

SHAKESPEARE'S DRAMATIC AUTHORITY:

SEVEN PLAYS WITHIN THE MEDIEVAL LITERARY TRADITION

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INTRODUCTION

Authority in art compels attention. In a painting it compels the viewer to see what the painter wants him to see, and dictates generally the response. In a novel or poem it compels the mind to follow the sentences to the end, and shapes the frame of thought, the attitude the mind assumes. Authority, in short, holds the unbroken illusion before the mind, the illusion that sweeps the mind along, guiding its attention, perception, and response.

I use authority in the same way that Kent uses it when he speaks of that quality in Lear that he would call master (I, iv, 30). For just that quality every artist seeks for his art, that his audience may believe and obey. He does not want them forever asking, can anyone really say these things? or do people really act this way? He wants his audience obedient to the demands of the illusion before them. Illusion may be thought of as that willingly suspended disbelief. But with Shakespeare this definition misleads. For with Shakespeare we do not simply believe by choice; we are seized by the force and power of the presence before us. The potent grip of this presence is authority.

To describe authority further is difficult. Perhaps I could say that the wedding of the right form with the conception that has in itself a certain universality, or greatness, or energy, quickens the mind and so has authority. But this is too indefinite: universality, greatness, energy--all are hopelessly vague. Form, however, clearly contributes. And thus Aristotle's discussion of what makes a good tragedy, a tragedy with authority, focuses in large part on tragedy's formal aspects--plot, diction, and so forth. Plot is the "soul" of tragedy, he says¹. And because tragedy is the imitation of an action that is complete or whole, the plot must have a beginning, a middle, and an end:

¹W. J. Bates, Criticism: The Major Texts, (New York, 1952) pp 23 ff.

A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be An end ... is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing following it.

The plot of a play therefore must contain what is necessary and what is natural. And so I say that as plot is the soul, a work's authority depends on the presence of the necessary and the natural.

But in mentioning plot and even drama here, I have leaped ahead of myself. For clearly, all aspects of form in art may contribute authority. For instance, Chaucer gives some measure of authority to his Parliament of Fowls by using the tradition of the dream vision. His purpose is generally to set courtly love and marriage in perspective through allegory, and the framing vision invokes the tradition of inspired dreams, provides a vehicle of credibility for the allegory, and so adds authority:¹

For out of olde felde, as men seyth,
Cometh al this newe corn from yer to yere,
And out of olde bokes, in good feyth,
Commeth al this newe science that men lere
(22-25)

The wery huntere, slepyng in his bed,
To wode ayeyn his mynde goth anon; ...
The syke met he drynketh of the tonne:
The lovere met he hath his lady wonne
(99-105)

But thus seyde he [Affrican]: "Thow hast the so wel born
In lokyng of myn olde bok totorn,
Of which Macrobye roughte nat a lyte,
That sumdel of thy labour wolde I quyte."
(109-12)

And thus Chaucer's Monk tries to give his catalogue a measure of coherence by prefacing it with a general description of tragedy:

Tragedie is to seyn a certeyn storie,
As olde bookes maken us memorie,

¹All references are to the F. N. Robinson edition: The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, (Cambridge, Mass., 2nd. edition, 1957). The somnium animale, of course, is a topos. See Robinson's note for a list of other occurrences. I shall discuss the Parliament at greater length below.

Of hym that stood in greet prosperitee,
 And is yfallen out of heigh degree
 Into myserie, and endeth wrecchedly.

(1973-77)

The Monk's purpose is to hammer out, through his tales, a lesson to men of place and power:

I wol biwaille, in manere of tragedie,
 The harm of hem that stode in heigh degree,
 And fillen so that ther nas no remedie
 To brynge hem out of hir adversitee.
 For certein, whan that Fortune list to flee,
 Ther may no man the cours of hire withholde.
 Lat no man truste on blynd prosperitee;
 Be war by thise ensamples trewe and old.

(1991-98)

and by stating first the general pattern of rise and fall and the instability of Fortune, he tries to underscore the lesson and to give his catalogue coherence, and so, to add authority. And likewise, Malory gives to his narrative a measure of authority simply by using so many active verbs in his descriptions of tournaments and fighting¹:

Than aythir dressed to other and com as fast as they might dryve. And sir Galahad smote hym so that hys spear wente thorow his shuldir, and smote hym downe of hys horse, and in the fallyng sir Galahaddis speare brake. So with that com oute another knyght oute of the grene levys and brake a spere uppon sir Galahad or ever he myght turne hym. Than sir Galahad drew oute hys swerde and smote the lyffte arme off, that hit felle to the erthe; and than he fledde and sir Galahad sewed faste aftir hym.

As he is a story teller his purpose is in part to present a vivid and compelling narrative, and the active verbs drive the mind along with swiftness and excitement, and so they too add authority. To list more examples is pointless. My analysis of authority in each of these instances is inadequate, and I mean to give a fuller account of each below. My point here is simply that when any aspect of form helps fulfil the purpose, it tightens the grip of the illusion: A work's authority

¹All references are to the E. Vinaver edition: The Works of Sir Thomas Malory (London, 1954); here, p. 645.

depends on its every part.

Though every part may add authority, some parts add more than others. How much each part adds depends on how much of the work's purpose it fulfils. What parts add most authority, then, in a play? Each play will answer this question specifically, but first something can be said about drama, to answer it in general.

Without conflict life's events are humdrum and day-to-day; they become subject for a play only when conflict arises. And any play, no matter how simple or complex, can be reduced to some basic conflict or antithesis, from which in turn all the action of the play springs. It may be true, as D. W. Robertson says, that for the medieval man conflict "in the modern sense exists only as a result of false human perspective", that what appear to be contraries (the flesh and the spirit, worldly and spiritual goods) are really elements in a hierarchy which are each good and useful when properly ordered¹. This qualification however does not preclude conflict in the Middle Ages, but rather puts it within the larger framework of what Robertson calls the "Divine Order". The qualification makes antithesis perhaps a better word than conflict, for conflict implies that things are simply at loggerheads till one side is defeated, while antithesis implies that in time things may come to synthesis. And this conflict or antithesis, whether absolute or simply the outcome of the limited human perspective, is the precipitant, the sine qua non, in drama. This is true in a comparatively simple play, such as the Brome Abraham and Isaac where all the action springs from the temporary, or perhaps only the potential, conflict between God's will and man's². God wills to test Abraham's obedience, and though Abraham is never actually disobedient, most of his words and the substance of the play witness that he feels a conflict between

¹A Preface to Chaucer (Princeton, 1963) pp. 23-7.

²The allegorical level reflects this conflict as well, in as far as Abraham's taking Isaac to the hill foreshadows Christ's incarnation and passion, and in as far as the incarnate Christ dies on the cross as an atonement for man's disobedience.

his obligation to God and his love of his son, or perhaps, that he has for a time a limited human perspective. This is also true in a complex play, such as King Lear. For in Lear two Natures clash: to use J. F. Danby's distinction, one is the Nature of kind, of kindred bonds, which Lear means to evoke in the first scene and which Cordelia typifies (I, i, 97-100);¹ and the other is the Nature of advantage, of self-interest, which Lear in fact evokes in Goneril and Regan and which Edmund calls upon to be his goddess (I, ii, 1).² And the play through all its turns does no more than work this opposition to an end. Or again, Coriolanus is in large part the conflict of Marcius' will to be true to his single absolute nature on the one hand, and on the other, of the forces around and within him that urge compromise and dissimulation. Conflict is the essence of drama.

A joust or Platonic dialogue, thus, is drama one-fold--the opposition of conflicting forces. Almost by definition the joust or dialogue exists neither before the disruptive conflict appears nor after it vanishes, when again there is peace. All the action and all the words spring from that one source, and no blow or argument is superfluous. So it is (ideally) in a play. From this premise Aristotle decides that plot in drama is foremost, for what is plot but the working out, by words and deeds, of a conflict!³

For Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of a tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all. Again, without action there cannot be a tragedy The Plot, then, is the first principle, and as it were, the soul of a tragedy.

Only through the dynamics of a plot may characters speak and act, may situations arise; without a plot characters have nothing to say or do, and situations have

¹All references are to the Arden King Lear, edited by K. Muir (Cambridge, Mass., 1955).

²Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature (London, 1949) Part I. Both Lear and Coriolanus I discuss at length below.

³Bates, op. cit., p. 23.

no relevance. A plot neither begins till conflict arises, nor ends till conflict is resolved: this too is implicit in Aristotle's definition of plot--that it contain the necessary and the natural. And neither can plot stretch beyond this beginning and this end. It expresses most basically the working out of a conflict.

Thus in Abraham and Isaac God wills to test Abraham's obedience, and when He knows at last that Abraham's will accords with His own, the temporary conflict, or the potential for conflict, ceases; the play is done. Thus in Philoctetes Odysseus and Philoctetes meet and struggle, and the play works their struggle to an end. And in each play plot determines the situations and characters. As, for instance, it brings Abraham and Isaac and finally the angel together on the hill, so it brings together Philoctetes, Odysseus, and Neoptolemus on the island. As plot dictates all Abraham says, from his prayers to his moanings and at last to his praises, so it dictates Philoctetes' words to Odysseus and to Neoptolemus. Plot, then, is foremost.

From first to last, once more as in a tournament or debate, the characters must move logically through a coherent set of situations. This is plot--a framework of events; its primary and essential element is character in situation, or character in action. The action must move logically, and the logic of the action depends largely on its coherence and on its growing necessarily and naturally out of the conflict. Thus the structure of a play, the sequence of events, comes ideally to mirror the conflict, much as the general rise and fall of a medieval tragedy mirrors Fortune and her wheel, which is at least in part a figure for the conflict. As the figure occurs in Boccaccio's De Casibus Virorum Illustrium under the heading "Paupertatis et Fortunae Certamen", Fortune and her wheel are tied to a stake after the fight with Poverty, so that only if one makes a point of soliciting her does one mount the wheel.¹ Thus Fortune's wheel is an emblem for the conflict between worldly poverty which is off the wheel out of Fortune's reach, and worldly power

¹Edited by Johannes T. Bellovacensis (Paris, 1520) Liber III, fo. xxiii.

which is on the wheel and within her realm, and too, in the wheel's turning, for the necessary and the natural outcome of this worldly aspiration. In this way the general rise and fall in a medieval tragedy, the upward movement to the pinnacle of worldly power and the inevitable downward turn (as in the Monk's tale of Zenobia or of Hercules) behind which movement lies the Monk's moral of not trusting to worldly power, mirrors the figure of Fortune and her wheel, the emblem for the conflict. This is a notably superficial account of medieval tragedy, and it applies chiefly to those tragic stories of the Monk whose own understanding of tragedy is limited. I will give a fuller account later on. But my point is here that structure mirrors conflict, in the way that the progression of a family line through time by means of generation comes to mirror for the Middle Ages the conflict or antithesis of Nature and Mutability, of continuance and change. Or more simply, in the way that the tide of a contest flows each moment with the greater strength and skill, and that of an argument with the greater logic and the more compelling truth. In either case the structure of the whole, the sequence of the action, always mirrors the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two conflicting or antithetical sides.

The play's structure must cohere and grow naturally out of the basic conflict in order that this structure, or set of circumstances, can in turn light up without shadow the involvements and consequences of the play's essential struggle. Eliot points towards this with his term "objective correlative"--the external situation that, when invoked, automatically calls forth a certain emotion:¹

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.

But what I mean by logical and coherent structure calls forth not only emotion but, more generally, our understanding. Henry James comes closer with the word that rings

¹Selected Essays, (London, 1951) p. 145.

throughout his prefaces--"dramatize!" That is, give an idea, conflict or emotion palpable form by embodying it in the structure. In "The Jolly Corner" for instance James tries to show rather than tell as much as possible, and so he embodies the idea of Spencer Brydon's encounter with his past in his exploring the hours^{5e} of his childhood:¹

He spoke of the value of all he read into it, into the mere sight of the walls, mere shapes of the rooms, mere sound of the floors, mere feel, in his hand, of the old silver-plated knobs of the several mahogany doors, which suggested the pressure of the palms of the dead; the seventy years of the past in fine that these things represented, the annals of nearly three generations, counting his grandfather's, the one that had ended there, and the impalpable ashes of his long-extinct youth, a float in the very air like microscopic motes.

Further, James tries to dramatize not only a tale's whole conception, but its every part. Thus in "The Pupil" Mrs. Moreen tries at once to engage the tutor and to avoid the subject of fee, and the image of her "drawing a pair of soiled gants de Suede through a fat jewelled hand ... at once pressing and gliding", embodies her slippery tactics and too, the illusion of wealth she means to create. Or again, she tries to get her son out of the room by asking him to find her a fan, and presently he returns, with only the casual comment that he could not. And in the structure James has mirrored their relationship.²

A playwright's job is just this. He cannot easily turn to mere telling of his tale, and because drama is basically not of the occult and the cryptic, he must make his ideas rise easily and clearly from the structure. Structure may refer simply to the data of a play--for instance, the family is a kind of structure. Thus in Pericles for example Shakespeare makes the family of Pericles reflect the abstract idea of chastity and of continuance in change, and contrarily, the family of Antiochus the idea of unchastity and of the proliferation of evil. Structure may also refer

¹The Complete Tales of Henry James, ed. by L. Edel, (London, 1964) vol. XII, p. 201.

²ibid., vol. VII, p. 409.

to the chain of events, and thus in Pericles the whole action moves through a kind of double circle or spiral as first father and then daughter move through Infortune to good Fortune, and this spiral structure reflects the overall idea in the play of man's working his own perfection through generation (see below). Or in this same way the structure of Act Five, scene three, in Julius Caesar reflects the idea that suicide allows Infortune or Time to triumph and so to bring man by despair and grief to naught, and contrarily the idea that patience allows Infortune to prove itself illusory by letting Infortune come full-circle into substantial good Fortune and truth. Thus in the first scene of King Lear Shakespeare structures the situation so that the conflict, the nature of the old king's dilemma, appears in sharp focus, and so that we see Lear turning the kingdom and the family upside down. The trial, as Lear proposes it, sets the two Natures at odds (if I may use Mr. Danby's distinction again), for Lear asks for love, but in terms of self-interest:

Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge.
(I, i, 51-53)

... what can you Cordelia say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.
(ll. 85-86)

How how, Cordelia! Mend your speech a little,
Lest you may mar your fortunes.
(ll. 94-95)

Quickly the conflict draws up its sides: Cordelia, Kent, and France on one; Goneril, Regan, and Burgundy on the other. But the conflict is within Lear as well, for he seeks the bonds of kin, real values, and truth,

I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery.
(ll. 123-24)

but he recognizes instead advantage, mere glitter, and falsehood. He curses his kind daughter and rewards his unkind daughters, and thus he turns the family upside down. And each episode in the scene widens the conflict's implications: Lear's

dialogue with Kent includes the relationships in the hierarchy of state:

Lear. The bow is bent and drawn; make from the shaft.
 Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
 The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly,
 When Lear is mad. What would'st thou do, old man?
 Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak
 When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's bound
 When majesty falls to folly.

(11. 143-49)

his dialogues with Burgundy and France include the relationships in marriage:

Cordelia. Peace be with Burgundy!
 Since that respect and fortunes are his love,
 I shall not be his wife.
 France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
 Most choice, forsaken; and most lov'd, despis'd!
 Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon:

(11. 247-52)

Thus from the beginning of the play Shakespeare makes the basic conflict or anti-thesis rise through the structure clearly and richly. Lear banishes Cordelia and Kent and gives up his power to the evil sisters and Cornwall; and thus the structure of the scene, the sequence of events, reflects the idea that when the divine Nature and truth do not control the appetitive and false, the kingdom turns upside down and evil is let loose.

As I have said, coherent and logical structure includes the embodiment not only of the basic conflict and its immediate involvements, but of all the range of details that are a consequence. For if a playwright expects his insight and the ideas that naturally evolve from his play to have weight and force, he must give palpable form to them too, that they may be clearly and sensually perceived. A further example from King Lear shows Shakespeare mirroring in a brief action a range of ideas, which stand as a consequence to the basic struggle. As Lear dies, Edgar says,

My Lord, my Lord! Look up, my Lord!
 (V, iii, 311-12)

And Kent follows with,

Vex not his ghost: O! let him pass; he hates him

That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

(ll. 313-15)

There is a strong movement in the last two acts of the play for the characters who find themselves subjected to bad Fortune in the upside down world, to rise above misfortune and come to the real values of hope, patience, and Boethian contempt of the world. On the other hand, continued misfortune drives them in the opposite direction towards despair, rage, and pride. Thus Lear and Cordelia go off to prison content:

No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison;
We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness: so we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out;
And take upon 's the mystery of things,
As if we were Gods' spies: and we'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones
That ebb and flow by th' moon.

(V, ii, 8-19)

and he returns carrying her body, raging against the heavens and howling like an animal:

Howl, howl, howl! O! you are men of stones:
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack.

(ll. 257-59)

Thus Gloucester is at times content to bear affliction (IV, vi, 75-7) and at times full of despair (IV, vi, 34-40; V, ii, 8). Edgar and Kent epitomize this conflict of values: Edgar who turns his father away from suicide and for whom "ripeness is all", urges Lear to live and to endure, and implicitly urges life's worth. On the other hand, Kent bids Lear's heart to break and to torment him no longer. To Kent at the end of the play all is "cheerless, dark, and deadly" (V, iii, 290), all is hopeless and futile. And it is appropriate here that the second expose the first as hollow and false. In this manner all the details must find logical and coherent

statement, that they may stand in clear relationship to the whole. Authority demands no less.

Authority demands that the structure mirror the ideas adequately, and when the structure does not, authority wanes. Eliot originally believed,¹ for instance, that Hamlet's structure was not adequate for its idea--as a tree might be too weak to bear up its fruit. Many of the speeches in the play, he said, point towards an emotion--Hamlet's disgust with his guilty mother--that fails to find an adequate objective correlative in the structure. Whether he was right or not does not matter here so much as the example of his applying the principle of structure's mirroring thought to a play, and his subsequent assessing of the play's authority. For when the structure is inadequate, in place of the clear and compelling grip of illusion there is vagueness and a confused, halting attention. The inadequacy stands between the play and us like a pillar, and we must forever stop and crane our necks to see and understand.

Authority also demands that the structure not shoot beyond the play's practical necessities, for if it does, again authority will lapse. This happens for instance in Julius Caesar, in the interview between Portia and Brutus, just after he has taken upon himself the role of conspirator:²

It must be by his Caesar's death: and for my part,
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
But for the general.

(II, 1, 10-12)

She does not know this, of course, and as she is worried about his sleeplessness and anxiety, she asks him to confide in her. Moved by her plea, he decides to tell

¹op. cit., pp. 143-5. I say "originally believed" because it is difficult to know whether he continued to believe this or not. In the preface to the second edition of Selected Essays, he says: "On reviewing the contents of this book, I find myself at times inclined to quarrel with my own judgments, and more often to criticise the way in which they were expressed. For myself, this book is a kind of historical record of my interests and opinions." (p. 8)

²All references are to the Arden Julius Caesar, ed. by T. S. Dorsch, (Cambridge, Mass., 1955).

her all:

O ye gods,
 Render me worthy of this noble wife!
 Hark, hark! one knocks. Portia, go in awhile;
 And by and by thy bosom shall partake
 The secrets of my heart.
 All my engagements I will construe to thee,
 All the charactery of my sad brows.

(11. 302-08)

and thereby fills us with anticipation. We wonder, will he reconsider? change his mind? This scene must precipitate some event. But it does not. Certainly we see further into Brutus--but dramatic material is wasted, the illusion broken. When this happens structure becomes in part a dead branch, to be pruned or lopped off before the play wholly lives.

Eliot originally thought that this happens too in Hamlet, where Shakespeare has left in, he said, superfluous and inconsistent scenes.¹ And again, some think that this happens in Troilus and Cressida in the debate in Troy. Shakespeare carries the debate beyond the needs of the play, they would say, and makes Hector awkwardly withdraw his superior argument that the war may continue:

If Helen then be wife to Sparta's king,
 As it is known she is, these moral laws
 Of nature and of nations speak aloud
 To have her back returned. Thus to persist
 In doing wrong extenuates not wrong,
 But makes it much more heavy. Hector's opinion
 Is this in way of truth. Yet, ne'ertheless,
 My spritely brethren, I propend to you
 In resolution to keep Helen still;
 For 'tis a cause that hath no mean dependence
 Upon our joint and several dignities.

(II, ii, 183-93)

Whether or not this is true, their uneasiness with this scene is justified. To be sure, if Shakespeare did not mean to show that Hector's idealism was profoundly inconsistent with his action, he could have given Priam or someone else the lines that keep the war going. But even if Shakespeare meant to show an inconsistency

¹ op. cit., p. 143.

in Hector, the portrayal is awkward and confusing and, because ill-prepared, illogical.¹ For structure mirrors thought, and a playwright must connect the two with accuracy and clearness, that there be no separation. If a playwright fails, the illusion breaks, and our attention focuses not on the play, but on the gap between thought and structure. Now if a bad playwright fails, we dismiss him, but if a good playwright fails, we tend to hammer the connexion out of him, the way Richard II "hammers out" his metaphor of the prison and the world. So we often hammer at Shakespeare. And when we find ourselves generally laboring, and generally with little agreement, to find the links between thought and structure, we may suspect in fairness that we are trying to hammer out what either is not there or has not been set down clearly. Thus too little or too much structure threatens a play's authority. On the one hand we will not be able to focus our attention properly; on the other we will follow wrong paths and have to backtrack to find the way. Both instances break the illusion and thus miss perfection by not allowing the play's insight to rise to the surface clear and unencumbered.

That Shakespeare has authority goes without saying. Lear and Hamlet, Prospero and Macbeth, compel, even tax, our attention. But Shakespeare's authority is not a constant: Just as his facility with language grows, so does the grip of his dramatic illusion. That comparison implies what should be clear--that logical and coherent structure is only one aspect of authority. Complete authority in a play depends on its every part. But again, some parts add more than others, and coherent and logical structure is one of these. Similarly, it may be objected that this manner of dealing with Shakespeare's plays, this applying the principle of structure's mirroring

¹By logic I mean here only that an action proceed reasonably from our understanding of the character and the situation. Whether the act follows reason or madness matters not. (I am assuming, of course, that we all grasp characters or situations as well as Sancho Panza or Pantagruel tastes wine.) Then if nothing else detracts, when an act follows logically--when it springs from what we know--the illusion does not break, but carries us along with authority.

thought, is prescriptive rather than descriptive. This is partly true, for the manner is prescriptive. But applying this principle does not preclude further description of Shakespeare's technique. Moreover, the principle is so general and so universally accepted that to propose it as a conclusion to this study would be foolish.

I shall study Shakespeare's authority as a dramatist then in as far as it depends on coherent and logical structure. The principle of structure mirroring thought rises not only from the literature and criticism of the twentieth century, but from the literature of all ages--clearly for example from that of the medieval and the Elizabethan. Common sense shows us this. In the first place, allegory dominates, or is a major influence in, both these ages. For as C. S. Lewis says in his Allegory of Love:¹

In many periods the historian of literature discovers a dominant literary form, such as ... satire in the eighteenth century, or the novel of sentiment and manners in the last age or in our own. During the years between Chaucer's death and the poetry of Wyatt allegory becomes such a dominant form It is ... unwise to neglect the adventures of the dominant form, for in so doing we run the risk of misunderstanding its successors. There are few absolute beginnings in literary history, but there is endless transformation.

And Ernst Curtius suggests that perhaps allegory may extend even further as the dominant form when he quotes from Goethe's Maxims and Reflections:²

Shakespeare is rich in wonderful tropes which stem from personified concepts and which would not suit us at all, but which in him are perfectly in place because in his time all art was dominated by allegory.

Whether we admit that allegory dominates both medieval and Elizabethan art, or that it dominates only the medieval, we must admit that the principle of structure mirroring thought is essential to allegory. And perhaps if we examine the principle at work in allegory we may learn something about how a poem or play's authority depends on the principle. "Allegory is simply the device of saying one thing to mean

¹(London, 1936) pp. 232-4.

²European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, translated by W. R. Trask, (London, 1953) p. 303.

another," Robertson says.¹ But this is much too general. C. S. Lewis comes closer to defining it:²

... you can start with an immaterial fact, such as the passions which you actually experience, and can then invent visibilia to express them. If you are hesitating between an angry retort and a soft answer, you can express your state of mind by inventing a person called Ira with a torch and letting her contend with another invented person called Patientia. This is allegory The allegorist leaves the given--his own passions--to talk of that which is confessedly less real, which is a fiction.

The concrete fiction (e.g., Ira and Patientia) mirrors the immaterial passion, and the contention in the fiction mirrors the thought or idea--here, the hesitating between an angry and a soft answer. Thus in Piers Plowman the proposed marriage of Lady Mede and False mirrors the idea of the potential problem of a reward in this world that goes beyond simple hire. Their marriage contract is an impressive document, enfolding all who partake of mede thereafter in the deadly sins and in final damnation:³

'þei to have and to holde and here eires aftir
 Wip alle þe purtenaunce of purgatorie into þe pyne of helle;
 3eldinge for pis ping at o 3eris ende
 Here soulis to sathanas to synken in pyne,
 þere to wone wip wrong while god is in hevене.'
 (II. 67-71)

The action of Lady Mede in the altercation of Peace and Wrong mirrors the idea of the corrupting influence of mede in the order of the land:

þanne gan mede to meke hire, and mercy besou3te,
 And proffide pees a presaut al of purid gold;
 "Have þis of me, man, ' quap heo, 'to amende þi skape,
 For I wile wage for wrong, he wile do so no more."
 (IV, 81-84)

The ideas in these examples--mede, the potential problem of a reward that exceeds hire, the corrupting force of mede in the just order of the land--are abstract. But in allegory, persons are invented or used to embody the ideas, as Lady Mede

¹ op. cit., p. 300

² op. cit., pp. 44-5.

³ Piers Plowman: The A Version, ed. by George Kane (London, 1960).

embodies the idea of a reward that exceeds simple hire, and situations are invented to objectify or represent the ideas, as the proposed marriage represents the potential problem. And in this way the structure mirrors the thought and makes the ideas manifest and clear, that the poem may have authority.

Allegory differs from symbolism in that allegorical personifications lack any real existence or the quality of divinity. Lewis quotes Dante's Vita Nuova (xxv) to substantiate this:¹

'You may be surprised', says Dante, 'that I speak of love as if it were a thing that could exist by itself; and not only as if it were an intelligent substance, but even as if it were a corporeal substance. Now this, according to the truth, is false. For love has not, like a substance, an existence of its own, but is only an accident occurring in a substance.'

Lewis also distinguishes between two types of allegory, the erotic and the moral homiletic or scriptural. Scriptural allegory is the four-level allegory of biblical exegesis.² It differs from erotic allegory not so much in kind as in degree, so that for instance Spenser in his Faerie Queene embodies and objectifies ideas in persons and in situations, but he also makes biblical allusions, such as the allusion to Paul's letter to the Ephesians (5: 23-29) in the betrothal of Una and the Red Cross Knight (see below), and so suggests the several levels of meaning that that passage in the letter contains. In general, though, allegory depends on intention and technique. Boccaccio's tale of Agamemnon is not an allegory, but an example that Boccaccio may have meant to illustrate the moral level of the allegory of Poverty and Fortune. Yet no doubt someone could shape the tale into an allegory. And allegory does not stand apart from all exempla, for Philosophy in the De Consolatione uses the tale of Orpheus and Eurydice as an example that may console Boethius (III, met. 12), and she relies on Boethius' understanding the example allegorically.

¹Lewis, op. cit., p. 47. A difference may have existed for Dante. In later centuries it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish allegory from symbolism.

²Robertson, op. cit., p. 292.

Thus allegory depends in part on the teller's intent. It also depends on his technique. But though (as I have said) allegorical figures do not have the quality of numen, if we limit allegory to bodiless personification or even to abstract representation, where abstract means immaterial, we are wrong. There is nothing bodiless about Britomart, nor immaterial in the parable of the tares of the field, nor in the portrait of Gluttony in Piers Plowman. We can think of allegory as abstract representation only if abstract means drawn away from or separate or ideal. Allegory is a manner of expression where the intended abstract ideas and the fictional events stand side by side parabolically. The ideas gain poetic form, just as chaste and fruitful marriage in Book Three of Spenser's Faerie Queene (see below) becomes a poetic expression of the idea in the Mutability Cantos of continuance in change, and so reflects the idea of man's moving through Time towards Truth. The structure mirrors the thought, and in as far as it gives the thought substance and energy and life, the poem has authority. Similarly the allegory in the two medieval figures, the divine Nature and the appetitive Nature (which I shall discuss below), suggests that what they embody is simply different aspects of the same thing and not two different and opposed things as the words "natural" and "unnatural" imply. Thus the allegory gives life and energy to the idea and so gives the idea authority.

We see the principle of structure mirroring thought, clearly at work when we see the writer giving his work authority by shaping his material to fit his purpose. Boccaccio in the De Casibus means to fix the responsibility for tragedy, and in the beginning of his third book he gives the allegory of Poverty and Fortune. Poverty and Fortune fight (as I have said), and when Poverty wins, Fortune is tied to a stake so that her influence is limited and so that men have the choice of either seeking or not seeking her favor.¹ The moral is that ill-Fortune falls not necessarily on a bad or proud man but on a man who merely seeks worldly power. Again, in

¹Boccaccio, op. cit., Liber III, fo. xxiii. W. Farnham, The Medieval Heritage of Elizabethan Tragedy (Oxford, 1956) p. 91.

the nature of allegory, the allegorist turns his material on the wheel of his purpose. If Boccaccio wanted his allegory to illustrate some other moral, to fix some other responsibility for tragedy, he would have shaped his allegory differently. Thus he acknowledges the correspondence of purpose and structure, of idea and action, and gives his narrative logic and clarity and, finally, a measure of authority.

Another example is Boethius, whose Philosophy occasionally uses fables to instruct. One is the fable of Orpheus and Eurydice. Of course the choice is deliberate, because Philosophy uses the image of Orpheus leading Eurydice towards the light of day and then looking back into the darkness of hell:¹

This fable apertenith to yow alle, whosoevere desireth or seketh to lede his thought into the sovereyn day (that is to seyn, into cleernesse of sovereyn good). For whoso that evere be so overcomen that he ficche his eien into the put of helle (that is to seyn, whoso sette his thoughtes in erthly thinges), al that evere he hath drawn of the noble good celestial he lesith it, whanne he looketh the helles (that is to seyn, into the lowe thinges of the erthe).

(III, met. 12, 60-70)

The choice thus works into the pattern of consolation, for Boethius who seeks to understand the Good, has just had difficulty understanding Philosophy's argument about evil's being nothing (III, pr. 12). Even Orpheus, the fable shows, who "hadde resceyved and lavyed out of the noble welles of his modir (Callyope), the goddess" (III, met. 12), whose music could overcome the various appetitive figures in hell--even he succumbs to human frailty and does not entirely understand the "sovereyn good". Boethius uses the fable to fit his purpose, uses his material to illustrate his argument, and so gives his argument authority.

One further example is Robert Henryson, who by writing his own exegesis, underscores the strictness of the correspondence between structure and idea. Our understanding of his allegories depends precisely on our understanding the thought that each action represents, and thus his task (and his greatness) lies in making the two correspond perfectly. In Orpheus and Eurydice, recollect the assault of Aristaeus,

¹Reference is to Chaucer's Boece.

the bustious herd who chases Eurydice, while she in turn runs away only to step on a venomous serpent:¹

a busteouss hird callit arresteuss,
kepand his beistis, Lay undir a buss.
(11. 97-98)

preckit with lust, he thoct withoutin mair
hir till oppress, and to his cave hir draw:
Dreidand for evill scho fled, quhen scho him saw;
and as scho ran, all bairfute on a buss
Scho strampit on a serpent vennemuss.
(11. 101-05)

This is the assault of virtue, the moralitas says, and the sting of deadly sin:

Arestius, this hird that cowth persew
Euridices, is nocht bot gud vertew,
That bissy is to keip our myndis clene;
(11. 435-37)

The serpentis stang, that is the deidly syn,
That posownis the saule without and in;
(11. 442-43)

The correspondence is precise and highly suggestive, for what is virtue to the purely appetitive (431-34) but an undesirable mate, from whom the flight leads to sin and spiritual death! And how well the image of a strong young herd suggests a virile and forceful virtue, whose victory over the appetitive would have all the stunning strength of a rape. The narrative compels attention. The embodiment of the idea is imaginative and clear; authority is strong.

Thus the principle of structure mirroring thought, clearly applies to any work in the tradition of allegory and exempla. If a writer means to demonstrate something, even if that something is only the unavoidable unfolding and the final outcome of a certain conflict or antithesis, he must do just that--he must make the idea and the action or chain of events correspond with coherence and logic. For in this way he will compel our attention--he will give his work authority.

¹H. H. Wood's edition of Robert Henryson: Poems and Fables, (Edinburgh, 1958). Henryson probably used Boethius' version of the tale; he certainly used N. Trivet's commentary on the De Consolatione. See Wood's note on line 421.

* * * * *

When Marlowe torments Faustus with the words of the Good Angel and the Bad, he uses allegory to express Faustus' dilemma--allegory full in the tradition of Everyman, whose allegory is no doubt an outgrowth of scriptural allegory as is found in Piers Plowman and in Deguileville's Pèlerinage de la Vie Humaine. And Marlowe uses it, of course, quite without apology, for allegory is not foreign to his age; as we know the continuity between the literature of the Middle Ages and the Elizabethan is more or less unbroken. Among others, Curtius and Lewis and Tillyard help to cut the strictures that bind up these ages in separate shocks, that the sheaves may fall together as they should. Curtius' European Literature in the Latin Middle Ages concerns itself with the general continuity in the history of ideas, subjects, and themes. Lewis' Allegory of Love traces the progress of erotic allegory as a "dominant form" from the literature preceding the Romance of the Rose through the Middle Ages to Spenser. Tillyard tries to show that the themes of the history plays find their roots in the historical literature and dramatic and non-dramatic poetry of the preceding age.¹ And as Marlowe shows us, there is also a continuity of method of treatment, or technique.

That allegory is a force in Elizabethan drama is clear. Sackville and Norton, for instance, use it in Gorboduc, where several times they break off the dramatic movement of the play to insert a short parable. The parable and the action relate to each other just as they do in the De Casibus. For instance the breaking of the sticks in the first scene of Gorboduc anticipates the action with a pattern and gives a moral, just as does the parable of Poverty and Fortune. And the action of the old king and his wife and sons is an instance, an example. Jonson too makes allegory an integral part of his Volpone. He lets the level of the allegorical beast fable rise up through the characterization and the imagery,²

¹E. M. W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays, (London, 1944). See also his Elizabethan World Picture, (London, 1939).

²see also V, v, 18; V, xii, 150-1.

Now, now, my clients
 Beginne their visitation! vulture, kite,
 Raven, and gor-crow, all my birds of prey,
 That thinke me turning carcasse, now they come:
 I am not for 'hem yet.

(I, ii, 87-91)

and it in turn provides a form and a commentary for the narrative, so that the two levels of allegory and narrative again stand in this relationship of, on the one hand, pattern and moral, and on the other, example.

If we are going to understand a play and understand where it has and where it has not authority, we must be aware of the playwright's method of treatment, of the way he makes structure mirror thought, as well as aware of the ideas and themes he uses. We can generally understand these two plays perhaps without recognizing anything more than a general indebtedness to medieval allegory and exempla. And we can generally understand Measure for Measure perhaps, without knowing that the play's essential movement corresponds to that of medieval comedy, or that Shakespeare by the choice of names for the characters may have intended a level of allegory.¹ We can generally understand Midsummer Night's Dream by itself too; our general understanding for example does not depend on our seeing that Shakespeare uses the wood allegorically, just as Chaucer does in the Knight's Tale. In both instances the wood is an occurrence of what Curtius calls the "mixed forest".² Generally the wood is the "wood of the world" as in Spenser (see below), but also wood means madness, and when Palamon and Arcite meet and fight in the wood, Chaucer emphasizes this aspect of the wood of the world--this madness of ungoverned appetite and bestiality which qualifies their nobility:

...In his [Palamon's] fightyng were a wood leon,
 And as a cruell tigre was Arcite;
 As wilde bores gonne they to smyte,

¹The names, which are Shakespeare's own addition, mean: Angelo, angel or messenger or minister; Claudio, lame one; Isabella, devoted to God; Marianna, bitter grace.

²op. cit., p. 194.

That frothen whit as foom for ire wood.
Up to the ancle foghte they in hir blood.

(ll. 1656-60)

Similarly Shakespeare emphasizes this aspect of the wood of the world in Midsummer Night's Dream. There at night Lysander will "pursue" Hermia (II, ii, 247-48). Demetrius is "wode within this wood" when he cannot find Hermia. And Shakespeare makes clear the idea of disorder, and the connexion^{ct} between the lovers and the beasts in the wood.

Dem. I'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you,
Run when you will; the story shall not be changed:
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase;
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tiger.... bootless speed,
When cowardice pursues and valour flies.

(II, i, 227-34)

Shakespeare shows us the lovers in the wood of the world, as does Chaucer, and especially in the element of madness. But we can generally understand Midsummer Night's Dream by itself, because in the wood the correspondence between the fairies and the lovers for instance is clear, and because we know that madness and enchantment are part of the love that is shown in the play. We do not need to know the medieval background here in order to understand the play in a general way, though such knowledge will no doubt quicken our understanding.

But we will have difficulty understanding the wrestling match in Act One of As You Like It, if we do not see first that Shakespeare is using allegory,¹ and then that he is drawing upon a tradition. In the wrestling match Orlando shows his supremacy over brute strength and the crude plot of his brother, and as he begins to cast off his servitude, he can state his name and lineage before the court--a measure of identity.²

¹cf. J. Vyvyan, Shakespeare and Platonic Beauty, (London, 1961) p. 98.

²As You Like It, the New Cambridge Edition, (Cambridge, 1926).

Duke F. What is thy name, young man?
 Orl. Orlando, my liege, the youngest son of Sir Rowland
 de Boys,
 (I, ii, 233-35)

And in the wrestling match he also falls in love:

What passion hangs these weights upon my tongue?
 I cannot speak to her, yet she urged conference.
 O poor Orlando, thou art overthrown!
 Or Charles or something weaker masters thee.
 (I, ii, 245-48)

For the tradition Shakespeare calls upon is that of the trial, so familiar in Lydgate and Gower and Chaucer and Malory and Spenser as a battle ground of honor and of love, and also as in Lydgate's Pilgrimage and in Malory's Sankgreal and in Spenser's Faerie Queene (see below), as a step on man's pilgrimage toward Truth. For there is the hint in As You Like It that when Orlando starts off into the Forest, which is another occurrence of Curtius' mixed forest and the wood of the world, he is starting on a pilgrimage, whose end would then in some way correspond with Truth.

Tongues I'll hang on every tree,
 That shall civil saying show.
 Some, how brief the life of man
 Runs his erring pilgrimage,
 (III, ii, 127-30)

And our understanding this tradition that Shakespeare writes within, will enrich, if not radically change, our understanding of what he is writing about.

We see this same theme of the pilgrimage again (among other plays) in Pericles where throughout the hero goes through the trials of the medieval pilgrimage, and in King Lear where Edgar speaks of himself after his adventures as Poor Tom and after his trial by combat with Edmund, as on a pilgrimage (V, iii, 196). Nowhere, I think, in As You Like It, Pericles, or Lear, does the knowledge of this medieval background greatly change an intelligent general reading of the play. But this intelligent general reading is only a first step. And we cannot discuss the authority in As You Like It for instance till we perceive (as we may presume a contemporary would) the allegory of love and honor in the wrestling match and the way that this fits

into his larger pilgrimage towards Truth in the wood of the world. Till then the match will not seem to cohere with the rest, and our attention will falter. Moreover the structure of As You Like It unfolds partly as a straightforward plot in Orlando's conflict with his brother, and partly as a pattern of antitheses. Understanding the play's authority will depend on understanding how well Shakespeare paces the main action with the pattern of antitheses, for instance where in the third and fourth acts he shows us Rosalind and Orlando's love by setting it against the antithetical loves of Touchstone and Silvius. By using a pattern-antithesis structure as well as a plot-conflict, Shakespeare uses a structural technique familiar in the Middle Ages in such poems as The Book of the Duchess and the Parliament of Birds and in the Elizabethan age in Spenser's Faerie Queene, in each of which our understanding depends on our making imaginative leaps between parts that develop side by side or one after the other. We should examine this structural technique in the preceding literature, for we will not fully understand Shakespeare's authority in As You Like It (or any where else for that matter) till we understand the two kinds of development Shakespeare uses. Our understanding of how pattern and example fit together in Boccaccio or Boethius will prepare us so that we can understand the structure and so the authority in Gorboduc or Volpone. Similarly we cannot discuss authority in King Lear till we fully understand the two kinds of Nature goddesses in the Middle Ages, the appetitive and the divine; and then too, such understanding of Nature in the Middle Age will help us see how pervasive a force Nature is in one form or another in Shakespeare's plays. In short, we cannot discuss dramatic authority anywhere without seeing at each moment exactly what the playwright is doing, without understanding the ideas and techniques he inherits and uses.

The allegory of the trial and the pilgrimage is one example. In the Middle Ages it appears in Piers Plowman in passus six through eight of the A-text, and in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. The pilgrimage is the unifying concept in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, and it also appears in Lydgate, particularly in his translations,

The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man and Reason and Sensuality, and in Malory's Tale of the Sankgreal. But we do not need to hunt down every reference, nor limit ourselves of necessity to those books that Shakespeare knew. He certainly knew most of the books and authors that I have named, but he may not have known the Sir Gawain. That does not remove Sir Gawain from our concern, for we need to reconstruct a framework of ideas, and Sir Gawain is part of that frame.

But the trial and pilgrimage is only one of several themes that we need to examine. Another is marriage, and we need to know Chaucer's allegories and tales in particular, in order to understand Shakespeare's comedies and last plays. The themes of the pilgrimage of the life of man and of marriage often appear in the Middle Ages in comedy; comedy is in a sense the fullness of marriage and of the pilgrimage where the characters finally come to the harmony of Nature's bonds. But we also need to consider these themes in tragedy. Comedy is not merely the triumph of Nature, but the establishment of the proper hierarchy, where Fortune exists under Nature's sway. Contrarily tragedy is not simply the triumph of Fortune and her wheel, but the breakdown of this same hierarchy, so that Fortune or Time or Mutability defeats Nature. Tragedy is in this sense the failure of the pilgrimage or of marriage. We need to know Lydgate's and Chaucer's and Henryson's and Malory's non-dramatic tragedies, in order to understand the ideas about tragedy which Shakespeare inherits. And besides these general concepts which cut across several of Shakespeare's plays, we need to know some specific sources, in order to reconstruct the framework that is necessary for an understanding of his structure, and finally of his authority. Gower's tale of Apollonius of Tyre is an example.

All of this points toward my real focus, which is the growth of Shakespeare's authority, the increasing strength of his dramatic illusion. I shall trace this growth in two groups of plays, each of which spans a number of years: As You Like It, Pericles, and The Tempest; and Richard II and Coriolanus, Julius Caesar and King Lear. But I begin this study, as I must, by examining some of the relevant themes that

Shakespeare takes up and uses. The writer partakes of tradition; though the tradition may not make us understand the writer, neither can we understand him alone.

PART ONE

THEMES IN THE MEDIEVAL LITERARY TRADITION

I want to consider now two dominant themes in the medieval tradition--the pilgrimage and marriage. The themes link together in as far as they both describe metaphorically man's movement through life or Time towards Truth, and thus in Lydgate's Reason and Sensuality and in Spenser's Faerie Queene marriage becomes a part of man's pilgrimage towards Truth. As I have said, the fullness of marriage or of the pilgrimage is often the end point of medieval comedy, and in this way medieval comedy tends to realize a philosophical basis which, as in Spenser and in Boethius, is connected with Platonic ideas about the One and the Many. For medieval comedy in this sense is the fullness of marriage or of the pilgrimage where man uses Time and Mutability and multiplicity to approach the harmony or simplicity or One-ness of Truth. Conversely, as I have said, the breakdown on earth of the marriages that help bind the universe in harmony and accord, and the failure on earth of the pilgrimage where man does not move through Time and Mutability and multiplicity towards harmony but instead falls prey to them, form the basis of medieval tragedy. These are the ideas--poetic forms of philosophical ideas--that Shakespeare inherits and uses. And so I mean to consider the themes in medieval comedy and tragedy.

CHAPTER I
THE PILGRIMAGE

The theme of the pilgrimage of the life of man pervades the literature of the Middle Ages. To begin with, the pilgrimage of the spirit is a scriptural concept. Peter's first epistle for instance reads, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Pet. 2: 11). From this root in the Bible the theme is taken up in the homiletic allegory of the medieval pulpit. "Any pilgrimage during the Middle Ages," D. W. Roberson says, talking about the Canterbury Tales, "was ideally the figure for the pilgrimage of the human soul through the world's wilderness toward the celestial Jerusalem. The pilgrimage of the soul was not in itself a journey from place to place, but an inner movement between the two cities so vividly described by St. Augustine, one founded on charity, and the other on cupidity. Love moved the pilgrim's feet and determined the direction of his journey."¹ The pilgrimage is also rooted in Christian Platonism where, as in Deguileville's Pelerinage, our life is a quest and a harkening back towards some clear vision of the eternal. And from its roots this theme continues and develops in the fourteenth through the seventeenth century, and quite naturally finds expression in Shakespeare's plays. Before we can see it in Shakespeare's plays (or for that matter, in any single work along the way) and grasp how Shakespeare uses it, we need to examine the theme as it develops, and understand its own potency. The examination does not need to be exhaustive nor in every instance highly detailed, but it must be at least representative and accurate in pointing out how broad and deep the theme is. Langland's Piers Plowman is a good place to begin.²

¹ op. cit., p. 373.

² As Owst says about Piers Plowman, there is hardly a concept of the poet's mind or trick of his symbolism but it is found characteristic of the literature of the

Our understanding of the pilgrimage in Piers Plowman depends on our understanding the imaginative links that tie the poem together. For then we will see that Piers as Peter is a recurrence of Holy Church,¹ and that the pilgrimage to St. Truth in passus six through eight of the A-text Visio is a consequence of the trial of Lady Mede, and ultimately of the words of Holy Church in passus one and the basic antithesis in the prologue's field full of folk, of workers and wanderers, regenerate and unregenerate (18-9). The poem is about the folk who dwell between the tower of Truth and the dungeon of False. Truth will save their souls (I, 82-3); False will make them curse that they were ever born. (I, 59-60). As Holy Church explains in passus one, their behavior in the field determines whether they are regenerate and are moving towards the tower, or unregenerate and towards the dungeon. And so the proper use of worldly goods, governance by reason, love, and "kind wit", is necessary to save their souls:

'Reddite cesari', quap god, 'þat cesari, befalliþ
Et que sunt dei deo, oþer ellis }e don ille.'
 (I, 50-51)

As is the knowledge that

Whan alle tresouris arn triþede, treuþe is þe beste.
 (I, 181)

In the land, the proposed marriage of Lady Mede to False and her subsequent trial develop this theme of the proper use of goods. As long as Mede remains unregenerate, that is, as long as she leans towards False, there are two kinds of reward in the land:

þat on god of his grace gyveþ in his blisse

medieval pulpit. Preaching in Medieval England, (Cambridge, 1926) p. 295. See also the relevant passages in his Literature and the Pulpit in Medieval England, (Oxford, 1961).

¹cf. T. P. Dunning, Piers Plowman, (London, 1937) pp. 116-20. Dunning emphasizes the mirroring of Passus One in the beginning of the pilgrimage, and the significance of Piers as Christ, St. Peter, and the Church. See also Piers' covenant with the knight to protect "holykirk" and his workers, from the wasters and the wicked (VII, 27-30); and the pardon for Piers and his heire (VIII, 1-4) among whom Knights are again mentioned as keepers of "holy chirche".

To hem þat werchen wel whiles þei ben here.
(III, 219-20)

and

þere is a mede mesurles þat maistris desiri ;
To mayntene mysdoeris made þei taken,
(III, 225-26)

These two kinds of reward, hire and mede, match deeds on earth which are regenerate and reasonable and so which lead to God, and those deeds, unregenerate and out of measure, which tie men to the "wrecchide world" of the flesh and the devil (I, 36-40). They also correspond to treasures in heaven which are Truth, and to sins and damnation which the wedding contract of False and Mede proclaims (II, 58-71). The King of course rejects the governance of Mede in the land after her intervention in the case between Peace and Wrong, and accepts the guidance of Reason and Conscience. And it is after Conscience and Repentance begin to act in the kingdom that the pilgrimage develops.

The goal of the pilgrimage is Truth (V, 254; VI, 20) and this is the same Truth who is salvation to the folk of the field and whose tower opposes the dungeon of False:

þe tour þere trewe is hymself is up to þe sonne;
(VI, 79)

But the contrast among the pilgrims of regenerate and unregenerate, workers and wanderers, abides. For to begin with they "blustride forth as bestis", and none or perhaps only a few know the way to Truth;

Ac þere were fewe men so wys þat^ewey þider couthe, (VI, 1)
and even after Piers teaches them the way, still two classes remain--the workers who work for hire, each after his own manner (VII, 60; 101-2), and the wasters who "feynide hem blynde" and "leide here leg alery as such lorellis cunne" (VII, 113-4). And too, the contrast abides in Piers and the "lede aparailid in pilgrimes wyse", with his vials of holy water and his keys and his vernicle. For Piers is Peter, the True Church. He knows the way to Truth, and as he is ready to be Truth's "pilgrym at þe plouȝ" (VII, 94), he is also a prototype for regenerate man; while the other

does not know the way and is simply a false pilgrim, a wanderer, and hence unregenerate.

The way of the pilgrimage, as Piers says, is to follow through Meekness and Conscience, the Commandments. Then if a pilgrim is "sib" to some of the seven virtues which oppose the seven deadly sins (VI, 104-14), or if Mercy intervenes (VI, 120-3), Grace will open the gate to salvation and Truth. And despite Mercy's overall power, kinship to the seven virtues is the surest key to Grace's gate, and so the pilgrimage is a journey that must oppose and overcome the seven sins and thus purify the human heart.

And 3if grace graunte þe to gon in on þis wise,
þou shalt se treuþe himself wel sitte in þin herte
(VI, 92-93)

Following this description of the pilgrimage, with its long place-names such as the brook called "be buxum of speche" and its ford called "þoure fadris honouriþ", is a rendering of it in terms of working the half-acre, with Piers the pilgrim at the plow. Piers makes an agreement with the Knight, who must keep "holy-kirke" that the pilgrim-workers may be free from the wasters and the wicked (VII, 27-30). The wasters and the wicked are of course generally unregenerate, but at times they are described specifically in terms of the deadly sins. Thus there is a "bretoner, a braggere" and "sire surfet, a lecchour" (VII, 141; 249), and in the B-text in the corresponding passage some are described as living in lechery, lying, and sloth:¹

"In lecherye and in losengerye ye lyven, and in sleuthe
(VI, 145)

And despite the knight's not being very successful, so that some of the wasters still will not work but will only wander about even after Hunger comes, the Knight remains an essential part of the pilgrimage. He is the guardian of "holy kirke" and of the workers of the land, and he is a servant of Truth² (I, 92-102; VII, 29); and too,

¹The Vision of William Concerning Piers The Plowman, ed. by W. W. Skeat, (Oxford, 1886) vol. 1.

²See Dunning on Knights as keepers of Truth. *op. cit.*, pp. 46-8.

it is part of the conception of the poem that the pilgrimage be a common effort, so that some make grain sacks, some clothes against cold and some robes for priests, some ear the land--each tries to do his part (VII, 9-25). For as part of the allegory (as I have said) Piers is Peter, the True Church and a recurrence in the poem of Holy Church, and thus the pilgrimage is necessarily not of mere individuals alone, but of the body of individuals together, Piers and his heirs (VIII, 4), who make up the body of the True Church.

Thus Langland describes the pilgrimage of the True Church towards salvation and Truth. The next poem that I want to consider is Lydgate's version of Deguileville's Pèlerinage--The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man.¹ Like Piers Plowman it is a full scriptural four level allegory, but unlike Piers Plowman it is always the pilgrimage of one man, who though he is a kind of Everyman bearing Deguileville's name, is in no way comparable to Piers. And The Pilgrimage serves us here as a compendium (if anything of more than 25,000 lines may be called that) of the topoi that appear in other instances of the pilgrimage theme.

At the beginning of The Pilgrimage, a vision

With-Inne a merour large & bright,
Off that hevenly ffayr cyte
(ll. 318-19)

moves the dreamer to make a journey to the celestial Jerusalem. The goal of this pilgrimage is the same as the goal of Piers and his heirs--the celestial city, the tower of Truth, Truth itself, Christ (318-19, 4774-6, 11974-12050). Just as Piers has his path towards the gate of Grace, this pilgrim in his course must always seek the "right way":

Evere enquere, nyght and day,
Tyl thow ha founde the ryhte way
(ll. 11947-48)

And the "right way" of the pilgrimage is forever keeping the body from its sins, chastening it by hardship, submitting it to reason and the soul:

¹EEETS es. ed. F. J. Furnivall, (London, 1899, 1901, 1904) vols. 77, 83, 92.

The Body, ffro hys synnes grete,
 Duely punysshē in cold & hete,
 Yive hym peyne, and ek penaunce, ...
 Sende hym out on pylgrymage;
 Charge hym with fastyng & wakyng

(ll. 2518-19)

Thus the pilgrimage of the soul is also the pilgrimage of the body which must be kept from sin--not slain but corrected (9077-200)

One topos which springs from this idea of the pilgrimage as a struggle against sin, is the pilgrim as a champion, well armed and ready to defend the house of Grace Dieu (1793-1813). This figure of the champion in the "armour of light" is scriptural (Eph. 6: 11-8), and the figure also appears in Sir Gawain and in Malory and Spenser.¹ And generally, unless the pieces of armour are given special significance, they draw their significance from the passage in the letter to the Ephesians: the helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit, the shield of faith, and so forth. Here in The Pilgrimage Grace Dieu gives the pilgrim special armour: he must wear the gambeson of patience, the breastplate of fortitude, the helmet of temperance and salvation, the gorger of sobriety, and the sword of righteousness which makes the body obedient to the spirit (7225-912). For once the arming is complete and the pilgrim is prepared by Grace Dieu and Reason, he sets out into the world of the pilgrimage, where after Idleness sends him the "wrong way", he meets the seven deadly sins. And this meeting too is a commonplace of the pilgrimage theme, which we have just seen in Piers Plowman and will see again in Malory and Spenser. Only the purest knights reach the celestial city or the particular goal of their quest; only those "sib" to the seven virtues reach salvation and Truth.

Another commonplace in The Pilgrimage which also appears in Chaucer and Spenser, is the figure of Venus, and a purely appetitive Venus, as a huntress--the Venus "off venerye":

There lyth A mortal huntress:
 In a-wayt to hyndre the,

¹Which I shall discuss in their turn.

Wyth gret noubre off her meyne, ...
 Gretly to drede, & daungerous;
 The name off whom ys dame Venus,
 And hyr sone callyd Cupide

(ll. 8128-35)

She has hounds (8111), and to avoid her the pilgrim here wears no armour on his legs, for the best defence is flight.

A-geyn whos malys and envye,
 Fflight ys the besti remedye.

(ll. 8187-88)

Thus we have one figure for the struggle with appetitive love--the hunt and chase. And the figure works not only for Venus, who in the poem is a foul masked hag, riding a sow, but for evil in general. At one time the hounds of Envy and Treason chase the pilgrim. The dogs tear at him, Envy spears him, and Treason beats him on the head (23141-66). At another, the enchantress Scylla, or Conspiracy, hunts him with dogs (21328 ff). And of course the great hunter is Satan himself who catches in snares the "kynges beestis" (19046).

Another commonplace figure in The Pilgrimage is the wood.¹ While musing on his unstableness, the pilgrim finds himself in a wood, wild and dangerous:

... In-to a woode ful savage;
 Me thouths the weye peryllous,
 And by to passe. Encombrous;
 I knew nat what was best to done,
 ffor, in a woode, a man may soone
 Lese his weye, and gon amys,
 Or he be war.

(ll. 17134-40)

Robbers and wild beasts are ready to attack him, and the beast that immediately appears is the ugly broken-backed Avarice. The wood is one element or setting that the pilgrimage may take place in, and its significance in this allegory is confined more or less to those bestial aspects of man's nature, the ungoverned lusts and appetites that support the seven sins, and too, the madness and self-interest which make man lose his right way towards Truth.

¹cf. Curtius on the "mixed forest". op. cit., pp. 194 ff.

Another commonplace element in which the pilgrimage may occur is the sea. The sea is the world full of trouble, Satan says (19116), and many pilgrims are wrecked there by Pride, and many swim weighted down by covetousness of vain worldly riches. The sea is linked closely with Fortune, whose wheel and axle-tree ride on the waters like an island (19423 ff). And only after the pilgrim falls off the wheel and prays to the Virgin for mercy, do the raging waves calm down and the winds fall off, so that

... at the laste, off grace, I fond
 a verray lytel hyl off sond,
 And thyderward I gan me dresse,
 To reste me for werynesse.

(ll. 19985-88)

C. S. Lewis speaks of The Pilgrimage as a fusion of two kinds of allegory, the erotic and the homiletic--a scion of the Romance of the Rose and of the medieval pulpit. "To set Virtue and Venus in action within a single poem," he says, "is to transcend the narrowness both of the strictly homiletic and the strictly erotic allegory."¹ This fusion seems present in The Pilgrimage only in as far as someone called Venus appears. But she is here no more than one of the deadly sins. This extreme figure of Venus as Lechery precludes any real treatment of love and any real erotic allegory; and besides the marriage which is briefly recorded, of the man from the east and the woman from the west (1905 ff.), there is no treatment and no fusion at all. But this fusion certainly comes about in another poem by Deguileville, Les Echecs Amoureux, which Lydgate expanded into Reason and Sensuality.² Lydgate's version of Les Echecs Amoureux (though his version remains unfinished) is throughout an attempt to put love within the larger, ordering framework of Nature, who is God's

¹The Allegory of Love, (London, 1936) p. 260.

²ETS es. ed. by E. Sieper, (London, 1901) vol. 84. Sensuality has to do here primarily with the worldly, the temporal--that which lacks a spiritual life. This is clear when Nature describes the two ways to go around the world (see below). The marginal note on line 647 reads, "Oriens significat celestia et divina, et occidens temporalia et terrena".

heavenly minister (242).

The dreamer here is not called a pilgrim, but clearly the pilgrimage theme provides the framework for the poem. Nature appears to the dreamer and tells him to go round the world to see God's beautiful and wise creations, that he may learn to "preyse the lorde eternal" (527). Man is like God, Nature says, but it is hard for man to hold to that perfection. Man can hold to that perfection, however, if he goes "the weye that is ryght" (614). There are two possible ways around the world: one heads east, passes through the west, and ends up again in the east; the other heads west, passes through the east, but ends at last in the west. The one is the way of reason:

Thorient, which ys so bryght
And casteth forth so clere a lyght,
Betokeneth in especiall
Things that be celestial
(ll. 665-68)

The other of sensuality:

Which set his entente in al
To thinges that be temporal,
Passynge and transytorie,
And fulfilled of veyn glorie.
(ll. 679-82)

Here is the frame of a pilgrimage, and it matches the prototype in The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man or for that matter in Piers Plowman. Through Nature, just as through Grace Dieu's mirror or through Holy Church's words, the dreamer-pilgrim comes aware of the heavenly perfection--Truth, the celestial city--and he sets out to find it. And the fusion of erotic and homiletic allegory comes not in the mere bridling of the sensual, appetitive nature by reason, for this idea appears whenever a pilgrim meets the seven deadly sins. Rather, the fusion comes in the thoroughgoing treatment of love in the poem, for this poem focuses entirely on that locus of the struggle between reason and sensuality, where reason must guide love in the Garden of the Rose. And it is worth noting here that the reconciliation of reason and sensuality is in terms of chastity--virginity or chaste marriage. Deguileville's poem in fact

ends more or less with marriage as the embodiment of reasonable love.¹ And we know from Lydgate's introduction that he intended his version to include how the dreamer in the game of chess

Was of a Fers so Fortunat
In-to a corner dryve and maat.
(ll. 9-10)

though we do not know how he may have intended to use maat.

As soon as the pilgrim sets out, he takes the wrong path (928), of course, and becomes Venus' man. (The encounter with the God of Love is a wrestling match, Venus claims, that man can never win (2454).) She bids the pilgrim seek the garden of delight, and on his way there he enters a great forest. This is Diana's forest of chastity, and it opposes the garden of delight, which is the garden of Venus and of courtly love. Love in the garden, Diana says, leads to trouble and evil, and she rebukes the pilgrim for misunderstanding Nature, in going there as Venus' servant. The forest, on the other hand, has no evil. Diana herself shoots all "wylde bestis" (2855) and "ydlenesse" (2862), so that her forest is healthy, with good springs and fruitful trees, and also contemplative (4502).² Diana only regrets that gods and men all serve Venus these days, and she looks back to Arthur and his Round Table, when

Their choys was not for lustynesse,
But for trowth.
(ll. 3203-04)

This is another occurrence of the "mixed forest", and this occurrence emphasizes not the appetite and bestiality of the wood of the world, but the orderliness and fruitfulness of Nature. The mixed forest generally contains within itself the possibility of the appetitive Nature, the Nature of Edmund in King Lear, and of the divine Nature of Spenser's Mutability Cantos. This occurrence of the mixed forest clearly bears some relationship to Nature's park in The Parliament of Fowls, to Nature's forest

¹LETS, ed. by E. Sieper, vol. 84, pp. 62-3.

²This is an instance of what D. W. Robertson calls the good hunt, as against the hunt of Venus or of Satan. op. cit., pp. 263-4.

in The Book of the Duchess, and to the forest of Arden in As You Like It.

From here on, Lydgate's unfinished poem takes place in the garden of delight, which is substantially the garden of the Romance of the Rose. And after the description of the garden, the game of chess between the maiden and the dreamer takes up the rest of the poem. The chess game is a topos that is also in The Pilgrimage. There the game is between the pilgrim and his body, that he might make the body

... lowly to obeye
Up-on hys dongel, in hys estat,
Ther, to hym to seyn 'chek maat'.

(ll. 10062-64)

Here the game is for the love of the maiden, and for the "victoryre and maistrie" (5867) that both the maiden and the dreamer want. And so the game of chess becomes a figure here for courtly love in the garden of delight.

In Reason and Sensuality the dreamer-pilgrim's journey to the celestial east should pass through the temporal west--that is, he should temper the sensuality, the diverse unstable worldly things, with the reason of the divine spirit. And as I have said, his journey is a struggle to bring love under the bit and curb of Nature, to guide love by reason. Man's whole struggle with his appetites focuses here on his struggle with love. The theme is similar in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. The doom of Gawain at the Green Chapel depends on his fulfilling his agreement with Bercilak at the castle, and how well he fulfills that agreement depends on how he acts with the lady. He must always be chaste and courteous.¹ He cannot take her love, for then he cannot hold to his agreement with the lord; and he cannot utterly reject her, for then he would be discourteous. He must make his courtly behavior correspond with the knightly ideal of chaste courtesy and with his agreement to the lord.

He cared for his cortaysye, lest crayn he were,
And more for his meschef, 3if he schulde make synne,

¹See J. Burrow, A Reading of "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight", (London, 1965) p. 100. G. L. Kittredge, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, (Cambridge, Mass., 1916) pp. 8-9.

And be traytor to þat tolke ^{þat} þat telde aȝt. (ll. 1773-75)

The knightly ideal mirrors the Christian ideal. For Arthur's knights are

þe most kyd knyȝteȝ under Krystes selven,
(l. 51)

And also Gawain's "trawþe" with the lord of the castle must mirror the "trawþe" of his Christian faith, for he travels "on Godeȝhalve". (692). In this way, the poem presents the same problem as does Reason and Sensuality--how to make action in the temporal world, and especially in the realm of love, accord with the larger eternal judgment.²

Gawain is on a pilgrimage. But his pilgrimage does not appear allegorically, as does the pilgrimage in Reason and Sensuality, so much as it appears symbolically.³ In other words, the elements in Sir Gawain stand at first not for abstract concepts, as do Beauty or Dedit in the garden of courtly love, but for themselves.

Gawain's armour is actual armour, his journey in the second fit a real journey, even though the armour and particularly the shield bears the significance of the scriptural "armour of light", and even though the journey involves supernatural creatures such as "wormeȝ" and "wodwos" and "etayneȝ". (720-3).

The goal of Gawain's pilgrimage, again, is Truth.⁴ This is immediately the truth of his covenant with the Green Knight:

I swere þe for soþe, and by my seker trawþe.
(l. 403)

¹Burrow, op. cit. pp. 105-6. Burrow says that the links between the two ideals or codes appear in the description of the shield. All references are to the Tolkien and Gordon edition of Sir Gawain (Oxford, 1935).

²ibid., p. 110. The encounter at the Green Chapel "constitutes for him Gawain a kind of personal doomsday".

³For the general distinction see Lewis, op. cit., especially the beginning of the second chapter.

⁴J. Burrow, op. cit., pp. 23-4.

He also swears a "trawþe" with Bercilak over the exchange of fortunes (1108). And by the end of the poem, we see that these "trawþeȝ" grow together into the one larger Truth which the pentangle on his shield symbolizes:

Hit is a synyne þat Salamon set sumquyle
In bytoknyng of trawþe.

(ll. 625-26)

Mr. Burrow glosses this "trawþe" as "integrity", "righteousness", "faith" (pp. 43-5). He excludes as irrelevant the Branch III sense in the OED article, of "spiritual reality". Holy Church invokes this sense of the word in Piers Plowman, as does Chaucer in his poem Truth. But there is no need to exclude this sense; indeed the mere presence of the pilgrimage theme suggests its relevance, though this sense may not always be primary.

How well Gawain fulfils the Truth of his shield depends on how well he keeps first the tryst at the Green Chapel and then the agreement with the lord of the castle. And likewise, from the Green Chapel he bears away the green and gold girdle, which becomes the token of where in "trawþe" he has failed:

Þis is þe token of untrawþe þat I am tan inne,
(l. 2509)

Gawain's pilgrimage begins when he arms himself to fulfil his "trawþe" at the Green Chapel. Several stanzas depict the richness and completeness of his armour, and especially of his shield with the pentangle of Solomon on the outside and on the inside, the image of the Virgin (649). As I have said, each piece bears the significance of the scriptural armour: the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and so forth. And on his pilgrimage Gawain must sleep "in his ymes" (729), because as a stranger everywhere, he encounters foes. He encounters them at each bank-- "wormeȝ", "wolves", "wodwes", "bulleȝ", "bereȝ", "boreȝ", and "etaymeȝ" (720-3). And the setting for the pilgrimage is wild. There are cliffs and naked rocks; the winter is cold, the rain freezing. There is a deep forest of huge oaks and hazels and hawthornes and ragged moss (740-5). Thus he leaves the high court of Arthur on

All Souls' Day and travels till Christmas Eve, when as an answer to his prayers the marvelous castle appears.

The pilgrimage does not end here, though Gawain is unarmed and though the castle which seems "pared out of papure" (802), suggests at first perhaps the celestial city.¹ Indeed, the castle also suggests a diabolical place, when we consider how quickly and eagerly Gawain is "dispoyled" of his armour of God (826-8; 860-1), and too, how fiercely Bercilak is described, with his red-brown beard and fiery hue (844-7). When Gawain makes the new agreement with Bercilak, his temptations really begin. He is tempted now (as I have said) to be either discourteous to the lady or false to the lord (1773-5), and through the three days of the trial runs the metaphor of the hunt. In general this is the hunt where Satan chases the pilgrim, as in The Pilgrimage, but specifically it is the hunt of Venus, the enemy of chastity. Thus while the generally ominous tone runs throughout the third fit as Bercilak hunts down his beasts, there is the specific threat of the lovely lady as she hunts her prey, Sir Gawain. The connection each day between Gawain and the creature is clear². On the first day the deer is frightened:

At þe fyrst quethe of þe quest quaked þe wylde;

¹Just as, in the same framework of ideas, Arthur's somewhat immature court suggests perhaps the city of the world which Robertson mentions as the place of the pilgrim's departure.

²cf. Burrow, op. cit., pp. 86-9, 97-8. He does not find this argument convincing, except in the third day's parallel between Gawain and the fox. Burrow also suggests that Bercilak's hunt may more closely resemble Diana's good hunt after Idleness, though he admits to the connection between hunting and wooing and though he does not believe that the poet is moralizing about Gawain's being idle.

There is at first (as I said) a certain diabolism about Bercilak and his castle, just as there is about the Green Knight and Chapel. Recollect again how completely Gawain is unarmed at the castle, and then in Malory and Spenser what usually happens to knights when they take off their armour. Recollect also the initial description of Bercilak. Then too, the poet is much more concerned with Venus than with Idleness, as Burrow admits. Though Bercilak's hunts are full of energy and life, there is too much suggestion of danger about his whole castle for these hunts not to recall the hunts of Venus and of Satan. And at the least, we can say that the cutting up of the slain deer (1319 ff.) and the hewing off of the boar's head (1607) and the presenting of the head to Gawain (1633), all make poignant the "doom" he expects at the Green Chapel.

Der drof in þe dale, doted for drede,
(ll. 1150-51)

And Gawain is also timid, and he tries to hide in feigned sleep (1185-90), and then crosses himself in fear:

And sayned hym, as bi his saþe þe saver to worthe,
with hande.
(ll. 1202-03)

Then, bolder like the boar, he welcomes the lady and defends himself well:

Bot he defended hym so fayr þat no faut semed,
(l. 1551)

And last, he accepts the girdle, and like the fox he is subtle and full of guile. By accepting the girdle, he hopes to avoid his doom. And this parallels quite closely the fox's movements:

Renaud com richchande þur} a roþe greve,
And alle þe rabel in a res ry}t at his hele}.
þe wyþe wat} war of þe wylde, and warly abides,
And brayde} out þe bry}t bronde, and at þe best caste}.
And he schunt for þe scharp, and schulde haf arered;
A rach rapes hym to, ry}t er he my}t,
(ll. 1898-1903)

The "schunt" is fatal for the fox, and nearly so for Gawain (2280).¹ Gawain's trial on his pilgrimage is of chastity and courtesy, and he reaches Truth in as far as he is able to cut a path between unchastity on the one side, and discourtesy on the other.

Just as the theme of the pilgrimage of man toward Truth runs through Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, so it runs through the translations of Thomas Malory, and in particular The Tale of the Sankgreal. Like the Sir Gawain of the poem, Lancelot and Bors and Galahad and the rest are first of all actual legendary knights. But the idea of knighthood on earth symbolizes or reflects the perfect rule of the heavenly host of angels,² to which perfection in turn these knights on earth aspire.

¹H. L. Savage, The "Gawain"-Poet, (Chapel Hill, 1956) p. 37. Savage finds the connexion each day quite clear. See pages 31-8, 43-5. I might note that the word "shunt" is used also to describe Gawain's flinch at the first blow (l. 2280).

²For example, see the parallel between David and Christ in Piers Plowman, in

And too, the actual knight-errants become in part metaphors for men who are armed and ready to do battle with evil. In a like manner, Launcelot in the Sankgreal is an archetypal courtly or worldly knight, while Galahad is the heavenly knight who, arriving on Pentecost, "semely and demure as a dove",¹ suggests the divine spirit, the Holy Ghost. And also, Launcelot, who is tied by his sins to the world and the flesh, recalls the Old Law which 'betokenyth a fynde';² and Galahad with his sword of the spirit, the New Law which is faith. Likewise, the armour, while it is real armour, is also the symbolic "armour of light". This is particularly true of Galahad's armour--his helmet of salvation, and his sword of the spirit which he draws from the stone, and his shield of faith with its red cross.

The end of the pilgrimage is the same--Truth, the celestial city, Christ, the Holy Grail. Once the pilgrim-knight has armed himself, he must go "the way on the ryght hande" for that way "betokenyd the hygheway of oure Lorde Jesu Cryst ... and the othir way betokenyth the way of synnars and of myssebelevers".³ On the way he does battle with the seven sins, as at the Castle of Maidens where, according to the hermit, "the seven knyghtes betokenyth the seven dedly synnes, ... and the good knyght Galahad ... the Sonne of the Hyghe Fadir".⁴

But again, as in Sir Gawain, chastity is a primary virtue--so much so here that Bors' and Perceval's and Launcelot's struggle to be chaste mirrors most completely their overall struggle against the seven sins, for spiritual health. In this way

the A-text, I, 92-108. Especially,

And crist, kingene king, kniȝtide tene,
Cherubyn and seraphyn, and such sevene and anoȝer;

See also Pearl, 441-4. Edited by E. V. Gordon, (London, 1953).

¹Sir Thomas Malory, op. cit., p. 627.

²ibid., p. 666.

³ibid., p. 646.

⁴ibid., p. 651. See also the metaphor of the devil as a champion whom Christ beats out of heaven. p. 670.

Launcelot is spiritually like an "olde rottyn tre" that is barren because "defouled with lechory".¹ In this way Perceval's struggle with evil and the devil comes in the shape of a lady lying down before him naked; a glance at his sword with its red cross makes him reaffirm the ideals of his knighthood, and the lady then reveals herself a fiend as she departs "rorynge and yellynge" with the wind. And in this way, the three who achieve the Holy Grail in the end are the three most chaste, whom the two white bulls and the one with the spot represent:²

The too whyght betokenythe sir Galahad and sir Percivale, for they be maydyns and clene withoute spotte, and the thirde, that had a spotte, signifieth sir Bors de Gaynes, which trespassed but onys in hys virginite. But sithyn he kepyth hymself so wel in chastite that all ys forgyffyn hym and hys myssededys.

At the end Galahad's soul goes immediately to Christ. He is the most pure, never having even been tempted. Perceval, the next purest, dies shortly after. And Bors who carries the one black spot, must return to Arthur's hall. Though he too finds the Grail, he of the three is most tainted.

The Faerie Queene too contains the theme of man's pilgrimage toward Truth, and this occurrence of the theme witnesses a continuity between the medieval literature and the Elizabethan. The most obvious instance of the pilgrimage is in Book I, throughout which the Red Cross Knight moves towards saintliness and "the new Hierusalem" (X, 57).³ In the tenth canto he is even ready to take up "Pilgrims poore estate" (X, 64). But as each book is a quest for one of the moral virtues, and as the first book is in part a prologue to the whole (holiness is a foundation, as Mr. Fowler says, for the other virtues),⁴ the subsequent quests contain the pilgrimage theme as well.

¹Sir Thomas Malory, op. cit., pp. 656-7.

²ibid., pp. 683-4. I might add that Perceval's sister, as a chaste lady, also achieves the Holy Grail.

³The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser, ed. by J. C. Smith & E. de Selincourt, (London, 1912).

⁴A. Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, (London, 1964) p. 6.

One commonplace setting or element wherein the quests take place, is the wood. As before, it is the wood of the world (I, i, 6-12), the "wandering wood" with birds and groves and Error's den. But at times the wood particularly represents the appetitive instincts, the unbridled bestial lust, and so ties up in this way with the figure of Venus' hunt, as when Timias chases Florimel in the wild forest (III, i, 14-8; iv, 46). One other usual setting is the sea, and this is the sea of Fortune, of which Britomart complains (II, iv, 8-9). Another topos is the armour that each knight bears. It is the scriptural "armour of light", as Spenser himself says in his letter to Raleigh.¹ Each knight wears his armour to combat evil: thus Arthur whose armour is elaborately described (I, vii, 29 ff.), can defeat the giant Pride and strip Duessa. And conversely, when a knight does not have his armour on, he falls when he fights Pride unarmed.

But beside these topoi, the pilgrimage theme in the Faerie Queene undergoes a notable expansion. This expansion is in the possible ways a pilgrim-knight may reach his goal, Truth. In Book I the Red Cross Knight, the pilgrim, reaches saintliness when he defeats the dragon through the grace of the well and the tree of life, and when he then plights his troth to Una. Una is, allegorically, simplicity, light, faith, truth; as opposed to Duessa who is duplicity, darkness, falsehood.² The betrothal and ensuing marriage is in the first place the wedding of a pilgrim-knight to his lady, in the second, the wedding of the pilgrim-knight to Truth or Holiness, and in the third, the wedding of Christ to the Church, as in Paul's letter to the Ephesians (5: 23-33). Here the Red Cross Knight becomes a saint, Holiness, and also a kind of Christ who defeats Satan by defeating the dragon in the three-day battle, harrows Hell (as in the Gospel of Nicodemus) to free Adam and Eve,³ and so stands

¹The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser, p. 408.

²A. Fowler, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

³Lewis, op. cit., p. 334.

heir through the marriage, to Adam's kingdom of mankind.

But also, in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, the metaphor of Christ's being married to the Church is an example to husbands and wives:

Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so
let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

5: 24

And the allegory in Book I works this way as well, for on the literal level the plight of troth is the marriage of a knight to his lady. The Red Cross Knight, the pilgrim, reaches Holiness or Truth by a marriage with Una---simplicity, faith---a marriage that is an ideal union because it is a plight of troth. And thus one generation, as it is the inheritor and the successor, saves the other---here the parents, Adam and Eve---from the complete ravagement of headlong mutability and decay, so that through successiveness all approach or partake of the divine minister Nature's¹ ideal of constancy in mutability or continuance in change, and thus all accord with Nature's way of coping with calumniating Time and decay.²

This explanation is not entirely clear. Book I, again, is a prologue, and this idea which is epitomized there is developed in Book III, the pilgrimage-quest for Truth through chastity. Specifically, Britomart's quest is for Artegall, with whom she as the lady-pilgrim-knight of chastity, will be chastely married. Led by providence (iii, 24), she sees his image in that "wondrous myrrhour", and so begins her pilgrimage-quest for Truth and her heavenly ordained spouse (iii, 26). But simple wedding or union is not all her quest involves, for as Merlin shows, her marriage will give birth to a succession of kings. By marriage and generation, two creatures who are limited by Time and decay come into a more lasting harmony: thus "three" is a "marriage number" wherein sundered opposites---here, man and woman---are given unity

¹ Mutability Cantos, VI, 35; VII, 15. Though a subject of God, Nature also is the agent of God, and is far above the gods.

² cf. Yeats' fine expression of this idea in "Meditations in Time of Civil War", especially parts one and three.

and harmony by generation.¹ And thus marriage is a way for a pilgrim-knight to approach Truth.

Unbridled appetite in the Bower of Bliss is sterile, and change for wrong ends opposes the gods and Nature,² and so is an aspect of falsehood:

That all which Nature had establisht first
 In good estate, and in meet order ranged,
 She /Mutability/ did pervert, and all their statutes burst:
 And all the world's faire frame ...
 She alter'd quite, and made them all accurst
 That God had blest;

(Mut. VI, 5)

But Spenser, as Lewis says, is not a dualist. Mutability who is presented here as Rebellion and Sin, can be contained within the larger orderly framework of divine Nature, and so behind the endless contention of Mutability and Nature lies the deeper truth--"that Change is but the mode in which Permanence expresses itself, that Reality (like Adonis) 'is eterne in mutability' ".³ None the less, Spenser makes Mutability the force behind sin:

Ne shee the lawes of Nature onely brake,
 But eke of Justice, and of Policie;
 And wrong of right, and bad of good did make,
 And death for life exchanged foolishlie:
 Since which, all living wights have learn'd to die,
 And all this world is woxen daily worse.
 O pittious worke of MUTABILITIE!
 By which, we all are subject to that curse,
 And death in stead of life have sucked from our Nurse.

(Mut. VI, 6)

In this same way, Proteus, whose cave opposes in part the garden of Adonis and who is "father of false prophecis" (iv, 37), is a recurrence of Duessa and of Archimago

¹Fowler, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-9. I cannot find an adequate gloss in this book for harmony, but I think he means a concord that would always approach an eternal concord as harmony in music tries to approach the eternal harmony of the spheres. Unity of course implies one-ness and Truth. cf. Una.

²Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

³*ibid.*, p. 356. See also R. Ellrodt, Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser, (Travaux D'humanisme et Renaissance) vol. XXXV, 1960, pp. 67-70.

(I, ii, 10), duplicity and deceit,¹ and hence akin to all that opposes Una and Truth.

But the generative garden of Adonis, whose enemy is Time (III, vi, 39), is akin to Nature and Truth. In the garden, Cupid has left Venus to play with Psyche, and each lover knows his mate. Forms there give shape to chaotic matter, so that God's words may be fulfilled--increase and multiply--and so that constancy in generation may compete with Time or Mutability or multiplicity.

Ne when the life decayes, and forme does fade,
Doth it consume, and into nothing go,
But chaunged is, and often altered to and fro.

(III, vi, 37)

Britomart is a lady-pilgrim, and her inevitable chaste and fruitful marriage, then, becomes one way for the pilgrim-knight to approach Truth. By matching the prototype in the garden of Adonis, her marriage fulfils the divine ordinance and also Nature's ideal of constancy in mutability, or of the successiveness that stretches out through the long line of kings, through Time and change, towards peace (iii, 49), towards order and harmony and accord. This is precisely what happens in briefer form in the betrothal of the Red Cross Knight and Una.

The pilgrimage is a struggle for the seven virtues, or for the single dominant virtue of chastity--virginity, or chaste and fruitful marriage--which lead the human soul by means of generation, through Mutability or multiplicity towards simplicity and Truth.

¹cf. Ben Jonson's Volpone, III, vii, 152 ff.

CHAPTER II

MARRIAGE

The goal of the pilgrimage is always Truth--the celestial city, Christ, God. And each of the quests in the Faerie Queene embodies this idea of a pilgrimage, and each approaches in some form Truth. In particular, chastity which (as I have said) embodies this idea, approaches this goal; for as W. L. Renwick says, chastity "is nothing other than truth and honour in the question of sex, sanctified by the spirit of God, Who is Love". The two principles of spiritual love and fleshly love were reconciled for Spenser in the teachings of the Church of England, in the authority of the Marriage Service in the Book of Common Prayer.¹ In this way Spenser's use of chastity and the pilgrimage leads up to the subject I want to consider next--marriage.

Again, Britomart and Artegall's unavoidable chaste and fruitful marriage reflects the ideal described in the garden of Adonis and in the Mutability Cantos, of constancy or continuance in change. "The principle of continuance in change," Renwick says, "is the Venus of Lucretius, presiding over procreation, and representing nothing other than the power of God."² Her house is the heavenly house of forms, whence come the images of beauty:

The house of goodly formes and faire aspects,
Whence all the world derives the glorious
Features of beautie, and all shapes select,
With which high God his workmanship hath deckt;

(III, vi, 12)

To her the plenteous earth gives forth its fruits:

Then doth the daedale earth throw forth to thee
Out of her fruitfull lap abundant flowers,

(IV, x, 45)

¹Edmund Spenser (London, 1925) p. 167.

²ibid., p. 170. See De Rerum Natura, the proem to Book One.

And as she presides over procreation, in her and in Nature, "things" rule over change, maintain themselves in stability, and even work towards their own perfection:

They [all things] are not changed from their first estate;
 But by their change their being doe dilate:
 And turning to themselves at length againe,
 Doe worke their owne perfection so by fate:
 Then over them Change doth not rule and raigne;
 But they raigne over change, and doe their states maintaine.

(VII, vii, 58)

The time shall come, Nature says, when there will be no more change. And in the beginning of the next canto, the poet looks forward to that time when there will be

But stedfast rest of all things firmly stayd
 Upon the pillours of Eternity,

when

... all shall rest eternally
 With Him that is the God of Sabbath hight:
 O that great Sabbath God, graunt me that Sabaoths sight.

(VII, viii, 2)

Chaste and fruitful marriage points towards this time when all shall rest eternally with the Lord of Hosts, when the Many, in other words, shall partake eternally of the One. This Christian idea that mutable things may work their own perfection through change modifies the Platonic idea of the One and the Many. As Robert Ellrodt says, the Christian idea makes Time not a degraded image of eternity but a teleological progress designed by God to bring all created beings to perfection. Ellrodt compares Book IV, prose six, in the Boece with the last stanzas in Spenser's Mutability Cantos.¹ Thus marriage becomes Nature's figure in the world for this eternal concord. Marriage leads towards the One and Truth.

This idea of fruitful marriage as a figure for constancy in mutability is not only in Spenser; it occurs often in Shakespeare, for example in the sonnets where the poet says,

¹op. cit. pp. 68-70 and 91-2. However the idea that mutable things may work their own perfection through nature, that "marriage" may bring what is multiple or many into the harmony of one-ness, is not entirely foreign to Posthous. See III, pr. ii.



From fairest creatures we desire increase,
 That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
 But as the ripper should by time decrease,
 His tender heir might bear his memory: ...

(Sonnet 1)

And frequently, as Robertson says about the Middle Ages, marriage has related significance of being a figure for order, in the individual and in the Church and in society. (In the same way, Lucretius' Venus is a force for peace and order, whom Lucretius calls on in the proem to Book One of De Rerum Natura to placate Mars.) In the individual, "The solution to the problem of love, the force which directs the will which is in turn the source of moral action, is, figuratively, marriage As Thomas Brinton puts it, 'Every soul is either an adulteress with the Devil or a spouse of Christ'. A man either preserves the marriage contracted at baptism, or abuses it. When a man is properly 'married' in this way, the 'marriage' between the spirit and the flesh or the reason and the sensuality within him, is preserved intact, and he is also a part of the 'marriage' between Christ and the Church."¹ Likewise, the bishop is married to his diocese, the priest to his parish, the prince to his people. And in this way Artegall--Justice--is the proper husband for Britomart, for order in the kingdom and in the marriage come together.

Consider briefly John Gower's Confessio Amantis, where appetitive love breeds the seven deadly sins and so breeds division and discord throughout the world, and contrarily where chaste love, which leads to orderly marriage, makes all the world atone together. In the prologue Gower laments that,²

The world is changed overal,
 And therof most in special
 That love is falle into discord
 And sein the regnes ben divided,
 In stede of love is hate guided,

¹ op. cit., pp. 374-5.

² References are to The Complete Works of John Gower, ed. by G. C. Macaulay, (Oxford, 1901).

The werre wol no pes purchace,
 And lawe hath take hire double face,
 So that justice out of her weie
 With rightwisnesse is gon aweie:

(11. 123-32)

Book One begins with the lines:

Naturatus amor nature legibus orbem
Subdit, et unanimes concitat esse feras:
Huius enim mundi Princeps amor esse videtur,
Cuius eget dives, pauper et omnis ope.
Sunt in agone pares amor et fortuna, que cecus
Plebis ad insidias vertit uterque rotas.
Est amor agra salus, vexata quies, pius error,
Bellica pax, vulnus dulce, suave malum.

Love appears both as the appetitive Venus who is always linked with Fortune (see below), and as the Venus of Lucretius who makes the "beasts" of one mind. In Book One we see the pattern emerge. The lover is confessing his sins, each of which his love for his lady makes him commit. For instance Murmur and Complaint are aspects of the deadly sin of Pride, and the lover commits these sins unnaturally against his lady when his fortune in love is bad (I, 1376-92). The confessor tells the tale of Florent (which is an analogue for the Wife of Bath's Tale),

To teche how that obedience
 Mai well fortune a man to love

(I, 1858-59)

The tale is an exemplum meant to cure the sin, and of course the tale ends with a harmonious marriage. Or again, the tale of Constance in Book Two is meant to dissuade the lover from envy, which his disordering love leads him to, and the tale ends with Constance's son becoming the Emperor of Rome. But more important than any single tale is the overall pattern of the prologue and the eight books. The prologue proclaims that the end of the world is near (881-5) because division and disorder have caused manifold evil (967-1016). In the first six books we hear the lover's confession of his sins, each of which, like the Murmur and Complaint, is a kind of evil disorder, or broken bond of Nature, that his imperfect love has brought him to. The confessor urges him through the exempla towards love in accord with the bonds of

Nature, which in turn will order society, as in the tale of Constance, and make it atone together.

Each of the first six books discusses a deadly sin, and from this confessing and purging of the deadly sins we come in the seventh book to an account of Aristotle's education of Alexander. To understand the connexion between this and what has gone before we must make an imaginative jump. In the first place, order in the kingdom of the world and in the little kingdom of man go together:

To teche of vertu thilke reule,
 Hou that a king himself schal reule
 Of his moral condicion
 With worthi disposicion
 Of good livinge in his persone,
 Which is the chief of his corone.

(VII, 1653-58)

If man cleanses himself of the deadly sins, order and unity in the world will prevail. And in this sense Book Seven which discusses the orderly ruling of the world, quite naturally follows books one through six which discuss man's ruling himself in love. (Remember too that Gower dedicates the Confessio to Richard the Second and England [Prologue, 24-5].) Moreover, the apocalyptic tone of the prologue suggests another imaginative link between the first six books and the seventh. The end of the world is near; we are in the seventh age. At the end of this age, the prologue says, each man shall go to heaven or to hell, that is, to eternal peace and accord or to eternal discord (1041-7).

Bot wolde god that now were on
 An other such as Arion,
 Which hadde an harpe of such temprure,
 And therto of so good mesure
 He song, that he the bestes wilde,
 Made of his note tame and milde,
 The Hinde in pes with the Leoun
 And every man upon this ground
 Which Arion that time herde,
 Als wel the lord as the schepherde,
 He broghte hem alle in good acord:

(II. 1052-65)

Book Seven thus perhaps corresponds to the seventh age, and in Book Seven the

education of the true prince is a guide to this perfect accord in the kingdom of the world, which then leads to Book Eight, the eighth age and eternal bliss. Thus Book Eight celebrates marriage, epitomized in the tale of Apollonius of Tyre--marriage in its fullest sense, in the man and in the kingdom (see Pericles below) when all atone together. This pattern in the Confessio Amantis also brings to mind the gospel story of the marriage at Cana (John, 2) which, as Emile Male says, the Middle Ages understood allegorically. "Christ was hidden from the world, as the wine in the water, during the six ages marked by Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, Jechonias and John the Baptist. He revealed Himself in the seventh age, and His reign will last until the Day of Judgment, that is until the beginning of the eighth age which shall have no end."¹ And as in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins (Matt., 25), Christ is also allegorically the bridegroom,² and "marriage" with him in the eighth age is eternal peace and accord. Purging the deadly sins means preserving the proper marriage of the spirit and the flesh, of the reason and the sensuality; and as man thus orders himself he orders society and partakes of the "marriage" between Christ and the Church.

Marriage in the Middle Ages is an important theme, as important as the pilgrimage and particularly so in the poems of Chaucer. And our understanding the figure of marriage in Chaucer, together with our understanding it in Spenser and Gower, may quicken our understanding of Shakespeare, both his comedies and his tragedies.

The first of Chaucer's poems that I want to consider is The Book of the Duchess, where the values of marriage and generation stand as the background and the ultimate consolation. The values are there, as they are everywhere Nature appears,³ for

¹The Gothic Image, translated by Dora Nussey (London, 1961) p. 195.

²ibid., p. 198. Male refers to the interpretation in Walafrid Strabo's Glossa Ordinaria.

³I mean by Nature here the goddess as she appears in the Mutability Cantos or in the Parliament of Birds, as against Edmund's Nature or the Nature in Lydgate's Pilgrimage. (3344-976)

marriage and generation are her particular concerns. Generally the poem works out a consolation for the courtly lover-husband (the Man in Black, John of Gaunt) who grieves over the death of his lady-wife (White, Blanche), and the poem does this by developing the antithesis of Nature and Fortune.¹ Our understanding, however, depends on our making certain imaginative jumps--from the story of Ceys and Alcyone, to the May morning and the hunt, to the dialogue with the Man in Black.

The antithesis of Nature and Fortune appears first in the story of Ceys and Alcyone. Alcyone's world is thrown out of order by the death of her husband:

For sorwe ful nygh wood she was,
(l. 104)

She cannot sleep, and thus she exists in an "unnatural" state.

For nature wolde nat suffyse
To noon erthly creature
Nat longe tyme to endure
Withoute slep and be in sorwe.
(18-21)

She seeks consolation--a return to orderly nature. In the book's description of her husband's death (and the book is the appropriate book for the narrator to pick up, he who also exists in the unnatural sleepless state:

That clerkes had in olde tyme,
And other poets, put in rime
To rede, and for to be in minde,
While men loved the lawe of kinde.
(ll. 53-56)

We see that the cause of her grief was Fortune, described metaphorically (here as before) as a ship-wrecking, tempest-driven sea.

This king wol wenden over see
Such a tempest gan to rise
That brak her mast and made it falle,
And clefte her ship, and dreinte hem alle,
(ll. 67-72)

After hearing the husband's words, Alcyone (like the narrator) falls asleep--returns to the natural, ordered existence.

¹See J. MacQueen, "As You Like It and the Medieval Literary Tradition," F.M.L.S., I; 3 (July, 1965) pp. 216 ff.

The implications of the antithesis and the nature of the consolation are more developed in the next part, the narrator's dream vision. The dream begins with the birds' harmony on the May morning (295-320). This is the same singing that the dreamer in the Romance of the Rose hears on a May morning outside the walled garden (49-131), and the same harmony of Nature that the dreamer in the Parliament of Fowls hears on entering the park (190-200). Of the harmony in the Parliament Robertson says, "We may contrast with it the 'swogh' of sighs which permeates the Temple of Venus".¹ Likewise, here we may contrast the harmony and natural accord of the birds with the horn of the hunt and the ensuing noise:

Me thoghte I herde an hunte blowe
 T'assay hys horn, and for to knowe
 Whether hyt were clere or hors of soun.
 And I herde goynge, bothe up and down,
 Men, hors, houndes, and other thyng;
 And all men speken of huntyng,
 How they wolde slee the hert with strengthe.

(ll. 345-51)

The hunt of course is the hunt of Venus and of courtly love; but it is also the hunt of Fortune, for Fortune and Venus are not separate here. As John MacQueen says, "It is in terms of courtly love ... that Fortune is so often linked with Venus; together they form a kind of deity of courtly lovers, and, as in the Romance (4353-64), the attributes of the one tend to be given to the other".² MacQueen also notes that poems concerning Venus or Fortune belong alternatively to the courtly love and the Fall of Princes tradition. And this is precisely how the hunt figures in The Book of the Duchess; for White is the hart, and her allegorical escape from the hunt (381, 539-41, 1309-13) is on the one hand an affirmation that she exists not merely in the realm of Fortune but in the encompassing orderly "mixed forest" of Nature:

And many an hert and many an hynde
 Was both before me and behynde.

¹op. cit., p. 132.

²op. cit., p. 219. References to the Romance are to Chaucer's version. See also H. R. Patch, The Goddess Fortuna in Medieval Literature (Harvard, 1927). See also Gower's Confessio Amatis, Book One, proem and ll. 39-60.

Of founes, soures, bukkes, does
 Was ful the woode, and many roes,
 (ll. 427-30)

Or on the other, her escape is her death:

"She ys ded!" "Nay!" "Yis, be my trouthe!"
 "Is that youre los? Be God, hyt is routhe!"
 And with that word ryght anoon
 They gan to strake forth; al was doon,
 For that tyme, the hert-huntyng.
 (ll. 1309-13)

But Fortune's power grows small in this larger perspective: White (the hart) escapes into Nature's larger orderly "mixed forest".

Like the hunt, the Man in Black with his sorrow and his complaint in rhymed verse (463-4) contrasts sharply with the birds' harmony and the general orderly background of Nature's forest.

Hit was gret wonder that Nature
 Myght suffre any creature
 To have such sorwe, and be not ded.
 (ll. 467-69)

The Man in Black is under Fortune's control because he has always devoted himself in idleness to Love (785-98), and his world as a result is upside down.¹

My song ys turned to pleynynge
 (l. 599)

Myn hele ys turned into seknesse,
 In drede ys al my sykernesse;
 To derke ys turned all my lyght,
 My wyt ys foly, my day ys nyght,
 My love ys hate, my slep wakyng,
 (ll. 607-11)

Nature's forest, again, is orderly, and as the forest is still the wood of the world, Nature's world is orderly.

For hit was, on to beholde,
 As thogh the erthe envye wolde
 To be gayer than the heven,
 To have more floures, swiche seven,
 As in the welken sterres bee.
 Hyt had forgete the poverttee
 That wynter, thorgh hys colde morwes,

¹J. MacQueen, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-7. See also Curtius, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-8.

Had mad hyt suffre, and his sorwes, ...
(11. 405-12)

So grete trees, so huge of strengthe,
Of fourty or fifty fadme lengthe,
Clene withoute howgh or stikke,
With croppes brode, and eke as thikke--
(11. 421-24)

Moreover, White was the pattern and masterpiece of Nature; she was as bright as the summer's sun (821); Truth himself found in her his "maner principal", his resting place:

Nature had swich lest
To make that fair, that trewly she
Was hir chef patron of beaute
And chef ensample of al hir werk,
And moustre;
(11. 908-12)

Trouthe hymself, over al and al
Had chose hys maner principal
In hir, that was his restyng place.
(11. 1003-05)

She kept the Man in Black from idleness, for he busied himself making and singing songs. She ordered his world, made it harmonious and natural. And the triumph of Nature rests on this ordering of White and the Man in Black,¹ in the Man in Black's maturing from upside down courtly love to orderly and harmonious marriage.

She White took me in hir governaunce.
Therwyth she was alway so trewe.
Our joye was ever ylyche newe;
Oure hertes wern so evene a payre,
That never nas that oon contrayre
To that other, for no woo
And thus we lyved ful many a yere
So wel, I kan nat telle how.
(11.1286-97)

Thus despite Fortune's winning the game of chess (618-9) and the tragedy in the Fall of Princes tradition, Nature and Truth triumph in the orderly creation, and in White, and in the ordering marriage which is clearly designed (though the Man in

¹J. MacQueen, *op. cit.*, p. 216. I must admit that the marriage depends somewhat on the traditional correspondence between White and Blanche, and the Man in Black and John of Gaunt.

Black fails to see this) to be the instrument for the generation of Nature's and Truth's beauty. The consolation, which is clear to the reader, rests on this triumph of Nature and of Truth which envelopes and overshadows the triumph of Fortune, on this ideal of a marriage which is to generate beauty, harmony, and "kind".

The value of marriage is perhaps clearer in Chaucer's allegorical Parliament of Fowls. The Parliament sets out to put courtly love and marriage in perspective, and again, to understand the poem we must understand the implicit links between its parts, particularly between the introduction which includes the narrator's reading, and the subsequent dream vision. The dream-journey of Scipio, like the journey of Troilus to the eighth sphere, is a means for gathering perspective. Troilus hears the music of the spheres, sees the earth embraced by the changing, mutable sea, and laughs at worldly vanity (Troilus and Cressida, V, 1811-25). Scipio hears the music

That cometh of thilke speres thryse thre,
That welles is of musik and melodye
In this world here, and cause of armonye.

(ll. 61-63)

and sees the "lytel erthe", and learns that "commune profit" is an ultimate and eternal value:

Know thyself first immortal,
And loke ay besyly thow werche and wysse
To commune profit, and thow shalt not mysse
To comen swiftly to that place deere
That ful of blysse is and of soules cleere

(ll. 73-77)

A somnium, as J. A. W. Bennett says, is "that special kind of dream that veils with ambiguity the true meaning of the information offered".¹ Our understanding the narrator's somnium about marriage and courtly love depends on our understanding how it links up with this foreshadowing Somnium Scipionis.

If we understand the two major goddesses in the poem, we will begin to see this link between marriage and "commune profit". The antithesis of Nature and Fortune in

¹The Parlement of Foules, (Oxford, 1957) p. 52.

The Book of the Duchess may have seemed a simple duality. In the Parliament Nature is contrasted with Venus. (And again we do not need to make the distinction between Venus and Fortune, for Venus here causes the pattern of tragic love (279-94); consider once more the equation in the Romance of the Rose:

It is of Love, as of Fortune,
That chaungeth ofte, and nyl contune;
Which whilom wol on folk smyle,
And glowmbe on hem another while;
Now freend, now foo, thow shalt hir feel.
For in a twynklyng turneth hir wheel;

(ll. 4353-58)

But Nature and Venus here are not in simple opposition; Nature is the more embracing concept, the equivalent perhaps of the Venus of Lucretius (Aeneadum genetrix), the Venus of generation and goodly forms in Book III of the Faerie Queene. The Venus in the Parliament however is limited, and her realm is sterile courtly love which has its meinie of abstractions--"Plesaunce," "Delyt," "Beute," "Flaterye," "Desyr," and so forth--recalling the tradition of the Garden of the Rose. Or at the least, she is limited as "Cytherea" to appetitive love:

Cytherea! thow blysfyl lady swete,
That with thy fyrbrond dauntest whom the lest,

(ll. 113-14)

She resides in the dark temple till the sun goes down (266); she and "the bittere goddesse Jelosye" cause the discordant sighs (246-52); she causes the pattern of unfruitful tragic love (279-94). There can be no doubt that the black verses on the gate apply to her and to the pattern of love she engenders:

"Thorgh me men gon ...
Unto the mortal strokes of the spere
Of which Disdayn and Daunger is the gyde,
Ther nevere tre shal fruyt ne leves bere.
This strem you ledeth to the sorweful were
There as the fish in prysoun is al drye;
Th' eschewing is only the remedye!"

(ll. 134-40)

Her vicissitudes resemble a wrestling match (165). Her love is sterile--as unnatural as a fish out of water. It is limited to this world, and it leads to death.

The verses in gold, on the other hand, clearly apply to Nature:

"Thorgh me men gon into that blysfyl place
Of hertes hele and dedly woundes cure;
Thorgh me men gon unto the the welle of grace,
There grene and lusty May shal evere endure.
This is the way to al good aventure.

(ll. 127-31)

And already the correspondence between the Somnium Scipionis and the narrator's dream, a correspondence by modification and by mirroring, begins to appear. Nature and her way correspond to "commune profit" in that Nature's way, like "commune profit", leads to the well of grace, the cure of deadly wounds, and that "blysfyl place" (127-8, 47-8, 75-7). For Nature is

the vicaire of the almyghty Lord,
That hot, cold, hevye, lyght, moyst, and dreye
Hath knyght by evene noubres of acord,

(ll. 379-81)

She resembles the sun (299). Hers is the park with its orderly mixed forest where the birds sing and reproduce the harmony of the spheres:

On every bow the bryddes herde I synge,
With voys of aungel in here armonye;
Some besyede hem here bryddes forth to brynge;

(ll. 190-92)

Of instruments of strenges in acord
Herde I so pleye a ravyschyng swetnesse,
That God that makere is of al and lord,
Ne herde nevere beter, as I gesse.

(ll. 197-200)

And on Valentine's Day these birds come to her on her hill of flowers, to choose their mates. Nature encompasses the Venus of courtly and appetitive love (though this Venus is not in accord with her and common profit). As Nature's garden or park includes the Temple of Venus with its tragic love, so her retinue of birds includes the turtle-dove who advises,

Though that his lady everemore be straunge,
Yit lat hym serve hire ever, til he be ded.

(ll. 584-85)

Advices in other words unfruitful "service". Between Nature and Venus there is a

difference in proportion or perspective. Venus is sterile, tragic, discordant. Nature is fruitful, in harmony with common profit in that both lead to Truth and the blissful place.

For Nature's purpose is to join the birds in "evene noubres of accord", and the harmonious song of her garden rests on the generation of these marriages.¹ Like White, the formel eagle is Nature's masterpiece and pattern:

of shap the gentilleste
That evere she Nature among hire werkes fond,
The moste benygne and the goodlieste.
In hire was evere vertu at his reste,
(ll. 373-76)

And clearly Nature would like to join her to the royal eagle.

"If I were Resoun, certes, thanne wolde I
Conseyle yow the royal tercel take, ...;
As for the gentilleste and moste worthi,
Which I have wrought so wel to my plesaunce,
That to yow hit oughte to been a suffisaunce."
(ll. 633-37)

The royal eagle's proposal of service to a sovereign lady--a proposal of courtly love--does not make Nature change her mind about his being the proper mate for the formel. He is equal to the formel in kind (546-53) and there is no hint that he is purely appetitive in his love, as the other two eagles who are not the formel's equal, perhaps are. But the royal eagle's proposal of courtly love does cause the formel to reply in kind. Like a proper courtly lady (for instance White in The Book of the Duchess [1240-86] who also makes her lover wait a year [1258]) the formel blushes and says she will not serve Venus or Cupid yet "by no manere weye". (653). This means that she will not indulge in adultery, and it also means that she will not yet marry. She will remain a virgin for a year. And the implication is that the delay will perhaps mature the royal eagle,² as the delay matures the Man in Black, keeping him from idleness, busying him with making and singing songs (1155-9). In the delay's

¹Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

²Bennett, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

not upsetting Nature and in the tercelet's (who appears as Nature's spokesman) defence of the royal eagle and of his love against the disruptive raucous noise of the lower birds (596-602), it is clear that the year of service is going to lead to the fruitful marriage of the royal eagle and the formel, a marriage thus in accord with Nature's ideal of common profit. As in The Book of the Duchess and (below) in the Franklin's Tale, service matures into marriage.

Nature in the Parliament of Birds is the same great dame Nature who in the Faerie Queene sits on Arlo Hill and rules over Mutability:

So hard it is for any living wight
 All her array and vestiments to tell,
 That old Dan Geffrey (in whose gentle spright
 The pure will head of Poesie did dwell)
 In his Foules Parley durst not with it mel,

((VII, vii, 9)

Here as there, her proper concern is with all orders of creation, that she may knit them into that even harmony. Some of the birds, as the tercelet points out (599), are out of their element with courtly love. But in the park the song of the birds which comes so near that divine music of the spheres, depends on orderly and fruitful union:

On every bow the bryddes herde I synge, ...
 Some besyede hem here bryddes forth to brynge;

(11. 191-92)

The song is about St. Valentine's day and the orderly union, kind by kind, of Nature's meinie.

"Wel han they cause for to gladen ofte,
 Sith ech of hem recovered hath hys make ,..."

(11. 687-88)

Nature's concern is the common profit which will lead things on earth to Truth, that eternal "blysfyl place". Generative marriage here as in the Mutability Cantos, is the means by which things in Time approach that perfection.

Chaucer uses the theme of marriage in his later poems, and though G. L. Kittredge may properly define a "marriage group" within the Canterbury Tales,¹ the theme of

¹"Chaucer's Discussion of Marriage," M. P. IX, (1911-12) pp. 435-67.

marriage itself is more pervasive. Indeed, the Knight's Tale in its treatment of love is almost an extension of the Parliament of Birds. For the Knight's Tale rests on Nature's idea in the Parliament of things working through "commune profit" towards peace and that blissfulness, or on Nature's idea in the Mutability Cantos of things working through the pattern of continuance in change towards peace and perfection, towards the Lord God of Sabaoth, Truth. And in the Knight's Tale it is almost as if Chaucer does not stop with the birds' debate, but shows us (though not at all psychologically) what happens after the formel's year of virginity, and the royal eagle's maturity.

Theseus' Chain of Love speech is a key to understanding the poem:

The Firste Moevere of the cause above,
 When he first made the faire cheyne of love,
 Greet was th' effect, and heigh was his entente
 For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
 The fyr, the ayr, the water, and the lond
 In certeyn boundes, that they may nat flee.
 ... stablised in this wrecched world adoun
 Certyne dayes and duracioun
 To al that is engendred in this place,
 (ll. 2987-97)

Thanne may men by this order wel discernen
 That thilke Moevere stable is and eterne
 That every part dirryveth from his hool;
 For nature hath not taken his bigynnyng
 Of no partie or cantel of a thyng,
 But of a thyng that parfit is and stable,
 Descendynge so til it be corrumpable.
 And therefore, of his wise purveiaunce,
 He hath so wel biset his ordinaunce,
 That spesces of thynges and progressiouns
 Shullen enduren by successiouns,
 And nat eterne, withouten any lye.
 (ll. 3003-15)

The speech goes on for about eighty more lines, but in this much the pattern of order, change under the eternal stability of the First Mover is clear. And too, the pattern of change is clear throughout the poem. For instance, Arcite's world is thrown upside down by his appetitive love (1377); his complexion changes and his face is disfigured (1400 ff.); and these changes Venus (the Venus of appetitive love) and her constant vicissitudes cause (1528-39). Arcite, in Palamon's words, is changed into

a traitor (1580-86); and each of the courtly lovers is changed into a hunter who pursues the other as if he were a lion or bear, reasoning "he moot be deed, or I", till Theseus appears; and then they confess to him and even beg death (1733-39). Similarly, the wood becomes the place for the lists (1862), and then the place for funeral (2860). And in the end Palamon and Arcite have gone a progression from friends (1012, 1161), to mortal enemies, to again friends (2783-97).

Theseus plays an active part in the changes. In the Middle Ages he has a reputation as a hero and a wise leader.¹ Here his hunt is the "good hunt" of Diana; it is directed by the "purveiaunce" of God (1665); and his appearance in the wood stops the noble but decidedly bestial fighting (1656-59) and precipitates the confession. Further, Theseus tries to change Palamon and Arcite from his enemies (1747) into his friends.

Ne make werre upon me nyght ne day,
But been my freendes
(ll. 1823-24)

He moves from a judgment by law which would mean the lovers' death (1744-47), to mercy

Fy
Upon a lord that wol have no mercy
But been a leon, bothe in word and dede,
(ll. 1773-75)

He turns the trial by mortal combat (1857 ff.) into a contest that he hopes will not destroy their "gentil blood" (2538-42). And he tries to stop the malice between the warring sides and to inspire brotherhood and peace (2731-34). The poem generally moves with Theseus as an instrument, towards reconciliation and orderly peace.

The gods under the First Mover however--Venus, Mars, Diana, Saturn--are hostile. As the goddess of courtly love, Venus is again linked with Fortune and is shown floating on a large sea (1956) which points her mutability. Mars is Infortune (2021); war and treason, "Ire" and "Felonye" and "Drede", appear around him (1995-2002). In the temple of chaste Diana, "care and woe" stand out in such details as:

¹Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-61.

Ther saugh I Attheon an hert ymaked,
 For vengeance that he saugh Diane al naked;
 I saugh how that his houndes have hym caught
 And freeten hym,

(11. 2065-68)

Likewise, Saturn describes himself:

Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by the throte,
 The murmure and the cherles rebellyng,
 The groynynge, and the pryvee empoysonyng;
 I do vengeance

(11. 2458-61)

This world is a thoroughfare of woe (2847), a foul prison (3061). Generally the world under the First Mover is deterministic; there is no explicit Christian God, except perhaps in as far as Theseus is under God's "purveiaunce". But even in this hostile world, it must be seen that the movement is towards reconciliation and orderly peace, though the instruments of this movement (for instance the infernal fury (2684)) may be at times ignoble or degrading:

Now weep namoore, I [Saturn] shall doon diligence
 That Palamon, that is thyn owne knyght,
 Shal have his lady, as thou hast him hight.
 Though Mars shal helpe his knyght, yet natheless
 Bitwixe yow ther moot be som tyme pees,

(11. 2470-74)

The warring elements in the poem move towards reconciliation and orderly peace, and corresponding with this is a movement from appetitive courtly love which causes strife and discord (here as before), to blissful and harmonious marriage. In the beginning of the poem Theseus fights the Amazons, conquers them, and marries their queen. The Amazons, Robertson says, are figures for unbridled appetite.¹ It is a

¹Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-5. Perhaps it is in this sense that the Knight's words, that women in general and Emilie in particular are the followers of Fortune (2681-2), should be understood. Women need to be bridled; unbridled, they follow the mutations of Fortune and courtly love. With reference to the word Femenye (below) see Lindsay's Ane Pleasant Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis (The Poetical Works of Sir David Lindsay, ed. by D. Laing, (Edinburgh, 1879)) lines 1121-2:

Ye se the King is yit effeminate
 And gydit be Dame Sensualitie,

See also Confessio Amantis, VII, 4313-43.

marriage between the spirit and the flesh, the reason and the sensuality. Whether or not this is exactly true, Theseus does overcome them with reasonableness:

... with his wysdom and his chivalrie,
He conquered al the regne of Femenye,
(11. 865-6)

And references to Theseus' movement from war to marriage occur throughout. When he partakes of Diana's hunt, the Knight says,

For after Mars he serveth now Dyane.
(1. 1682)

That is, chastity. And later as Theseus recollects the time of his own service as a courtly lover (1814), he implies perhaps the connexion^{ct} between strife or Mars and courtly love, whose realm he has left for peace and chaste marriage. This progression of Theseus' which begins the poem, stands as an epitome and a paradigm, and it mirrors the subsequent movement from courtly love, which breeds discord, to Palamon's marriage which is in "alle blisse and melodye" (3097). The implication of those words should be clear.

To begin with, Arcite and Palamon are courtly lovers. They see Emilie in the garden on the May morning, and their love is kindled by their senses, particularly their eyes.¹ Their appetitive love is also clear in the mad bestiality of their fight in the mixed forest (1656 ff.) and again in the lists (2628 ff.); for though both lovers are likened to noble animals (lion, tiger, and boar), the adjectives "cruel" and "wood" emphasize the madness and animality. But of course Arcite and Palamon are distinct as types--the hot lover and the worshipper of a goddess (1156-60) the fierce Arcite and the "gentil" Palamon (2797). They are distinct too, not so much in the deities they pray to (for Venus is as hostile and as much a cause of strife here as Mars) but in the ways they pray. Though Palamon wants to be a "servant" and to war against chastity (2236), he is a "pilgrim" (2214), and he invokes Venus seriously as the "spouse of Vulcan" (2222). And though his purpose here may be the same as Arcite's, his manner is different, for Arcite invokes Mars by

¹See Robinson's note to line 1096.

recollecting Mars' lechery and by making of it a kind of locker-room joke. Remember, he says,

thilke hoote fir
 In which thow whilom brendest for desir,
 Whan that thow usedest the beautee
 Of faire, yonge, fresshe Venus free, ...
 Whan Vulcanus hadde caught the in his las,
 And foond thee liggyng by his wyf, allas!
 (11. 2383.90)

Arcite dies because, implicit in the poem's movement towards peace, his wrath must give way to the "gentil man", his hot fire to the blissful and harmonious marriage. The movement is not psychological but conceptual. In Palamon the transition can be made from courtly love to marriage. And thus Arcite's death echoes the description in the Chain of Love speech, of how things decline till they be corrupt, so that progressions of things may endure by succession:

The clothered blood, for any lechecraft,
 Corrupteth, and is in his bouk ylaft, ...
 (11. 2745-46)

The pipes of his longes gonne to swelle,
 And every lacerte in his brest adoun
 Is shent with venym and corrupcioun....
 (11. 2752-54)

Nature hath now no dominacioun.
 (1. 2758)

Things endure by succession, by corruption and growth (3010-14).

The end of Theseus' Chain of Love speech (3015-93) also reflects this movement from war and sorrow and courtly love to peace and joy and orderly marriage, the movement which first appeared when Theseus subdued and married the queen of the Amazons. Arcite has died with honor, Theseus says, and now let us change sorrow into joy (3071-72). Palamon has "served" for a long time, he tells Emilie; now take him "for housbonde and for lord" (3081). Appetitive courtly love has caused strife; peace and joy and order come back with marriage.¹ Recollect the Parson's words:

Now comth the remedie agayns Leccherie, and that is

¹Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

generally chastitee and continence, that restreyneth alle the desordeynee moevynges that comen of fleshly talentes. (915)

Lechery becomes a figure for disorder and, in the getting of bastards, for multiplicity and the proliferation of evil. Chastity contrarily becomes a figure for order, continuance in generation, and one-ness. For Theseus invokes the Chain of Love, the celestial Venus whom Lucretius asks to placate Mars' strife.¹ Courtly love declines and falls away, and marriage grows in its place. And again, the values which the poem comes to are clearly in accord (as in the Parliament) with the Chain of Love and the celestial harmony, for the marriage enfolds "alle blisse and melodye".

The Clerk's Tale also roots itself in the theme of marriage and common profit. Walter marries Griselda not because he is appetitive, guided by the senses, but because he sees her virtue: True, she is "fair ynogh to sighte" (209), but he looks without the "wantown lookyng of folye" (236), and therefore sees her lack of idleness and her grace:

But for to speke of vertuous beautee,
Thanne was she on the faireste under sonne;
For povreliche yfostred up was she,
No likerous lust was thurgh hire herte yronne.
Wel offer of the welle than of the tonne
She drank, and for she wolde vertu plese,
She knew wel labour, but noon ydelese.

(ll. 211-17)

And so the marriage precipitates common profit as common profit means order in the land:

... whan that the cas required it,
The commune profit koude she redresse.
Ther nas discord, rancour, ne hevynesse
In al that land, that she ne koude apese,
And wisely bryngge hem alle in reste and ese.

(ll. 430-34)

Moreover, the marriage precipitates common profit as marriage and common profit mean continuance in change. Lordship in Saluzzo is hereditary, and thus in Saluzzo (as in the Faerie Queene where Britomart and Artegall's marriage will give birth to the

¹Compare also the proem to Book III of the Troilus, or the song of Troilus that ends that book (1744-71).

successive line of kings that will lead towards peace) order and right rule depend on the marriage's fruitfulness, so that the successors may inherit the responsibility and perpetuate the orderly peaceful rule. Walter's people enjoy his rule and live in happiness;

"... so wel us liketh yow
 And al youre werk, and evere nan doon, that we
 Ne koude nat us self devysen how
 We myghte lyven in moore felicitee, ..."
 (ll. 106-09)

The Clerk blames Walter in the beginning of the tale, only in that he has not looked to the future--has not married:

I blame hym thus, that he considered nought
 In tyme comynge what myghte hym bityde,
 But on his lust present was al his thought,
 As for to hauke and hunte on every syde.
 Wel ny alle othere cures leet he slyde,
 And eek he nolde--and that was worst of alle--
 Wedde no wyf, for nought that may bifalle.
 (ll. 78-84)

The people want him to "bow under the blisful yoke" of marriage (113-15), for they are worried that if he dies his line will slack and the land fall under "strange" rule:

"For if it so bifelle, as God forbede,
 That thurgh youre deeth youre lynage sholde slake,
 And that a straunge successour sholde take
 Youre heritage, O, wo were us alyve!
 Wherefore we pray you hastily to wyve."
 (ll. 136-40)

Clearly the people want a succession of kind in the fullest sense--a continuance of peace and harmony through the change and perpetuity of generation. And indeed, through marriage this happens. Through marriage, Walter matures from something of a careless child of Fortune (69) to a wise and careful ruler. His daughter is as fair as Griselda, some say even fairer (988); this and her marriage to a worthy lord (1131) clearly mark her virtue. The son, unlike some children who are not as worthy as their parents (156), will be Walter's heir. And so the son succeeds the father, rules the land in order and peace, and too, cares for the future continuance

of kind:

His Walter's sone succedeth in his heritage
 In reste and pees, after his fader day
 And fortunat was eek in mariage.

(ll. 1135-37)

As Britomart's chaste and fruitful marriage mirrors Nature's ideal in the Mutability Cantos and leads through continuance in change towards "perfection" and the God of Sabaoth, so the marriage of Walter and Griselda leads towards that Truth.

In another sense, too, the marriage in the Clerk's Tale approaches Truth. When Robertson says (see above) that people who are truly married preserve the marriage contracted at baptism, the marriage of the spirit and the flesh, the reason and the sensuality, and thus partake of the marriage between Christ and the Church; he is setting forth a familiar concept that finds its roots in the Pauline epistles:

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands,
 as unto the Lord. Eph. 5: 22

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved
 the church, ... 5: 25

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies....
 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh.

5: 28-9

The marriage of Walter and Griselda, as James Sledd suggests,¹ also reflects this concept. The Clerk himself is quick to point out the allegorical connexion^{ct} between the mortal husband and God:

For, sith a woman was so pacient
 Unto a mortal man, wel moore us oughte
 Receyven al in gree that God us sent;
 For greet skile is, he preeve that he wroghte.

(ll. 1149-52)

... for certes he,
 Er we were born, knew aloure freletee;
 And foroure beste is al his governaunce.
 Lat us thanne lyve in vertuous suffraunce.

(ll. 1159-62)

And throughout, Chaucer has strengthened the religious implications already present

¹"The Clerk's Tale: The Monsters and the Critics," M.P., LI (1953-54) pp. 73-82.

in his sources.¹ When the people ask Walter to marry, they do so

... with humble entente, buxomly,
Knelynge upon hir knees ful reverently,
Hym thonken all; ...

(11. 186-88)

Griselda kneels reverently before her lord twice, first when he comes to marry her (292), and again when he asks her to serve in his house (949-52). Similarly, she emphasizes the difference between herself and Walter--between her unworthiness and his honor (355-60, 818-19, 823-24, 829, 881), between her poverty and his magnificence (814-17). She will die to please him (665-67). The allusion to the Book of Job 1: 21,

" ... Naked out of my fadres hous," quod she,
"I cam, and naked moot I turne agayn"

(11. 871-72)

further strengthens the Christian overtones and her position as a mortal who is taken and tried by God. And the Clerk also refers to Job 40: 4; 42: 1-6 in praising her humility:

Men speke of Job, and moost for his humblesse, ...
Though clerkes preise wommen but a lite,
Ther kan no man in humblesse hym acquite
As woman kan, ne kan been half so trewe

(11.932-37)

Griselda in her marriage with Walter is as patient, humble, and true as Job in his trials by a stern God. All these details make clear the Christian implication--the implication that Griselda and Walter's marriage reflects the "marriage" between the soul and God. She is his "trewe wyf" (838). Thus love becomes the binding force in the orderly universe; recollect the beginning and end of Book III of the Troilus (1-49, 1744-71), or the stanza near the end of that poem that suggests this love which matures from love of a mortal to love of God, and so suggests the way marriage in the Pauline letter mirrors the embracing relationship between man and God:

O yonge, fresshe folkes, he or she,
In which that love up groweth with youre age,

¹J. B. Severs, The Literary Relationships of Chaucer's "Clerkes Tale", (New Haven, 1942) pp. 238 ff.

Repeyreth hom fro worldly vanyte,
 And of youre herte up casteth the visage
 To thilke God that after his ymage
 Yow made,

V, 1835-40

The marriage in the Clerk's Tale approaches the truth of the ideal relationship between man and God, or between the Church and Christ; even as Britomart's inevitable marriage reflects the Red Cross Knight' plight of troth to Una, who is simplicity, one-ness, Truth.

Marriage is a theme in other of the Canterbury Tales as well -- the Wife's Tale, the Merchant's Tale, the Tale of Melibee, and so forth. But the last tale I want to consider is the Franklin's, where marriage is again a figure for Truth. The mode of the tale is symbolic, as in Sir Gawain where Gawain is an actual knight as well as a symbolic pilgrim-knight, a keeper of Truth, and where his shield is an actual shield as well as a part of the "armour of light". For here Dorigen and Arveragus are actual people who at times behave perhaps foolishly; but more important, the principle that Arveragus cleaves to--"Ye shul youre trouthe holden"(1474)--marks him a symbolic knight, one of the orders of knights in Piers Plowman, a keeper of Holy Church and Truth; and the marriage is a symbol for Truth, as in Book One of the Faerie Queene.

In the poem, indeed, there is a hierarchy of truths. At the bottom stands a "trouthe" that is based on falsehood; for contrary to Nature (1345), it rests on illusion, the magician's illusion of removing the rocks, which depends on the mutability of the moon. The rocks in fact are not removed. Moreover, the illusion is implicitly kin to False, for the illusion is contrary to "hooly chirches feith":

Which book spak muchel of the operaciouns
 Touchynge the eighte and twenty mansiouns
 That longen to the moone, and swich folye
 As in oure dayes is nat worth a flye,--
 For hooly chirches feith in oure bileve
 Ne suffreth noon illusioun us to greve.

(1129-34)

Somewhat above this is the "trouthe" which Dorigen swears to Aurelius. But, in the first place, she swears this "trouthe" in play (988), so that while the letter of it says she will love him best if he removes the rocks, the spirit says that she will never love him:

For wel I woot that it shal never bityde.
 Lat swiche folies out of youre herte slyde.
 (1001-02)

In the second place, this "trouthe" promotes courtly love athwart chastity and marriage. Aurelius is of course the courtly lover, the servant of Venus (937); he sees and sues Dorigen in the garden whose river and well and dancing and games of chess recall the several gardens of the rose. He is appetitive, like the hunts he sees in the magician's illusions. (1189-97) Against chastity and marriage this "trouthe" too is hardly kin to Truth at all. At the top of the hierarchy is the "trouthe" of the marriage. The marriage is an accord -- a "humble, wys accord". (741, 791) Like the Manin Black and Palamon, Arveragus has progressed from courtly love and service (731) to marriage and lordship.

...she fil of his accord
 To take hym for hir housbonde and hir lord,
 (741-42)

He promises her freedom, and she promises "trouthe". And in the Franklin's words,

Heere may men seen an humble, wys accord;
 Thus hath she take hir servant and hir lord,--
 Servant in love, and lord in mariage.
 Thanne was he bothe in lordships and servage.
 Servage? nay, but in lordshipe above,
 Sith he hath bothe his lady and his love;
 His lady, certes, and his wyf also,
 The which that lawe of love acordeth to.
 (791-98)

The repetition of this marriage's accord clearly shows that the marriage approaches Nature's ideal in, say, the Parliament of Birds where too part of Nature's emphasis is on the formel's free will. (407-9, 621-2)

The symbolic hierarchy from a knight to a squire and lastly to a magician also reflects this hierarchy of truths. And likewise, the connexion^{ct} each truth has with the sun marks its virtue. Like White and the Nature in the Parliament and Griselda, Dorigen exists in the sun when Arveragus courts and marries her. (734) After she swears to Aurelius, however, the sun loses its hue and its light. (1016-8) And when Aurelius swears to the magician

Phebus wax old and hewed lyk laton,
That in his hoothe declynacion
Shoon as the burned gold with stremes brighte;
But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,
Whereas he shoon ful pale,...

(1245-49)

The subsequent bitter frost, the rain and sleet, has destroyed all the green plants (1250-1), and in the figure of Janus with his double beard (1252) there is the suggestion of duplicity. Finally, Aurelius prays during the night (1018) for the sun to go into conjunction with the moon and thus to provide the illusion through unusually high tides (1030ff.); but of course the sun does not do this, and the illusion is left to the eight and twenty mansions of the mutable moon. (1129-31) The hierarchy of truths is clear, reaching up to the Truth that is knighthood and marriage.

As Arveragus is an actual person however, he perhaps makes mistakes. When he says to his wife, "Ye shul youre trouthe holden, by my fay!" (1474) he refers in part to her sworn "trouthe" with Aurelius; but we know that this "trouthe" is not as high as her plight of troth, her marriage. And "psychological" details here, such as Arveragus' breaking down suddenly and weeping, and his insistence on secrecy so that he does not have to bear his woe in public (1480-6), suggest that we are to see this irony in the "trouthe" and understand the situation on a literal as well as a symbolic level. Similarly, Dorigen seems rather foolish

in her questioning God's "purveiaunce", for which Boethius' Philosophy would rebuke her,¹ and in her vow with Aurelius which puts her in a cleft stick, and even perhaps in her long speculation on suicide.² On this realistic level, the Franklin's advice about human weakness and about patience applies. For as in Shakespeare's Pericles for instance, patience allows Infortune to come full-circle into good Fortune, allows man to use Time and Infortune to come to the fullness of Nature and Truth:

Pacience is a heigh vertu, certeyn,
For it venquysseth,...

(773-74)

For in this world, certein, ther no wight is
That he ne dooth or seith sometye amys.

(779-80)

And this links up with the symbolic level which Robertson fails to see.³ The knight adheres to Truth. And primarily in this sense he advises his wife to cleave to her truth, and thus inspires the squire and so the magician to give up their lesser "truths". As a preserver of Truth, the knight infuses the world of the Franklin's Tale with that virtue, and thus preserves the Truth of his marriage. Recollect the refrain (which is also an exhortation to a pilgrim-- "Forth, pilgrim") in Chaucer's ballad Truth:

And trouthe thee shal delivere, it is no drede.

This is "trouthe" in its largest sense, as in Piers Plowman and Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. And this Truth knighthood and marriage in the Franklin's Tale symbolize. The knighthood preserves it, the marriage embodies it.

Like the pilgrimage, marriage ideally leads through Time and Mutability to Truth.

¹See Boece, III, met. 9.

²Robertson, op.cit., p. 274.

³ibid., pp. 274, 276, 366.

CHAPTER III

TRAGEDY

The potential for tragedy is present in the works I have thus far discussed-- in Sir Gawain, in The Book of the Duchess, in the Knight's Tale. For tragedy in a sense is the failure of the pilgrimage, or the failure of the marriage, where the human soul while on earth does not climb towards Truth, but falls or begins to fall towards False. In Piers Plowman, for instance, if the pilgrim is a false pilgrim--if he does not combat the seven deadly sins in order to gain a spiritual kinship with the seven virtues--he is unregenerate and he heads not upwards to the tower of Truth but downwards to the dungeon of False. This is a kind of tragedy, where man falls through sin, though the possibility for redemption always remains--Mercy can open the gate. In this same way, Malory's Quest of the Holy Grail is in part the tragedy of Launcelot. Here the pilgrim-knight has seven trials with the seven sins, but basically each pilgrim-knight reaches the Holy Grail, or Truth, in so far as he is chaste;¹ yet Launcelot, though the perfect worldly knight, is fouled with lechery, rotten like an old tree;² and he fails in this "hevynly adventure", though by becoming a hermit, by leaving the world, he too is redeemed in the end of the Morte Arthur. Likewise, in Chaucer's Canterbury pilgrimage the Parson describes the evil disorders, the potential tragedies, that the seven sins engender. Pride for example causes disobedience and hypocrisy, insolence and impatience, irreverence and strife. (387-92) And indeed each of the deadly sins, the Parson says, is a turning away from God towards vain wordly things:

¹Malory, op.cit., pp. 683-4.

²ibid., pp. 656-7.

Deedly synne...is whan a man turneth his herte fro God,
 which that is verray sovereyn bountee, that may nat
 chaunge, and yeveth his herte to thyng that may chaunge
 and flitte. (368)

Each of the seven sins, then, entrusts the human soul to Mutability, subjects it to Fortune's vicissitudes; and this trust and this subjection, as the Monk says, cause tragedy:

Tragedies noon oother maner thyng
 Ne kan in syngyng crie ne biwaille
 But that Fortune alwey wole assaile
 With unwar strook the regnes that been proude;
 For whan men trusteth hire, thanne wol she faille,
 And covere hire brighte face with a clowde.
 (2761-66)

But Fortune and Mutability are limited to the sublunar world, and so anyone whom they cause to fall, retains as a consolation the possibility of redemption.

As tragedy is in part the failure on earth of the pilgrimage, so it is in part the failure on earth of the marriage. If the lovers do not follow the divine minister Nature or the celestial Venus towards chaste fruitfulness, which leads them to common profit as described in the Parliament of Birds, or to the inevitable perfection of ~~the~~ continuance in change as described in the Mutability Cantos; they must follow the Nature of Jean de Meun or the appetitive Venus towards sorrow and strife, become a part of the pattern of tragic love which is shown in the Temple of Venus in the Parliament, and thus fall to the complete ravagement of Time and Mutability and Fortune. This is tragedy. In this way in The Book of the Duchess, if there were no marriage between John of Gaunt and Blanch, instead of the ultimate consolation on earth of an orderly chaste and fruitful marriage which clearly propagates Nature's beauty (as White is Nature's "chef patron of beaute" (910)); we would find a full-blown tragedy, with Time and Fortune and the sterile appetitive Venus triumphing on earth over Nature. But the point of The Book is that Nature triumphs on earth--in

the orderly forest, in White, and in the marriage. Marriage which is in accord with Nature (as I have said) leads to perpetuation and ultimately to One-ness or Truth:

...that that nature desireth and requireth alwey, that is to seyn the werk of generacioun, by which generacioun only duelleth and is susteyned the longe durablete of mortel thinges. (Boece, III, pr.11, 171-75)

...thilke thing that desireth to be and to duelle perdurably, he desireth to ben oon. (193-95)

As Philosophy says, the following of Nature is the "eschuyng of destruccioun" (187); this is comedy. Contrarily, the inverting of Nature is the embracing of destruction and tragedy. Nature leads to "the long durability of mortal things", towards the One-ness of Truth; and the avoiding of Nature, of long durability and One-ness, leads to tragedy:

whanne it forletith to be oon, it moot nedys deien and corruppen togidres (44-73)

Nature's marriage, again, is the proper ordering of the reason and the sensuality; and the improper or inverted ordering breeds discord and rebellion, and so opens the gateway for tragedy.

For it is sooth that God, and resoun, and sensualitee, and the body of man been so ordeyned that everich of these foure thynges sholde have lordshipe over that oother;... But soothly, whan man synneth, al this ordre or ordinaunce is turned up-so-down. (Parson's Tale, 260-63)

An upside down relationship of the reason and the sensuality (as is clear in the dynamics of The Book of the Duchess) will remove the lovers from the realm of Nature who will lead them through continuance in change towards eternal order, one-ness, beauty, and Truth, and will subject them to the sterile Venus, to Mutability and multiplicity and Fortune whose wheel inevitably turns downward.

Again, "marriage" in the Middle Ages is also a metaphor; the priest is married to his parish, the prince to his people, the friend to his friend, and so forth. When a man is properly "married" he preserves intact the order of

those four things--God, the reason, the sensuality, and the body--and thus he partakes of the marriage between Christ and the Church.¹ "Marriage" holds the universe together in the Chain of Love--the final one-ness of comedy--contrarily, the failure of the "marriage" lets slip the chain, and tragedy and chaos on earth ensue:

...al this accorduance of thynges is bounds with love,
that governeth erthe and see, and hath also comandement
to hevене. And yif this love slakede the bridelis, alle
thynges that now loven hem togidres wolden make batayle
contynuely, and stryven to fordo the fassoun of this world,
...This love halt togidres peples joyned with an holy
boond, and knytteth sacrament of mariages of chaste loves;
and love enditeth laws to trewe felawes. O weleful were
mankynde, yif thilke love that governeth hevене governede
your corages. (Boece, II, met. 8, 13-26)

Tragedy usually has to do with Time and Fortune,² with man's trusting wordly mutable things rather than eternal things and God. And thus the Monk defines tragedy as the story of one who trusts Fortune, stands in high degree, and so falls into misery and wretchedness. (1990-98) But the Monk is a foolish character, and his definition is notably superficial. In this chapter I want to consider the nondramatic tragedy of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, as it is the failure to cleave to the values of the pilgrimage and of marriage, as the failure to hold the Chain of Love or the bonds of Nature taut, which failures put man on the fatal wheel. When things on earth are bound by Nature's marriages, then man perceives not the "many maner gises of things" that "moeveth and disponyth" but the simplicity of the divine thought (Boece, IV, pr.6), and he moves through Mutability towards one-ness. But when man violates the marriages, then he perceives not one-ness but the diverse infinite "moevable things", and he falls prey to multiplicity and discord and Time. This is more or less the philosophical basis for comedy and tragedy in the Middle Ages, which

¹Robertson, op.cit., pp.374-5.

²For the relationship between Fortune and Time, see S. C. Chew's The Pilgrimage of Life (New Haven, 1962) pp.1234.

basis Shakespeare inherits and uses. And so I want to consider tragedy in as far as it is a triumph of Fortune or Mutability or Time over the divine minister Nature. The tragedies I want to consider fall into two related traditions-- the fall of princes tradition and the tragic love tradition-- and so I again violate a strict historical sequence.

I begin with Lydgate's Fall of Princes.¹ The Fall of Princes, as Willard Farnham says, is a translation in the loosest sense of the word, of Boccaccio's De Casibus Virorum Illustrium; Lydgate "is much more prone than Boccaccio...to make sin the whole apparent cause of a tragedy".² Lydgate makes sin and evil cause tragedy by showing that sin and evil put man on Fortune's wheel. In the beginning of Book III for instance, he tells the familiar allegory of the fight between Glad Poverty and Fortune, whose moral is of course that Fortune can harm only those who seek her benefits. As Glad Poverty says to Fortune,

Thou shalt forgon thi dominacioun
To hyndre or harme any creature,
But onli foolis, which in thi myht assure.
Thei off ther foli may feele gret damage,
Nat off thi power, but off ther owne outrage.

(III, 659-64)

This same idea appears in Boethius, where Philosophy defines Fortune's powers by contrasting her with Nature.

...yif thow wilt fulfillle thyn nede after that it
sufficeth to nature, thann is it no nede that thow
seke aftir the superfluyte of fortune. (II, pr.5, 78)

And similarly, Lydgate says that God makes true reason and virtue natural to man, and too, that they are never bound to Fortune. (III, 665-72) This is the moral also in the beginning of Book VI, when Bochas talks with Fortune:

¹E.E.T.S. ed. by H. Bergen (London, 1924) Vols. CXXI-CXXIV.

²op.cit., pp. 160, 162.

Yit koude I rekne thynges that be stable:
 As vertuous lyf abidyng unmutable,
 Set hool to Godward of herte, will & thouht,
 Maugre thi poweer, & ne chaungith nouht.

(VI, 242-45)

There is nothing predestinate about Fortune (VI, 299-301); her power depends on man's fault.

Lydgate forcibly points out that sin causes powerful men to fall, and among the seven deadly sins, he underscores pride, gluttony, sloth, lust, and avarice, most heavily. Pride causes Nimrod to fall, and so Bochas exclaims for a hundred odd lines against proud men. (I, 1282-400) Idleness the "moodir off vices" dominates Sardanapalus the King of Assyria, and when idleness brings about his death, Bochas carries on for more than two hundred lines in praise of industry and scorn of idleness. (II, 2339-548) Lust makes Hercules fall:

where lust hath governaunce,
 Thoruh fals luxurie diffacen al noblesse,
 As this tragedie can bere ful weel witsesse,

(I, 5528-30)

And this fall too inspires an envoy against that vice. (5524-51) Gluttony is a particularly potent evil, and it causes the fall of Vitellius, after which Bochas condemns the four most proliferous vices, sloth and lechery, avarice and gluttony, calling gluttony the "cheef kyndeler of ther fyr". (VII, 1104-52)

In the Fall of Princes sin causes tragedy, but if we stop here in our examination of Lydgate's translation and of medieval tragedy, we are too superficial. When a prince indulges in sin, the sin multiplies within him, and he falls like a rotten tree, so that through sin, the prince embraces Fortune and rejects Nature, or in a Boethian sense he cleaves to diverse mutable things and rejects the simplicity of the divine thought. (IV, pr. 6) And in the Fall of Princes it is this rejection of God and Nature that is especially tragic. In this way the first story--Adam and Eve--sets up a pattern. Eve is created and married to Adam for his pleasure and advantage (I, 516), but by disobeying

God's laws and trusting to his wife (633), Adam upsets the natural hierarchy of the reason and the sensuality; and so all human sorrows come into the world through his disobedience of God and violation of Nature. The consequence immediately appears in Cain and Abel's unnatural strife:

...a thyng disnaturall,
Brethre off o wombe be hatred fraternall,
The toon off herte so feer hymself devyde,
Off fals malis to been an homicide.

(I, 739-42)

Adam's disobeying God turns joy into woe, and brings death to man. And throughout the Fall of Princes appears the condemnation of this unnatural, upside down reason and sensuality:

For thuruh fals lust of sensualite,
Lost was the bridil of inward providence.

(V, 87-88)

The triumph of Fortune, the downward turning of her wheel, repeatedly follows some violation of Nature, and this is particularly true of tragedies which go back to the classical Greek tragedy, for Greek tragedy was much concerned with this basic human theme. The story of Jason and Medea for instance is one unnatural act after another. (I, 2171ff.) Jason steals Medea from her father; because of her lust for Jason, she kills her brother to delay her father's pursuit; then she kills Jason's uncle; then Jason abandons her for Creusa, whom Medea in turn kills, along with Jason's two sons. In another story, Phaedra falls unnaturally in love with her step-son Hippolytus (I, 2812ff.); when he rejects her she accuses him of attempting adultery and thus sets father (Theseus) against son; Theseus plans a furious revenge, and subsequently Hippolytus dies. Perhaps the outstanding example of the tragic consequences of unnatural action is the tale of Oedipus (I, 3193ff.), where each unnatural act--Laius' attempt to have his son killed, Oedipus' murder of his father, his incestuous marriage, the visitation of plague in his kingdom, and the strife between his children--

follows the unnatural act before it with fatal and terrific inevitability.

Several tragedies occur because of violations of marriages. That of Pyrrhus is an example. (I, 679lff.) He abandons Andromache after taking her from Troy, and steals Orestes' wife by force. The reward for his adultery, Lydgate says, is sudden death (6809), and Orestes kills him in front of Apollo's altar. Lucrece's complaint and suicide after her rape by Tarquin, appears twice. (II, 1002; III 932) And there is much praise of chastity, in particular one passage on steadfast and chaste Dido, where Lydgate "sets aside" the story of her affair with Aeneas, to speak only of her goodness and her death, when she "slouh hirself to observe hir chastite". (II, 2170) Moreover, several tragedies occur because of other broken bonds of kind. The sequence of incest and adultery and infanticide in the story of Atreus and Thyestes gives rise to an envoy on brotherly strife, "hatful to God and contrary onto kynde". (,4228) In Book IX the story of Henry, who was thrown in prison and perhaps murdered by his father, also causes Bochas to exhort men to observe the natural bonds of kinship:

Pite is approprid to kynreede,
Fader and mooder be disposicioun
To cherisshе ther childre & eke feede
Til sevene yeer passe, lawe maketh mencioun,
As thei are bounde of nature and resoun.

(1758-62)

One last example of tragedy that springs from unnatural kin, is the fall of Arthur. (VIII, 266lff.) Who was more strong and famous than Arthur? Lydgate asks; and yet Fortune brought about his destruction by means of "unkynde blood". (3144-50) Mordred is only Arthur's nephew here; he was not begotten in incest (see below); But none the less his treachery causes not only Arthur's death, but the division of the monarchy and the devastation and ruin of England. (3185-96) Tragedy follows the breaking of Nature's bonds.

Another natural bond which, if broken, causes tragedy, is the bond between king and subject. Consider this analogy:

So as a fadir that is naturall,
Or like a moodir which kyndeli is bounde
To fostre ther childre in especial,
Riht so a kyng in his estat roiall
Sholde of his offis dilligentli entende
His trewe leeges to cherisse hem & diffende.

(2361-66)

This analogy comes in an envoy that tries to sum up all the tragedies in Book VIII, (2323-4) The king must also avoid all fleshly lust (2404), the envoy says, for if the sensuality dominates the reason, the land will fall to ruin. (2346-52) Elsewhere, Lucrece points out that a king's son "sholde off duete been to wommen wall and proteccioun...advertisynge thoffice of a knyht". (III. 1079-85) She refers specifically to Tarquin, but she invokes the general bond between prince and subject; and Tarquin's breaking the bond of course brings an end to the line of Roman kings. (II, 1338-40) These bonds require too that the subject be loyal to the king if the kingdom is to endure. Coriolanus here for instance never ceases working for the common profit (III, 1900); but fickle citizens exile him, and he brings a foreign army back to destroy Rome. He desists however, when Volumnia makes clear that he is breaking natural bonds; to destroy your country is to destroy your own children and kin, she says (2003-4), and he sends his foreign soldiers home. But the citizens are still fickle; they exile him again, and exile leads to death. This fickleness precipitates an envoy against disloyalty to protectors and great men. (2164ff.) Breaking these natural bonds which bind together the universe, opens the way to Fortune and tragedy.

The Mirror for Magistrates proposes to take up the sequence of the Fall

of Princes where Lydgate leaves off,¹ and in the Mirror, particularly in the first two editions (which are the most important), there is a striking continuity of theme interlocking the stories--the theme of tragedy as a triumph over Nature.² Nature's bonds in the Mirror are ordained by God, and as E.M.W. Tillyard says, the chaos that the erring magistrates cause "is allied to the chaos that would ensue if God relaxed his pressure on creation"³--relaxed in other words the Chain of Love. True, the theme does appear in the later editions, for instance in the 1574 edition where the tragedies of Cordila and Forrex and Porrex⁴ all spring from broken bonds of kind. But in the later editions the theme does not, as it does in the earlier, tie the separate stories together.

As in the Fall of Princes, evil multiplies itself in the Mirror, and one broken natural bond weakens the whole chain, and other bonds break as well. William, Duke of Suffolk, urges his king to marry unlawfully, to break a pre-contract (95); and when Duke Humphrey objects to this "mariage aduowtry", William, urged by the queen, kills him. He laments such sins

¹For another catalogue of this type, see David Lindsay's Monarchie or Dialog betuix Experience and ane Courteour, Off the Miserabyll Estait of the World (E.E.T.S. Vol 11), especially the prologue and the last hundred lines. The prologue describes dame Nature's May morning with its harmony of the birds. The moon wanes, and Saturn sets; the sun shines. But the narrator (the courteour) rejects this description of Nature as inappropriate, because he is mourning Mutability and human misery. Thus the contrast is established: tragedy is "unnatural". Likewise, after the apocalyptic vision (5060-6266), the poem ends with the ceasing of the birds' song (6313) and with the ascendancy of Venus and the mutable Moon and with the setting of the sun. (6304-23) References are to The Mirror for Magistrates, ed. by L. B. Campbell in two volumes (Cambridge, 1938). See the second preface to the 1559 edition. Vol. 1, pp. 68-71.

²These pages are concerned primarily with the first two editions--1559 and 1563--which make up Miss. Campbells first volumn.

³op.cit., p. 75.

⁴The Mirror, vol. 2, pp. 145ff. 168ff. 173ff..

As murdring of Duke Humfrey in his bed,
 And howe I had brought all the realme to naughtes
 In causing the King unlawfully to wed,
 (170-72)

Who brueth breach of lawful bond or oth,
 God will ere long, cause all the world to loth.
 (179-80)

The people curse the marriage, "esteming it the cause of every losse" (135), and in the next story we see how Jack Cade plays upon the people's hatred of the King and Queen (78) and breaks his bond of loyalty by raising a rebellion. The specific lesson here of course is that no subject

ought for any kind of cause,
 To force the lord, but yeeld him to the lawes.
 (160-61)

For "whosoever rebelleth agaynst any ruler either good or bad", the ensuing prose passage says, "rebelleth against GOD".¹ Likewise, the Mirror says that the king must be loyal to his subject, and in the story of Shore's wife, Edward breaks this bond (72-84) by making Jane Shore his mistress and by setting her up in a false marriage with Shore; and here too one breach causes a chain reaction of others, and evil multiplies. Clearly Edward's reason and sensuality are upside down, and so Jane Shore governs him and the land and overturns justice:

I governed him that ruled all this land:
 I bare the sword though he did weare the crowne,...
 Yf iustice sayd that iudgement was but death,
 With my sweete wordes I could the kyng perswade,
 And make him pause and take therein a breath,
 Tyl I wyth suyte the fawtors peace had made:
 (173-79)

Moreover, the bond between king and subject extends in the Mirror to become a bond between any man and his servant. And perhaps the most spectacular instance of the idea that one broken bond causes others to break, follows this disloyalty of a servant to his master. In the tragedy of Lord Hastings, Hastings relates the unnatural treachery of his servant Catesby, and then bids universal chaos

¹See Tillyard, op.cit., pp. 71-90.

to come in order to justify Catesby's breaking of the bond.¹

Flye from thy chanel Thames, forsake thy streames,
 Leve the Adamant Iron, Phebus lay thy beames:
 Ceasse heavenly Sphears at last your weary warke,
 Retray your charge, returne to Chaos darke.
 At least some rutherles Tyger hange her whellpe,
 My Catesby so with some excuse to hellp.
 And me to comfort, that I aloane, ne seeme
 Of all dame natures workes, left in extreme.

(329-36)

All the bonds in the Chain of Love must remain taut, or a kind of universal chaos may ensue.

This pattern of tragedy following some break in Nature, recurs throughout the Mirror, and occasionally one of the speakers generalizes from his own experiences in just these terms. Anthony Lord Rivers for instance talks about the abuse of God's holy laws and particularly about the abuse of marriage. Marriage, he says, is ordained by God for man's preservation:

...for the encreasyng of that blessed number
 For whome he [God] hath prepared eternal blysse.

(100-01)

Yet not for lust, for landes, or ryches sake,
 But to beget and foster so theyr frute
 That heaven and earth be stored with the suite.

(110-12)

And he regrets man's abuse:

But as thys state is damnably refused
 Of many apt and able therunto,
 So it is lykewyse wychedly abused...
 Wherein are gyltye all the gredy: who
 For gayne, for frendshyp, landes or honours wed,
 And there pollute the undefyled bed.

(113-19)

Tragedy, he says, follows the corruption of God's ordinances:

And therefore god through iustice can not ceas
 To plage these faultes with sundry sortes of whips:

(120-21)

¹Tillyard, op.cit., p. 76.

Anthony's words have emphasis, because they come at the beginning of the 1563 edition, and because they apply to several of the ensuing tragedies, for instance to that of Jane Shore and Edward. But perhaps the most notable example of such a generalization is that by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. He tells of the picture Henry the Second had, of the four young pelicans sitting in the nest and pecking with bloody beaks at their father's breast and eyes (87-91); and then he generalizes:

Let him peruse the stories throughout
Of English kinges, whom practise did oppresse,
And he shal fynde the cause of their distresse
From first to last, unkindly to beginne,
Always by those that next were of the kynne.

(115-19)

Throughout the Mirror God's laws are the natural bonds, between husband and wife, king and subject, and so forth. The prose passage after the story of Jack Cade, for instance, and the speech of Anthony, Lord Rivers, make this clear. Nature is the divine minister, as in the Parliament or in the Mutability Cantos. And too, Fortune and God's will, as Tillyard says,¹ are not separate in the Mirror. It follows that to break the natural bonds which God ordains incurs God's wrath; the wheel turns downward. Kingdoms perish, families fall apart. Upholding the natural bonds leads through common profit or continuance in change to eternal perfection; breaking these bonds subjects man to Mutability's ravagement. As Richard, Duke of Gloucester, says, "Time trieth out both truth and also treason". (308) The one is nurtured by God, and it endures; the other is damned, and it falls. Tragedy in the Mirror is in this sense the triumph of Mutability over Nature.

Next in this same tradition I want to consider several tragic narratives in which the ideas that run through the Fall of Princes and the Mirror are more or less woven together into a single story. I shall begin with the Gest

¹Tillyard, op.cit., p. 78.

of Robyn Hode,¹ which is an episodic tragic narrative ending with Robyn's death. Throughout the Gest we see the basic contrast between the forest and the court, between the men who walk in the "green wood"--husbandmen and outlaws-- and the men who walk in the court--the Sheriff, the Abbot, the Justice, and so forth-- between the natural and unnatural allegiance to the king and reverence for God. And thus, though the tragedy of Robyn's death appears as a distinct episode-- the treachery of the Prioress of Kyrkesly (450-56)--it is tied thematically to the whole, because the Prioress "nye was of hys kynne" (451), and so because Robyn's death grows out of the basic antithesis of natural and unnatural. Tragedy in the Gest is in this way the triumph over Nature.

The contrast develops throughout the poem as a paradox. The most important natural bonds are between man and God and between subject and king. Paradoxically, the Abbot and his justicer, who are supposed to reverence God and to encourage just behavior in the kingdom, are corrupt so that without Robyn's natural behavior, the good knight would have lost all his lands:

'That ever his [Robyn's] soule be in blysse:
He holpe me out of tene;
Ne had be his kyndenesse,
Beggars had we bene...' (Stanza 128)

And paradoxically, Robyn who lives outside the abbey hears three masses every day,

The one in the worship of the Fader,
And another of the Holy Gost,
The thirde of Our dere Lady,
That he loved allther moste. (9)

He exhibits in other words natural reverence for God. The same paradox exists in the natural bond between subject and king. The Sheriff of Nottingham is the King's liege. But in the fifth fit he is treacherous in his government, and it is Robyn the Outlaw who shows proper allegiance to King Edward. This

¹References are to F. J. Child's version in Volumn III of The English and Scottish Popular Balads (New York, 1957).

is especially clear in the eighth fit where the King himself becomes an "outlaw". He puts on the Lincoln green of the men of the forest, and rides with Robyn to rout the false court at Nottingham:

They bente theyr bowes, and forth they went,
Shotynge all in-fere,
Towarde the towne of Notyngnam,
Outlawes as they were.

Our kyng and Robyn rode togyder,;... (424)

The King in other words recognizes Robyn as the true subject, and underwrites Robyn's values and the values of the forest athwart those of the false court. For as before, the forest is Nature's orderly world, while the court is the world upside down.

Robyn Hode is the natural man. He cleaves to his bonds, both as a servant of God and as a subject of the King. He is even out of his element in the King's court (433)--he is out of his natural estate, which the forest represents--and so in the end he must return to the forest:

Whan he came to grene wode,
In a mery mornynge,
There he herde the notes small
Of brydes mery syngynge.

Thus his death by the treachery of his kin, the Prioress of Kyrkesly, is a triumph of the false over the naturally and truly reverent, of the court (in so far as the false ecclesiasts are linked with the false court (15)) over the natural forest, and of evil in general over Nature.

Next, consider a few of the stories concerning the death of Arthur, where these same ideas about tragedy appear. In the alliterative Morte Arthure,¹ to begin with, Arthur's death and the ruin of England again follow Mordred's

¹References are to the E.E.T.S. Vol. 8, ed. by G. G. Perry (London, 1865).

unnatural treachery. Mordred here is no closer to Arthur than nephew (645)--there is no mention of the incest--but he is made viceroy while Arthur is away defeating the Romans, and tragedy follows his unnatural acts. He seizes all Arthur's castles (3544); he brings infidels into the land who rob churches and rape nuns (3531-40); and worst of all, he marries Guinevere, his uncle's wife, and gets her with child. (3551-3) Arthur means to avenge himself and England, and in the ensuing battle, all is brought to nothing. The alliterative Morte Arthure is notable in the connexion it makes between the breaking of natural bonds and the tragic turning of Fortune's wheel. Mordred breaks the bonds between kin, between husband and wife, and between subject and king, and thus precipitates the tragedy which is prefigured in Arthur's dream about the six fallen kings and the turning wheel. (3232ff.) In the dream, after the fall of the six kings, Arthur achieves the high seat of Fortune. (3348) But at mid-day--the high point of the sun--Fortune spins the wheel, and the philosophers tell Arthur to prepare for his end. (3395) The dream gives no specific reason for her turning the wheel, but in the fatal battle itself we see that death and ruin--the actual downward turn--follow hard upon Mordred's breaking the natural bonds. And so it is clear in the Morte Arthure that tragedy is a triumph of Fortune or Mutability that follows the breaking of natural laws.

I turn now to Malory's last book, The Most Piteous Tale of the Morte Arthur Saunz Guerdon. It also is a tragedy where death and devastation follow the breaking of many of Nature's or God's bonds. But Malory's Morte Arthur of course looks back to the tales that come before it, particularly the Tales of King Arthur, the Tale of the Sankgreal, and the Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere. The Tales of King Arthur contains the fatal seed, the unnatural begetting of Mordred. Arthur meets Lott's wife, and without knowing that she is his sister, he

caste¹ grete love unto hir and desired to ly by her...
and he begat uppon hir sir Mordred. And she was
syster on the modirs syde Igrayne unto Arthure.

Afterwards he dreams that griffins and serpants come into his land and slay
all his people, and Merlin tells him,

ye² have done a thyng late that God ys displeas
with you, for ye have lyene by youre syster and on
hir ye have gotyn a childe that shall destroy you
and all the knyghtes of youre realme.

The Morte Arthur also looks back to the Sankgreal and the story of Launcelot
and Queen Guinevere, where the pilgrim-knight Launcelot, again, is "defouled
with lechory", like an "olde rottyn tre", because he is the servant-lover of
the Queen. But the Morte Arthur itself is a coherent and complete tragic
narrative. Things fall and cease because God's laws and the natural bonds of
chastity and friendship are broken; tragedy here clearly springs from the
failure of the pilgrimage and of marriage.

As Merlin says, when Arthur breaks the natural bond that forbids incest,
he displeases God; and likewise, when Launcelot and Guinevere become lovers
they lose their own chastity, which is the most important virtue for a pilgrim-
knight in quest of Truth, and break the natural bond between subject and lord,
and defile Arthur's marriage. These breaches of Nature's bonds, which are God's
laws, are the root of the tragedy, and indeed the Morte Arthur opens with an
epitome of the contrast between Nature's healthy and productive world and the
fatal, unnatural events in the kingdom:³

In May, whan every harte floryshyth and burgenyth
(for, as the season ys lusty to beholde and comfortable,
so man and woman rejoysyth and gladith of somer commynge
with his freyshe floures, for wynter with hys rowghe
wyndis and blastis causyth lusty men and women to cowre
and to syt by fyres), so thys season hit befelle in the

¹Malory, op.cit., p. 32.

²ibid., p. 35.

³ibid., p. 818.

moneth of May a grete angur and unhappe that stynted nat
 tylle the floure of chyvalry of all the worlde was
 destroyed and slayne.

It is a contrast between the celestial and the appetitive Venus, between the divine minister Nature and the Nature of Edmund in King Lear. The resulting "angur and unhappe" are out of accord with the divine minister Nature's flourishing world, and because of these "unnatural" events, the "floure of chyvalry" withers and dies--Mutability triumphs.

From the moment Agravain tells Arthur about Launcelot and Guinevere, the unnatural acts begin to multiply, till every possible bond is broken. Immediately Launcelot kills thirteen knights, "som of my beste fryndis", and disobeys "my lord kynge Arthur". (XX,6) The fellowship of the Round Table is broken, and Arthur decides that his wife must die. (XX,7) There is a battle, and Launcelot unwittingly kills two unarmed men, Gaherys and Gareth, who loved him above "all men erthly". (XX,8-9) Later,

the¹ Pope gaff hym [a clerk] bulles undir leade,
 and sente hem unto the kynge, chargyng hym uppon
 payne of entirdytyng of all Inglonde that he take
 hys quene agayne and accorde with sir Launcelot...
 but Sir Gawayn wolde nat suffir hym.

Gawain uses his bond of kinship with Arthur perversely, for selfish ends, and makes Arthur defy the orders of his spiritual father, the Pope, and so jeopardize all England. Moreover, Launcelot persistently holds to his courtly love; he will not betray his relationship with Guinevere which is clearly unholy because it is unchaste; and this upside down reason and sensuality makes him lie to his lord Arthur again and again about her virtue. (XX,15) Likewise, the unholy relationship blinds Guinevere and makes her compare herself to a martyr:

¹Malory, op.cit., p. 842.

¹
I woll take my dethe as mekely as ever ded marter
take hys dethe for Jesu Crystes sake.

Because of the breaches in Nature, the world is upside down, shot through with falseness, disloyalty, and "unkindness".

The multiplication of evil and of broken bonds quickens near the end. Again, Mordred plots against Arthur when Arthur is pursuing Launcelot in France. Mordred is Arthur's son and nephew, and he seizes Arthur's throne by deceiving the parliament and then plans to wed Guinevere, "which was hys unclys wyff and hys fadirs wyff". (XXI, 1) And he plans to do this despite the displeasure of God, as the Bishop of Canterbury tells him, and the shame to himself and to all knighthood. (XXI, 1) Mordred turns the people against their king, and when Arthur returns to Dover, bereft of "all myne erthly joy" (XXI, 2), he must fight a great civil war. He dreams,

that² the whyle turned up-so-downe, and he [himself]
felle amonge the serpentis, and every beste toke
hym by a lymme.

And indeed, an adder, a figure for the devil, precipitates the battle in which Arthur kills his unnatural son, who, dying, "smote hys fadir...that the swerde perced the helmet and the tay of the brayne". (XXI,4) The "Day of Destiny" ends with the death of Arthur and the devastation of England and the Round Table. One of the last scenes of the darkened moonlit day captures this utter triumph in the kingdom, of mutability and evil:

and³ so as he [sir Lucan] yode he saw and harkened by
the moonelyght how that pyllours and robbers were
com into the fylde to pylle and to robbe many a full
noble knyght of brochys and bees and of many a good
rynge and many a ryche juell. And who that were nat
dede all oute, there they slew them for their harneys
and their ryches.

¹ Malory, op.cit., p. 822.

² ibid., p. 865.

³ ibid., p. 869.

There is mention of Fortune or Mutability in the Morte Arthur; for instance Launcelot rails against Fortune and the mutable wheel. (XX,16) But he fancies himself innocent and regrets that he "shulde be thus shamefully banysshyd, undeserved and causeles!" (XX,16) He is clearly short-sighted, and we are meant to see that Fortune or Mutability follows hard upon the many breaches of Nature's bonds and God's laws. The consequences of the breaches are far-reaching, and the torrent of evil catches up the whole kingdom. Only in the last chapter, where the few survivors become hermits, does any element of goodness or of redemption return. But to become hermits of course, the knights must abandon the tainted world. Tragedy in the Morte Arthur is a turning away from chastity and the natural bonds which (here as in the Sankgreal) lead the pilgrim-knight towards Truth. Chaste marriage is the figure in Time for continuance in change; unchastity is the figure for the proliferation of evil. The breaking of the bonds subjects the world to Mutability. Afterwards, a knight can only turn away from the world, for in the world until the reign futurum, evil and Mutability have won.

Now I turn to the tales of tragic love. The Orpheus and Eurydice of Robert Henryson is a tragedy where, literally, a marriage founded on appetite leads to sorrow and death, or where, allegorically, an upside down "marriage" of the reason and the sensuality leads the soul away from Truth. The Orpheus is therefore a tragedy where "contrair the Lawis of nature", Orpheus (the reasonable part of the human soul) does not follow his divine progenitor in the succession of kind that would lead towards Truth, and where as a result Eurydice (the sensual part) falls into the power of Hell.

Lyk till a flour that plesandly will spring,
 Quhilk fadis sone, and endis with murnyng.

(11.90-91)

It too is a tragedy then where death and Mutability triumph over Nature.

Henryson bases his tale on a familiar passage in Boethius.¹ Lady Philosophy tells the tale to console Boethius, and thus she ends with the moral:

This fable apertenith to yow alle, whosoevere desireth
 or seketh to lede his thought into the sovereyn day
 (that is to seyn, into cleernesse of sovereyn good).
 For whoso that evere be so overcomen that he ficche
 his eien into the put of helle (that is to seyn, whoso
 sette his thoughtes in erthly thinges), al that evere
 he hath drawn of the noble good celestial he lesith
 it, whanne he looketh the helles (that is to seyn, into
 lowe thinges of the erthe). (III, met. 12.60-70)

And Henryson's Orpheus has something of an analogue in his Taill of the Paddock & the Mous, where the Mous (the soul) entrusts its salvation to the paddock (the body) and so flounders in the water of the world and dies.

The water is the warld, ay welterand,...
 In quhilk the saull and body wer steirrand,
 Standand rycht different in thair opinioun:
 The Saull upwart, the body precis down:

(Fables, 2955-59)

But the Orpheus with its moralitas is clear on its own. The poem begins by describing Orpheus' ancestry, for

It is contrair the Lawis of nature
 A gentill man to be degenerat,
 Nocht following of his progenitour
 The worthe rewill, and the lordly estait;

(11.8-11)

Orpheus is the son of Phoebus and Calliope, and he sucks from his mother the "sueit lecour of all musik perfyte". (70) He is allegorically of course the "pairte intelletyfe" of man's soul; his father is the god of "sapience", and his mother is eloquence. (425-9) But the poem is in part a courtly love poem as well, for Eurydice the Queen of Trace seduces Orpheus "with wordis sueit and blenkis amorouss" (81), and they are married.

...fra day to day
 The low of lufe cowth kyndill and inress,
 with mirth, and blythness, solace, and with play
 off wardly Joy;

(11.86-89)

¹See Wood's note to line 421.

This worldly joy fades like the flower however, because Eurydice is the appetitive part, the sensuality, and more completely, because the marriage is clearly upside down. The intellect, or the reason, does not control the sensuality, and so Eurydice flees from Aristaeus who is virtue keeping control over his beasts (98,435), and her flight leads her to deadly sin and death. (105,441)

That the marriage is upside down is also clear in Orpheus' reaction to his loss of worldly joy:

This noble king inflammit all in yre,
And rampand as a Lyoun rawanuss,
(11.120-21)

Half out of his mind, he runs into a "wod", and tries to reject his royal heritage--his nature. (157-8) But the upside down marriage is most clear in that Orpheus bids his harp to

turne all thy mirth and musik in murning,
and seiss of all thy sutell songis sueit;
(11.135-36)

Orpheus' music was perfect--his inheritance from his father and mother of divine wisdom and eloquence. His music in the De Consolatione makes rivers stand still, and the "hertes and the kyndes to joynen dreedles here sydes to cruel lyouns". (III,met.12) But now his song is mourning, and like the Man in Black in The Book of the Duchess (463-9), he is out of accord with Nature's orderly mixed forest:

Him to reioss yit playit he a spring,
quhill that the fowlis of the wid can sing,
and treis dansit with thair levis grene,
him to devod from his grit womenting;
Bot all in vane, that wailyeit no thing,
(11.144-48)

He goes to seek Eurydice in heaven, and of course she is not there. But there he re-learns the divine proportion, the music of the spheres which, as in the Parliament, causes all worldly harmony:

In his passage among the planeitis all,
 he hard a hevinly melody and sound,
 passing all instrumentis musicall,
 causit be roollyn of the speiris round;
 Quhilk armony of all this mappamound,
 Quhilk movingseiss unyt perpetuall,
 Quhilk of this warld plato the saule can call.

Thair leirit he tonis proportionat,
 (11.219-26)

This proportion is a figure for the divine harmony which the earthly harmony will approach when all the natural bonds in the Chain of Love are taut. Orpheus re-learns the proportion, and even though he seeks Eurydice in hell, he keeps the knowledge, for his playing overcomes Cerberus who is death (464) and the appetitive and "unnatural" figures who lie in torment. Ixion, for example, tried to rape Juno, the "quene of nature and goddace" (494), and so he spins on the wheel; to gain riches, Tantalus killed his own son, and so he is forever hungry and thirsty.

Bot quhen our mynd is myngit with sapience,
 and plais upoun the herp of eloquence;
 That is to say, makis persuasioun
 To draw our will and our affectioun,
 In every eild, fra syn and fowll delyte,
 (11.469-74)

then these unnatural and appetitive desires cease. Orpheus is allowed to lead his wife upwards to the light, under condition that he not turn his eye back upon her, that is, that he keep his mind on the "sovereyn good", or that he make his reason dominate his sensuality in a true marriage. But appetite blinds him again: he casts his mind's eye down on her and on hell, on low "erthly thinges", and so makes "ressoun wedow for to be". (627) Eurydice is in hell forever, for Orpheus loses his divine wisdom and eloquence, and his proportionate song again becomes an "unnatural" mourning and complaint.¹

¹Orpheus' complaint here (401-12) seems at least in part an imitation of the song of Troilus. (T&C, I, 400-20) See Wood's note on line 401.

Tragedy in the Orpheus is the failure of the marriage. Because Orpheus' marriage is not a true marriage of the reason and the sensuality, the body is subjected to Mutability and Time "lyk till a flour", and after its brief and unregenerate day it is cast into hell. Because of Orpheus' failure, his parents' wisdom and eloquence and the "worthe rewll" are not perpetuated, and contrary to Nature, mankind does not move through continuance in change towards Truth. Tragedy in the Orpheus is the triumph of Mutability over Nature.

Henryson's Testament of Cresseid is like the Orpheus in that the tragedy springs partly from Cresseid's appetitive nature. But in the Testament there is no real hint that her relationship with Troilus was upside down. Troilus here is the true knight, and the tragedy springs more completely from Cresseid's falseness--from her breaking her troth. In the early parts of the poem she fails to recognize her guilt--her own responsibility for her descent into the "Court commoun"--and so she blasphemes Cupid and Venus by calling them false and capriciously mutable:

O fals Cupide, is nane to wyte bot thow,
And thy Mother, of lufe the blind Goddes!

(11.134-35)

As Cupid points out, to traduce your own god is to traduce all gods (274-9), and so the convocation of the gods hands her over to Saturn and the Moon. The Moon is Cynthia, the goddess of chastity whom Cresseid has outraged, and alternatively Mutability. (258-9) Saturn, as John McQueen says,¹ is Kronos, interpreted as Chronos or Time. Cresseid's appetitiveness, untroth, and blasphemy, precipitate her ravagement by calumniating Time and Mutability. And so tragedy in the Testament is again the triumph of Mutability over Nature.

Indeed, the leitmotiv in the poem is the blasted spring.

¹op.cit., p. 220.

Ane doolie sessoun to ane cairful dyte
 Suld correspond, and be equivalent.
 (11.1-2)

Thus the prologue (the first ten stanzas) takes up this figure: the time is the middle of Lent, and hail storms blow down from the north so that the narrator (who is also Love's servant (23)) can scarcely save himself from the cold. (5-7) He prays to Venus that his "fadid hart" might grow green again (24), but the frost and the wintry blasts interrupt his prayer.

To help by Phisike quhair that nature faillit
 I am expert, for baith I have assailit.

I mend the fyre... (11.34-36)

Nature fails in the blasted spring. The figure reappears in the narrator's readings. He reads about how Diomedes rejects "lustie" Cresseid after he has fulfilled his appetite (71), and about how some men say that she becomes a whore. (77) And he laments that the flower of Troy should be thus blasted:

O fair Cresseid, the flour and A per se
 Of Troy and Grece, how was thou fortunait!
 To change in filty all thy Femitie,
 and be with fleschlie lust sa maculait,
 (11.78-81)

Cresseid is clearly unnatural here, and so the young flower withers and dies. In Cresseid's blasphemy of Cupid and Venus, and of all the gods, she uses the same figure for herself--the frost-bitten flower:

Ye gave me anis ane devine responsaill
 That I suld be the flour of luif in Troy,...
 (11.127-28)

The seid of lufe was sawin in my face,
 And ay grew grene throw your supplie and grace.
 Bot now allace that seid with froist is slane,
 (11.137-39)

When Calchas, her father, looks on her leprosy, the figure reappears (372-7), as it does in her ubi sunt complaint. She addresses herself:

Quhair is thy garding with thir greissis gay?
 And fresche flowris, quhilk the Quene Floray:
 Had paintit plesandly in everie pane,
 (11.425-27)

Thy greit triumphand fame and die honour,
 Quhair thou was callit of Eirdlye wichtis Flour,
 All is decayit, thy weird is welterit so.
 (11.434-36)

And of course it is appropriate to the tragedy that the blasted season be spring. For Cresseid does not die through a natural cycle of time, but withers unnaturally in the spring of her life.

In the figure of the blasted spring it is clear that her blight and her disease are not the work of capricious gods or simple Mutability; indeed, through the poem she moves towards a recognition of her own guilt--her unchastity and untroth. To begin with, she blasphemes the gods in her thinking that she herself is guiltless and that they are blind and false. (134-5) But leprosy suggests venereal disease, and so suggests that her blight stems from her activity in the "Court commoun". When she sees her deformed face, she knows that she is paying for her blasphemy (354); but she does not go any further than this, and so the theme of her complaint is that flowers fade because of capricious Fortune. (454) Not till she sees the noble Troilus and experiences his generosity, does she begin to see her own responsibility. Troilus stands as the perfect, symbolic knight:

For lufe, of me thou [Troilus] kept gude continence,
 Honest and chaist in conversatioun.
 Of all wemen protectour and defence
 Thou was, and helpit thair opinioun.
 (11.554-57)

He is a mirror in which she sees her faults:

Sa elevait I was in wantones,
 And clam upon the fickill quheill sa hie:
 All Faith and Lufe I promissit to the,
 Was in the self fickill and frivolous:
 (11.549-52)

My mynd in fleschelic foull affectioun
Was Inclynit to Lustis Lecherous:

(11.558-59)

She was "untrew of fay". (571) Truth, she sees, is the prime virtue in love.

(568-74) And so the refrain of her lament becomes,

O fals Cresseid, and trew Knicht Troilus. (546,553,560)

That tragedy in the Testament is specifically a triumph of Time and Mutability over Nature, is most clear in what is perhaps the central part of the poem, the convocation of the seven planets. Three of the planets are friendly--Jupiter, Phoebus, and Mercury--four are hostile--Saturn, Mars, Venus, and Moon. This opposition is developed in the descriptions, particularly in the descriptions of Jupiter and Saturn. Jupiter is Nature in the poem--the generative power, the nurse of fair flowers, who bears at his waist the phallic sword:

...Nureis to all thing generabill,
Fra his Father Saturne far different,...
Upon his heid ane Garland, wonder gay,
Of flouris fair, as it had bene in May.

(11.172-75)

Ane burelie brand about his midill bair;
In his richt hand he had ane groundin speir,
Of his Father the wraith fra us to weir.

(11.180-82)

His sword and spear war against Saturn who, again, is Time:

The Iceschoklis that fra his [Saturn's] hair doun hang
Was wonder greit, and as ane speir als lang...
His widderit weid fra him the wind out woir;
Ane busteous bow within his hand he boir,
Under his girdill ane flasche of felloun flanis,
Fedderit with Ice, and heidit with hailstanis.

(11.160-68)

Saturn's arrows indeed cause the blasted spring. The opposition of these two gods is the opposition (as in the Mutability Cantos) of Nature and Time. Likewise, Phoebus opposes Venus (at least in part), for Phoebus is also Nature, a nurse to the fruitful flourishing and enduring of man and beast:

...fair Phebus, Lanterne & Lamp of licht
 Of man and beist, baith frute and flourisching,
 Tender Nureis, and banischer of nicht,
 And of the warld causing, be his moving
 And Influence, lyfe in all eirdlie thing,
 Without comfort of quhome, of force to nocht
 Must all ga die that in this warld is wrocht.

(11.197-203)

While Venus is more strictly mutable, embodying both generation and decay,
 truth and falsehood:

The ane half grene, the uther half Sabill black;...
 Bot in her face semit greit variance,
 Quhyles perfyte theuth, and quhyles Inconstance...

(11.221-24)

Now grene as leif, now widderit and ago.

(1.238)

Their opposition is also that of night and day; recollect the second stanza where Phoebus descends in the west, while in the east Venus rises up, the "bewtie of the nicht". This unnatural event prefigures the tragedy--the ascendancy in the gods' convocation and in the poem in general, of Time and the mutable Moon over generative Nature. Cresseid is untrue, and her failure to see this causes her to blaspheme all the gods in her blasphemy of Cupid and Venus who are her father's special deities. (106-9) And so Calchas' daughter suffers disease and death, and his seed ^eparishes. Untroth and lack of proper reverence precipitates the tragedy where destructive Time defeats Nature, though the possibility of a kind of redemption through self-knowing remains. Marriage is a figure for Nature defeating Time and so leading man towards eternal perfection and Truth. Tragedy here is the failure of the marriage to lead Calchas' kind in general to that eternal perfection, and Cresseid in specific towards proper reverence and Truth.

Lastly I turn to Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, where again, contrary to Nature, love fails to be right-side-up, where marriage fails to be troth, and so where love and marriage in the world fail to lead the soul upwards

through the Chain of Love to Truth or God. The poem is complex, and bald statements about it seldom convince. In the poem Troilus' love is in a sense ennobling, but it is never ennobling enough, so that in the world he never gets enough beyond his appetite to be in accord with the celestial Venus whom he himself describes. (III,1744-71) The celestial Venus and the Appetitive Venus are aspects of the same thing, but they differ in that the celestial Venus is the proper order of the reason and the sensuality, while the appetitive is upside down. The celestial Venus then is the orderly world, or Nature, who leads man upwards to Truth. The appetitive Venus is the world upside down, or Fortune, who binds man on the fatal wheel. Tragedy in Chaucer's Troilus is the failure of the "marriage", which failure defeats Nature, binds man to the wheel, and so leads him on earth away from God.

Griseyde is not just a "worldly possession" for Troilus.¹ When he falls in love with her, he obeys a law of Nature:

That Love is he that alle thing may bynde,
For may no man fordon the lawe of kynde.
(I,237-38)

Love is ennobling, for it causes men to "dreden vice and shame" and makes worthy men worthier. (251-2) And too, love in a sense ennobles Troilus:²

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singynges,
This Troilus gan al his lif to lede.
He spendeth, jousteth, maketh festeynges;
He yeveth frely ofte, and chaungeth wede,
(III, 1716-19)

That swich a vois was of hym and a stevene
Throughout the world, of honour and largesse,
That it up rong unto the yate of hevene.
(1723-25)

But from the beginning it is also clear that he is appetitive. Chaucer compares him to an animal, a proud horse, "so pryketh hym his corn". (I,219) His love

¹ Compare Farnham, op.cit., p. 145.

² A. J. Denomy, "The Two Moralities of Chaucer's Troilus and Griseyde", Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada (XLIV, June, 1950) pp. 35-46. See also III, 1800-06.

is kindled by his sense, his eye (272), and so his song is of appetitive love: The more he drinks the more he thirsts; he burns in his lust. (406-7) And his upside down reason and sensuality appear in his image of himself:

Al sterelees withinne a boot am I.
Amydde the see, betwixen wyndes two.
(416-17)

His world is indeed upside down, like the world of the Mous in Henryson's fable, where the Mous subjects himself on the water of the world to the chaotic steerage of the body. And like the Man in Black, Troilus' sleep is waking, his meat his foe, because of his hot fire. (484-90) Moreover, though he has a potentially ennobling bond with Pandarus, as his love is upside down, so is this bond of friendship. For instance, Pandarus would not restrain Troilus in any desire, "theigh that it were Eleyne that is thi brother wif". (I,676-9) And likewise, Troilus would procure for Pandarus "my suster...by my wil she sholde al be thyn to-morwe". (860-1) Upside down love is chaotic, able to break marriages and bonds of kinship.

Similarly, Criseyde is in part noble. She does not want to lose her chastity, just as she does not intend to be untrue. But her idea of her honor at times does not go beyond mere name or reputation. (II,762-3) Her love too is kindled by the senses: "Who yaf me drynk?" (651) No husband will ever say to her, "chek mat!" (754), she says, for she means not be bound by marriage. (728) Indeed Book II, which is largely devoted to her, begins with a picture of unnatural love in the story of Philomela and Procne and Tereus (64-70), and possibly a hint of deception and hypocrisy in the image of Janus. (77)

In Book III it is most clear that the relationship is upside down--that the appetite rules, and that the loves reaches not upwards through the Chain of Love, but downwards to the "lowe thinges of the erthe". Book III begins and ends with an invocation to the celestial Venus:

Ye [Venus] fierse Mars apaisen of his ire,
 And as yow list, ye maken hertes digne;
 Algates hem that ye wol sette a-fyre,
 They dreden shame, and vices they resygne;...
 (22-25)

Ye holden regne and hous in unitee;
 Ye sothfast cause of friendshiphe ben also;
 (29-30)

Or in Troilus' own words:

Love, that of erthe and se hath governaunce,
 Love, that his [Cupid's] hestes hath in hevenes hye,...
 (1744-45)

Diverseth so his stowndes concordynge,
 That elementz that ben so discordable
 Holden a bond perpetuely durynge,
 That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bringe,...
 (1752-55)

That that the se, that gredy is to flowen,
 Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so
 His flodes that so fiersly they ne growen
 To drenchen erthe and al for evere mo;
 And if that Love aught lete his bridel go,
 Al that now loveth asondre sholde lepe,
 And lost were al that Love halt now to-hepe.
 (1758-64)

Indeed the celestial Venus awakens love in them. And their love becomes a marriage; they exchange rings (1368) and plights of troth. (1229,1297; 1495-8, 1511-2) But their marriage is indeed a heaven on earth, which, though not as obviously tainted as the earthly paradise in the Merchant's Tale, is still foolish and short-sighted. Consider the irony in these lines:

Hire sydes longe, flesshly, smothe, and white
 He gan to stroke, and good thrift had ful ofte
 Hire snowisshe throte, hire brestes rounde and lite:
 Thus in this hevne he gan hym to delite,
 And therwithal a thousand tyme hire kiste,
 (1248-52)

And the lovers do everything but bridle their desires, as they would bridle them if they themselves were in accord with the tempering celestial Venus.

Desir al newe hym [Troilus] brende, and lust to brede
 Gan more than erst, and yet took he non hede.

Criseyde also, right in the same wyse,
 (1546-48)

Their love is associated with night and darkness; they rail against day and the sun. (1450-70) After all, the celestial Venus makes the sun rise. (1755) But the lovers cling to night which (here as in the Parliament) is the time of the appetitive Venus, the Venus upside down, the Venus of sterile tragic love. Their appetite is also clear in that Troilus becomes a hunger^t (1780), Criseyde a hawk. (1784)

Moreover, the faliaw elements, particularly in Book III, qualify their love and make it comic.¹ Indeed everything Pandarus touches becomes comic. On that rainy night he puts Troilus where he can look through a tiny window "in a stewe" (601), and the pun is comic. So is the story about Horaste which is "so like a sooth". (919) And when Troilus swoons in the bedroom, Pandarus

...into bed hym caste,
And seyde, "O thef, is this a mannes herte?"
And of he rente al to his bare sherte;
(1097-99)

His chiding of Criseyde on the next morning is perhaps more salacious than comic. (1562-8) And this suggestion of evil and the grotesque appears also in Chaucer's pun at the end of Book III:

Thorough yow [the Muses] have I seyde fully in my song
Th'effect and jole of Troilus service,
Al be that ther was som disese among,
(1814-16)

When Diomedes takes Criseyde away he leads her by the bridle (V,92), but this is only the bridling of one appetite by another, for he is the appetitive boar who razes whole countries. (V,1469-71) Troilus and Criseyde have again plighted troths (IV,1477,1610), but in Diomedes's courtship of Criseyde there is the sense of beginning all over again. Diomedes will be her brother and friend (V,13405), as she at first wanted Troilus to be. (II,1224) And Criseyde and Troilus are described here as if we were meeting them for the first time.

¹See C. Muscatine, Chaucer and the French Tradition (Berkeley, 1957) pp. 124-65.

(V,806-40) But here is added to her description the irrevocable phrase, "slydyng of corage". (V,825) She is in a sense Donne's sublunary lover:

Dull sublunary lovers love
 (Whose soul is sense) cannot admit
 Absense, because it doth remove
 Those things which elemented it.

And her capitulation to Diomede is unavoidable, as are her wistful words:

To Diomede algate I wol be trewe.
 (V, 1071)

Though absense does not make Troilus false to her in this way, it certainly turns him farther away from what Lady Philosophy would call the "sovereyn good":

He corseth Jove, Appollo, and ek Cupide,
 He corseth Ceres, Bacus, and Cipride,
 His burthe, hymself, his fate, and ek nature,
 (V,207-09)

He becomes a false pilgrim (V,1577), seeking in Criseyde a false Truth. And he lives like the appetitive Ixion (212), but in a hell on earth.

Troilus' love and his marriage with Criseyde are clearly upside down, and Chaucer shows us this throughout the poem. The Venus Troilus serves is the sterile appetitive Venus, who (as before) is linked with Fortune. (IV, 1189; V,587-8) As Robertson says, "When the human heart is turned toward God and the reason is adjusted to discern the action of Providence beneath the apparently fortuitous events of daily life, the result is the city of Jerusalem, radiant and harmonious within the spirit. But when the will desires its own satisfaction in the world alone, the reason can perceive only the deceptive mutability of Fortune".¹ Thus Troilus finds himself caught up by destiny, as he says in his speech on determinism,² and bound to Fortune who plucks the bright feathers of his earthly paradise along with those of Troy. He perceives the multiplicity

¹ op.cit., pp. 496-7.

² See H. R. Patch, "Troilus on Determinism," Speculum (VI,1929) pp. 225-43.

of Mutability and not the simplicity of the divine thought. (Boece, IV, pr.6)
 Troy of course mirrors Troilus, because it too is bound to the war and the
 wheel by a false marriage--Helen and Paris. (V,890-6) And Antenor is going
 to be "unkind" to Troy (IV,204), just as Criseyde will be to Troilus. (IV,16)
 Troilus' appetite will not let him see beyond his sublunar position into the
 realm of Providence, and thus he stands looking at the moon, hoping pathetically
 that all the world will be true:

And al his sorwe he to the moone tolde,
 And seyde, "Ywis, whan thow art horned newe,
 I shal be glad, if al the world be trewe!..."
 (V,649-51)

Criseyde behaves, as Chaucer says, against Nature. (IV,16; V,1643) And
 her untroth and "unkindness" make Troilus' world chaotic:

Who shal now trowe on any othes mo?
 (V,1263)

The tragedy in the poem is that love and marriage, which should be in accord
 with Nature and the Chain of Love, are not, and so that they do not lead man
 and woman on earth upwards to the love of God and the marriage of the human
 soul with Christ:

O yonge, fresshe folkes, he or she,
 In which that love up groweth with youre age,
 Repeyreth hom fro worldly varyte,
 And of youre herte up casteth the visage
 To thilke God that after his ymage
 Yow made, and thynketh al nys but a faire
 This world, that passeth soone as floures faire.

And loveth hym, the which that right for love
 Upon a crois, oure soules for to beye,
 First straf, and roos, and sit in hevене above;
 For he nyl falsen no wight, dar I seye,
 That wol his herte al holly on hym leye.
 (V,1835-46)

Love that grows up in man points towards God, but if on earth that love never
 goes beyond appetite--if the reason does not control the sensuality--that
 appetitive love binds man to the many mutable things. Then (because the wheel

is limited to Time and this world) not till death can man escape the sublunar, mutable world, to see the little earth embraced by the changing sea, to hear the heavenly melody, and to laugh at such wordly vanities as blind lust. (V, 1808-25) Love ennobles Troilus, but it never ennobles him enough, so that not till death can he be redeemed from the earthly wheel. Tragedy in the Troilus is this failure on earth of the marriage--of love and of troth--to lead man upwards to God, which failure overthrows Nature and sets up Fortune in her place.

In medieval comedies like The Book of the Duchess or the Parliament of Birds or the Mutability Cantos, Nature triumphs on earth over Fortune or Mutability or Time and leads man through generation towards the one-ness of Truth. And in medieval tragedies, the divine minister Nature is by these same evil forces in the world defeated, so that although the possibility of redemption remains, man on earth does not use Time to defeat Time but instead falls prey to decay and multiplicity and change.

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PART TWO

SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDY

Let us consider Shakespeare's authority in the comedies. To consider his authority, as I have said, is to consider first how he does what he is trying to do, and then whether this makes a coherent and logical play. When attending or reading a play, we cannot easily separate how the playwright sets forth and develops his material, from what his intentions are. We take the play in as a whole; the better the play, the more compelled we are to follow and accept, the less to stop and question. And in a real sense, the best expression of the intentions in any play is the play itself. Paraphrase falls short. But if we want to understand how much Shakespeare's authority grows--how well he writes plays--we must first understand as best we can through the play itself what he is trying to do. We cannot criticize Shakespeare for making Hector an inconsistent character until we first take into account that he may have been trying to do just that. We may finally decide that he does not make a coherent and logical play of it. But authority depends, at least in part, on intent.

Again, the plays that I have chosen are As You Like It, Pericles, and The Tempest. Some will perhaps feel that there is small justification for discussing comedies and romances in the same breath. I am interested not in the general categories but in the specific plays. In other words Shakespeare's intentions as they are manifest in As You Like It, Pericles and The Tempest, seem to me enough alike to justify the sequence in this part of the thesis. I choose the plays in part because they suit my purposes, and this is particularly clear with Pericles. Pericles is not among Shakespeare's greatest plays, and my putting it in the middle of this sequence should not imply that it is. But

it is much better than most people think. It falls very much within the medieval literary tradition, and when we see it so, we can see just how good a play it is. Perhaps I could have chosen others--The Two Gentlemen or Midsummer Night's Dream, The Winter's Tale or Cymbeline. Still, in the sequence I just mean to show that Shakespeare gets better as a playwright and to show in part how he does so. And my choice I hope reasonably illustrates that progress.

Shakespeare's authority grows in as far as he makes his structure mirror his thought logically and coherently and clearly. Of course, as I have said, authority finally depends on a play's every part, and structure is just one part, although perhaps the most important. Basing authority on the idea of structure's mirroring thought suggests that a play succeeds in as far as it realizes the full potential of its philosophical basis, and to a certain extent this is the theme of this section of the thesis. Thus As You Like It partly fails because in its long fourth movement there is much that is repetitious and downright dull, and because the resolution of its basic antithesis fails to have a compelling and clear equivalent in the structure. Thus Pericles is a more logical and complete working out of the implications of its basic antithesis, a clearer embodiment of its philosophical basis, but it too finally fails to give that background compact and dramatic presentation. The Tempest, as I shall try to show, represents in these terms the fullness of Shakespeare's dramatic authority.

CHAPTER I

AS YOU LIKE IT

In As You Like It (1599)¹ the conflict is most simply between Fortune and Nature, and an understanding of the medieval literary tradition helps us understand the play.² The major characters--Orlando, Rosalind, and Duke Senior--are all cast down by Fortune and they in turn seek refuge in Nature, present in the mixed forest. On the other hand their rivals--Oliver and Frederick--follow Fortune upwards until they are in time converted by Nature. The opposition of Fortune and Nature appears more clearly in that to follow Fortune in the play is to eschew Nature, and as long as this is true, to follow Nature is to be out of Fortune. For instance, to gain Fortune, Oliver oppresses Orlando, his natural brother. As Orlando says,

Besides this nothing that he so plentifully gives me,
the something that nature gave me his countenance
seems to take from me: he lets me feed with his hinds,
bars me the place of a brother, and, as much as in
him lies, mines my gentility with my education...

(1,1,15-19)

And eventually Oliver tries to kill him through the wrestler Charles. (1,1,137-41)
Thus Oliver hopes to rise in the estimation of the world--a world governed by Fortune.

...I am altogether misprized: but it shall not be
so long--this wrestler shall clear all.

(11.159-60)

¹See the New Cambridge Edition, whose text I use throughout. Wilson suggests that the Folio text is based on a 1599 draft, which may in turn be a revision of a 1593 draft. pp. 103-8.

²See J. MacQueen, op.cit., These first pages owe much to MacQueen's article.

Likewise, Frederick banishes his older brother, the natural duke, that he himself might enjoy Fortune.

...the old duke is banished by his younger brother the new duke, and three or four loving lords have put themselves into voluntary exile with him, whose lands and revenues enrich the new duke, therefore he gives them good leave to wander.

(11.95-99)

And eventually in this same pursuit he too tries to kill his brother. (5,4,151-5)

Frederick also banishes Rosalind, his niece, and the unnaturalness of this is clear in that to banish Rosalind is to banish Celia, his own daughter and heir. Celia says to Rosalind,

Shall we be sundred? shall we part, sweet girl?
No, let my father seek another heir...

(1,3,98-99)

Frederick does this to enhance Celia's Fortune in the world.

Thou [Celia] art a fool--she robs thee of thy name,
And thou wilt show more bright and seem more virtuous
When she is gone:

(1,3,80-82)

The emphasis is of course on appearance, on seeming. But his unnaturalness causes only an unnatural reaction in Celia.

Duke Senior, Orlando, and Rosalind, on the other hand, are all strong in the "lineaments of nature". Duke Senior is the natural duke. Orlando is the "memory" of his father; he has within him his father's "spirit". Indeed his name is an Italian form of his father's name--Rowland¹. But at least in part, because of his natural qualities he is oppressed:

Yet he's gentle, never schooled and yet learned, full
of noble device, of all sorts enchantingly beloved,
and indeed so much in the hearts of the world, and
especially of my [Oliver's] own people, who best know
him, that I am altogether misprized: but it shall not
be so long--this wrestler shall clear all....

(1,1,155-60)

¹
J. L. Halio, " 'No Clocks in the Forest': Time in AYLI," S-E-L,
II (1962) p. 199.

Similarly, Rosalind is the kind daughter; she cannot forget her banished father.

And her naturalness is pointed by her contrast with Celia:

Herein, I [Celia] see thou lov'st me not with the full weight that I love thee; if my uncle, thy banished father, had banished thy uncle, the duke my father, so thou hadst been still with me, I could have taught my love to take thy father for mine;

(1,2,6-10)

In the end Rosalind, of course, is the "gift of heaven" who makes earthly things "atone together". (5,4,105-9) And like Orlando, because of her natural qualities she is oppressed:

Her very silence and her patience
Speak to the people, and they pity her...
Thou [Celia] art a fool--she robs thee of thy name,
And thou wilt show more bright and seem more virtuous
When she is gone:

(1,3,78-82)

Moreover, one of the important themes in the play is self-knowledge, and Duke Senior, Orlando, and Rosalind identify themselves with Nature in as far as they are, or become, advocates of self-knowledge. The connection between the divine minister Nature and self-knowledge appears in the Boece. Philosophy asks, can you tell me what thing is a man? He is a "reasonable mortel beste", Boethius says. And then she tells him.

thow hast left for to knowen thyselfe what thou art.
Thurw which I have pleyndly fownde the cause of thi
maladye, or elles the entree of recoveryng of thyn
hele. For-why, for thow art confunded with foryetyng
of thiself, forthi sorwestow that thow art exiled of
thy propre goodes; and for thow ne woost what is the
eende of thynges, forthy demestow that felonous and
wikkide men ben myghty and weleful; and for thow has
foryeten by whiche governementz the world is governed,
forthy weenestow that these mutacions of fortunes
fleten withouten governour. These ben grete causes,
nought oonly to maladye, but certes gret causes to
deth. But I thanke the auctour and the makere of
hele, that nature hath nat al forleten the.

(I,pr.6,58-83)

Self-knowing comes not through the gifts of Fortune but through Nature the divine minister. This is precisely how Duke Senior uses the Forest of Arden-- Nature's mixed forest:

Here feel we not the penalty of Adam,
 The season's difference?--as the icy fang
 And churlish chiding of the winter's winds,
 Which, when it bites and blows upon my body,
 Even till I shrink with cold, I smile and say
 'This is no flattery: these are counsellors,
 That feelingly persuade me what I am'...

(2,1,5-11)

Flattery, the false counselor, refers back to the court, which is at this point in the play the seat of Fortune and illusion. Likewise, Orlando in the first scene begins to know himself--to recognize the spirit of the father within him--when he feels his brother take away what Nature has given him.

This is it, Adam, that grieves me--and the spirit of
 my father, which I think is within me, begins to
 mutiny against this servitude....

(1,1,20-22)

And later in Nature's forest, while Jaques rails against the world ignorantly, Orlando knows himself:

I will chide no breather in the world but myself,
 against whom I know most faults.

(3,2,277-78)

And too, in the forest Rosalind advocates self-knowledge. For instance as she urges Orlando to see and know himself (1,2,163-70), so she tells Phebe to see herself not in a lover's flattery (love is again implicitly linked with Fortune) but in her own lineaments--the lineaments of Nature:

"Tis not her glass, but you [Silvius] that flatters her,
 And out of you she sees herself more proper
 Than any of her lineaments can show her...
 But, mistress, know yourself--down on your knees,
 And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love;

(3,5,54-58)

As in The Book of the Duchess, Nature is truth, Fortune illusion. And Duke Senior, Orlando, and Rosalind identify themselves with Nature and truth.

As MacQueen has said, there is generally in the forest (here as before)

the absence of illusion, the presence of truth.¹ Duke Senior's words at the beginning of Act Two point this out. Contrarily, there is generally in the court the absence of truth, the presence of illusion. For the court is the world upside down as long as Fortune rules over orderly Nature--as long as the usurper holds the throne. Celia will seem more virtuous when Rosalind, the natural daughter and the gift of heaven, is gone. And the initial dialogue with Le Beau shows us in epitome first that Fortune triumphs over Nature in the court, and then that the court is upside down. Le Beau relates the "good sport" of the wrestling, where Charles beats the old man's three sons so badly that there is little hope of life in them. (1,2,110-22) Wrestling here as before is in part a figure for Fortune, and the defeat of the old man's sons, and implicitly of his kind, is clearly a defeat of Nature. Touchstone asks,

But what is the sport, monsieur, that the ladies
have lost?

Le Beau. Why, this that I speak of.

Touchstone. Thus may men grow wiser every day. It is
the first time that ever I heard breaking of ribs
was sport for ladies.

(1,2,124-29)

Sport in the court is upside down. Orlando's house is like the court in that Nature there is oppressed. As Adam says, warning Orlando of Oliver's plot,

...your virtues, gentle master,
Are sanctified and holy traitors to you...
O, what a world is this, when what is comely
Envenoms him that bears it?

(2,3,12-15)

It is a world upside down, and the disorder and chaos of this appear also in that Fortune even preys on itself--Frederick eventually seizes all Oliver's

¹op.cit., p. 222.

land and goods. (3,1, 9-10) Disorder¹ and chaos will rule till Nature triumphs.

Again, the forest opposes the court by embodying Nature and truth. But the opposition is not absolute: Adam who is a product of the court, is a natural servant, loyal to the memory of his old master as he sees it manifest in Orlando. Then too, the unnatural appears in the forest, chiefly in the presence of Duke Senior and his banished fellows. He and his "merry men" live like Robin Hode, and they "fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world". (1,1, 110-3)² But as the rightful ruler of the court, he is as out of place in the forest as Robin is (see The Gest above) in the King's palace. This appears most clearly when they prepare to hunt:

Come, shall we go and kill us venison?
 And yet it irks me the poor dappled fools,
 Being native burghers of this desert city,
 Should in their own confines with forked heads
 Have their round haunches gored. (2,1, 21-25.)

Indeed, the stilted language itself emphasizes the unnaturalness of the court in the forest.

¹ See J. R. Brown, Shakespeare and his Comedies (London, 1957) Chapter V. Also compare Wulfstan's Address to the English (Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Reader, 14th Edition, (Oxford, 1959), for instance these lines:

And þy is nu geworden wide and side to ful yfelan
 gewunan þæt menu swyðor scamaþ nu for goddaedan
 þonne for misdaedan; (1.166)

The lines have a general relevance to the play. See also the prologue to Gower's Confessio Amantis.

² c.f. The Tale of Gamelyn, Skeat's edition (Oxford, 1893) ll. 615ff.. Gamelyn in the woods becomes head of an outlaw band.

Jaques and even at times Orlando also witness the presence of the unnatural in the forest, but to understand this, we must define natural and unnatural more clearly. In the first act the distinction is clear: Orlando cleaves to Nature, the divine minister who opposes Time by her chaste and fruitful marriages and whose laws are the bonds of kind, for he identifies himself as the kind son of the father; while Oliver is unnatural, for he opposes Nature by oppressing and seeking to kill his natural brother. In this way Oliver allies himself with Fortune, or self-interest, and with destructive Time; for to kill his brother whose natural virtues he recognizes, is in a sense to let Time destroy the memory of the father. And when he calls Orlando base born — "villain", (1,1 52) — he even suggests that the father's propagating was unchecked by chastity -- that it was guided by the appetitive Venus of the Parliament of Birds or by the appetitive Nature of Jean de Meun or of Edmund in King Lear. The appetitive Nature works with Time, because propagation unchecked by chastity is a figure for the proliferation of evil, which aids Time or Mutability in bringing ^{all} ~~all~~ to naught; while the divine minister Nature works against Time -- or rather, makes Time through an orderly succession of generations work against itself -- and so brings man towards that eternal perfection, as dame Nature describes it in the Mutability Cantos, in the Lord God of Sabaoth. In the forest Jaques celebrates the appetitive Nature. Horns are natural for him; marriage is cuckoldry:

Take thou no scorn to wear the horn,
 It was the crest ere thou wast born,
 Thy father's father wore it,
 And thy father bore it,
 The horn, the horn, the lusty horn,
 Is not a thing to laugh to scorn. (4,2, 14-19)

To urge this is to submit to evil and calumniating Time, and indeed, his

philosophy is that we simply "ripe and rot", which finds clearest expression in his speech on the seven ages of man. (2,7, 140-66) As Orlando enters the forest, he gives in briefly to an aspect of this philosophy when he expects to find Nature there savage, appetitive:

If this uncouth forest yield any thing savage, I will
either be food for it or bring it for food to thee ...
(2,6, 6-7).

He bursts in on Duke Senior as if the law of the forest were survival of the strongest -- the Nature of self-interest:

Forbear, and eat no more. (2,7,87)

But Orlando accepts the appetitive Nature only to reject her. Duke Senior meets his violence with civility and kindness, and immediately Orlando is converted to the divine Nature.

Speak you so gently? Pardon me, I pray you --
I thought that all things had been savage here,
And therefore put I on the countenance
Of stern commandment. (ll. 106-09)

Even the true court brings to the forest something of the unnatural, and the whole world of the play will stand right only when the natural duke gets back his dukedom -- when the divine minister Nature triumphs.

Different attitudes towards Time in the forest reflect the different attitudes towards Nature.¹ As I have said, Time for Jaques is the beginning and the end; life is simply ripening and rotting; and his Nature, like the Wife of Bath's (who herself is ever unchecked by chastity and ever a prey to Time), is thus appetitive. Duke Senior, however, losses and neglects "the creeping hours of time" (2,7, 112), because he is seeking and ultimately finding refuge from Fortune, who is always linked with Time,² in Nature's great forest. Orlando too seeks refuge in dame Nature's forest

¹ c.f. J.L. Halio, op.cit., pp. 197-207.

² See Boece, II, pr.3.

(indeed, his surname de Boys (de bois) suggests that he has kinship with the forest by birth), and as Macqueen points out,¹ he gives a good expression to the limit on Time's and Fortune's powers, in his metaphor for life -- the pilgrimage across Time towards eternity:

Tongues I'll hang on every tree,
That shall civil saying show.
Some, how brief the life of man
Runs his erring pilgrimage,
That the stretching of a span
Buckles in his sum of age; (3,2, 127-32)

The metaphor appears in Shakespeare's major source, Lodge's Rosalynd, in Sir John of Bordeaux's legacy to his sons:²

Let mine honour be the glasse of your actions, and
the fame of my vertues the Loadstarre to direct the
course of your pilgrimage.

Life is a pilgrimage, here as before, and this theme runs throughout As You Like It. To begin with, Orlando is kept in "idleness". He addresses his brother:

I am helping you to mar that which God made, a poor
unworthy brother of yours, with idleness. (1,1, 31-32)

In Lydgate's Pilgrimage "idleness" leads directly to the seven deadly sins, and in Reason and Sensuality Diana works to keep her forest -- the forest of Nature -- free from "idleness", that the dreamer-pilgrim may travel safely. Recollect also the basic contrast in the pilgrimage in Piers Plowman, of regenerate and unregenerate, workers and wanderers. And mention of "idleness" in Act One of As You Like It is not superfluous, because Orlando himself is in danger of being unregenerate, of falling to evil. Oliver's

¹ op.cit., p.224

² G. Bullough, Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare (London, 1958) Vol. II, p. 161.

unnaturalness tempts him to respond unnaturally, and when Oliver strikes him (1. 49) he in turn grabs Oliver by the throat. (1. 52) Orlando wants his own part of the father's will that he might "buy his fortunes" (1. 70); he will offend Oliver as much as he needs to for his own good (1. 76); thus he seeks to compete with Oliver on Oliver's terms. And this desire for justice and revenge does not leave Orlando till he finds Oliver out of Fortune's favor in the forest (4,3, 106), and kills the hungry lioness rather than let her kill his brother:

But kindness, nobler ever than revenge,
And nature, stronger than his just occasion,
Made him give battle to the lioness,
Who quickly fell before him. (4,3, 128-31.)

Another commonplace of the pilgrimage literature is the pilgrim as champion, ready to fight evil. Again, it appears in Sir Gawain and in Lydgate and Malory and Spenser. Here the combat, which is Orlando's "trial" (1,2, 176), takes up the theme of natural and unnatural. Orlando is of course the natural man, and the wrestler Charles is unnatural. He (perhaps) kills the three sons of the old man, and he represents the upside down court and the unnatural Oliver. This conflict is epitomized in the dialogue:

Charles. Come, where is this young gallant that is so
desirous to lie with his mother earth?
Orlando. Ready, sir, but his will hath a much more modest
working. (1,2, 189-92.)

And in As You Like It as in the earlier literature, most of the pilgrimage takes place in Nature's mixed forest. Throughout, Orlando on his pilgrimage stands against Jaques "the traveler". Again, Orlando looks towards eternity, Jaques towards the seventh and last age of man. Rosalind describes the traveler:

Farewell, Monsieur Traveller: look you lisp and wear
strange suits; disable all the benefits of your own
country; be out of love with your nativity, and almost

chide God for making you that countenance you are; or
I will scarce think you have swam in a gondola
(4,1, 32-36).

The contrast vaguely resembles that in Piers Plowman between Piers and the false pilgrim, a "wanderer". For though Jaques thinks of "many matters", he is out of accord with Nature's forest (2,5,48-59), and thus in terms of the play he is unregenerate. He leaves the marriage ceremony to hear and learn "much matter"; but clearly, like the false pilgrim, he does not know Truth. He has ears and he does not hear. Orlando, on the other hand, is a true pilgrim, a seeker of Truth. And here, as in Reason and Sensuality and in Book III of the Faerie Queene, the pilgrimage theme merges with the theme of marriage. Rosalind embodies Truth and Nature in the forest, and union with her is the goal of Orlando's pilgrimage.

Rosalind embodies Truth for Orlando; this is clear in his poem:

The quintessence of every sprite
Heaven would in little show.
Therefore Heaven Nature charged,
That one body should be filled
With all graces wide-enlarged:
Nature presently distilled
Helen's cheek, but not Her heart,
Cleopatra's majesty,
Atalanta's better part,
Sad Lucretia's modesty
Thus Rosalind of many parts
By heavenly synod was devised,
Of many faces, eyes, and hearts,
To have the touches dearest prized
Heaven would that she these gifts should have,
And I to live and die her slave. (3,2, 139-54.)

The subject of the poem, as MacQueen has said,¹ is the making of the perfect woman. Heaven and Nature work together, much as they do in making White in The Book of the Duchess, where White is Nature's chef patron and Truth's

¹ op.cit., pp. 220-2. "In Anticlaudianus the creation of the perfect man leads to the restoration of the Golden Age: in As You Like It the creation of Rosalind is to make the desert Forest of Arden civil."

maner principal, and in making the formel in the Parliament, where the formel is the highest of the divine minister Nature's works. And though Rosalind's position may be somewhat qualified by the dialogue in the play, Orlando is not seeking an illusory truth; the theophany at the end shows us that Rosalind, the gift of heaven, is integral in making earthly things atone together. Hymen sings:

Then is there mirth in heaven,
 When earthly things made even
 Atone together.
 Good duke, receive thy daughter,
 Hymen from heaven brought her,
 Yea, brought her hither,
 That thou mightst join her hand with his
 Whose heart within her bosom is (5,4, 105-12).

The key word is of course atone-- the simplicity or one-ness of a world in harmony and accord.

And indeed in As You Like It, as in The Book of the Duchess and the Parliament and the Knight's Tale, marriage becomes a figure for order in society and for continuance in change. Love, and particularly the love of Rosalind and Orlando, undergoes refinement in Nature's forest until it ends in marriage. This refinement happens in two ways: First, by juxtaposition. Phebe's and Touchstone's loves, for instance, are always more appetitive than Rosalinds'. Phebe is guided only by her eye-- her sense-- and thus her reason and sensuality are upside down. This is clear in her falling in love with Rosalind disguised as Ganymede: with her eye as her only guide, Phebe is lead into an "unnatural" homosexual love. Her senses recognize only appearances--illusion--and not Nature and truth. Shakespeare parodies sensual love:

"Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?"

(3,5, 83)

And Rosalind of course understands the fault. Touchstone's love too is

appetitive. As he sees marriage, horns are inevitable, and his upside down reasoning makes this right:

...as a walled town is more worthier than a village,
so is the forehead of a married man more honourable
than the bare brow of a bachelor: and by how much
defence is better than no skill, by so much is a horn
more precious than to want.... (3,3, 55-59)

He would be married "under a bush", that being poorly married, he might later leave his wife. (3,3,84-7) Second, the love of Rosalind and Orlando undergoes refinement on its own. Time tries, as Rosalind says. (4,1, 195) To begin with, their falling in love is caught up in the figure of the wrestling match. (The encounter with Love, Venus says in Reason and Sensuality, is a wrestling match.)¹ Orlando's "better parts are all thrown down" (1,2,237-8), and Rosalind tells him,

Sir, you have wrestled well and overthrown
More than your enemies. (1,2,242-43)

True, she recognizes his natural qualities as they appear in his trial, but she is also following her eye--her sense. In Nature's forest their romantic love survives Time's test of fidelity until it emerges right-side up (with the help of art in the form of disguise, poetry, and music) as a heaven-sanctified marriage.

In the play marriage is a figure for order in several ways. In the beginning, the "marriages" which bind the universe are broken. Subject overthrows lord, brother tries to murder brother, master abuses servant. (1,1,77) But in Nature's forest these "marriage" bonds grow back together. Frederick is converted by the forest in the person of an old religious man, and he in turn restores the crown to his brother, the rightful lord.

¹The metaphor also appears in Gower's Confessio Amantis Book VIII 11.2238-44.

Oliver is converted by Orlando's kindness, and he in turn binds up Orlando's wound and revives him. (4,3,150) Orlando as master saves the life of the good servant Adam. (2, 7, 170) And indeed, Nature's forest, far from being savage, is the only place where the ordered society can survive while the world is upside down. Orlando appeals to the duke on the basis of the ideal of an ordered society:¹

If ever you have looked on better days;
 If ever been where bells have knolled to church;
 If ever sat at any good man's feast;
 If ever from your eyelids wiped a tear,
 And know what 'tis to pity and be pitied,
 Let gentleness my strong enforcement be: (2,7, 113-18)

And the duke acknowledges his appeal. (11.120-4) The restoration of these "marriages" makes society in fact orderly, right-side up; and the actual marriages, and particularly Rosalind and Orlando's, embody this restoration. As their love grows into an orderly marriage, so the world gradually grows right-side up. The sanctified marriages are a triumph of heaven and Nature over Fortune and Time. Thus the wedding gifts return to Oliver the lands he lost to Frederick (5,4,165), and thus they give to Orlando a "potent dukedom". (1.166) Marriage here as before is continuance in change: Rosalind and Orlando inherit, and as they are natural heirs to a natural lord, they will perpetuate the right rule. As long as Fortune suppresses Nature, Time and appetite triumph, for in place of continuance in change there is only the proliferation of evil. But the orderly marriages removes the conflict between Nature and Fortune: the world is righted so that once again Nature may work through generation to defeat Time and so to bring man on earth towards a kind of perfection. Through Nature's marriages, the

¹MacQueen, *op.cit.*, p. 223. MacQueen notes the parallel between the duke and his fellows who appear as "outlaws", and Robin Hode (see The Gest above), and the parallel with Gamelyn, particularly with the line,

He moste needes walke in woode, that may not walke in towne.
 (1. 672)

conflict that precipitates the action of the play is resolved.

If what Shakespeare is trying to do in As You Like It is more or less clear, then let us see whether he makes a coherent and logical play--a play with authority. As You Like It generally breaks down into five movements or sequences (which do not correspond to the division into acts), and I shall consider each of these movements in turn. The first two scenes of the play make up the first.

The structure of these two scenes is parallel in exposition and development. Scene one in the house of the late Sir Rowland de Boys sets forth the conflict between the natural and the unnatural--between, if you will, the divine minister Nature and the appetitive Nature--and brings that conflict towards a head. Scene two sets forth and enlarges upon the similar conflict in the court, but in terms more specifically of Nature and Fortune, and then goes on to develop the conflict between Orlando and Oliver.

Consider the action in scene one. To begin with, Orlando tells Adam how the unnatural is oppressing Nature:

As I remember, Adam, it was upon this fashion: a'
bequeathed me by will but poor thousand crowns and,
as thou say'st, charged my brother on his blessing
to breed me well: and there begins my sadness
(ll. 1-5)

But in saying this, he also puts the conflict in terms of Fortune and Infortune. In a world ruled by Nature, Fortune (the thousand crowns) would follow Nature; but in a world ruled by the unnatural, Fortune and Nature stand at odds. Orlando objects to his own lack of Fortune and to the unnatural oppression of the "spirit" of his father.

... he lets me feed with his hinds, bars me the place
of a brother (ll. 17-18)

Of course these objections are linked, and he sees the link: he feels the spirit of the father within him mutiny against servitude. Thus he

appeals to Oliver on the basis of Nature:

I know you are my eldest brother, and in the gentle
condition of blood you should so know me... The
courtesy of nations allows you my better, in that you
are the first-born, but that same tradition takes not
away my blood, were there twenty brothers betwixt us:
(11. 42-46)

This appeal means nothing to Oliver, and he responds unnaturally here, first by striking his brother, and then by suggesting that Orlando is base born--"villain". Both responses define the kind of Nature Oliver has for his goddess--the Nature of Edmund. (Though of course the possibility for regeneration remains in Oliver: as Orlando says, Oliver the first-born comes nearest the father's "reverence".) The loyal servant Adam takes up Orlando's plea for Nature and urges the brothers to be "at accord". (1. 60) But as the scene develops, we see that they are beyond this, for when Oliver resists, Orlando begins to fight on Oliver's terms. Oliver strikes him, and he grabs Oliver by the throat. And finally Orlando appeals in terms of Fortune:

therefore allow me such exercises as may become a
gentleman, or give me the poor allottery my father left
me by testament--with that I will go buy my fortunes.
(11. 68-70)

This is not necessarily unnatural, but it does represent a shift in emphasis. His next statement is more clearly upside down:

I will no further offend you than becomes me for my good.
(11. 75-76)

Orlando shifts his appeal from Nature to justice and Fortune. The conflict is within him as well as around him, and the coherent logical structure of this scene brings this out well. In this way the encounter here anticipates the encounter in Nature's forest, where Orlando sees

justice and revenge embodied in the lioness, and defeats them.

In the second part of scene one, Oliver's unnaturalness ties up with that in the court and then grows to a head. We learn that Frederick, like Oliver, breaks several bonds by banishing his older brother, the natural lord. And here to the conflict appears in terms of Fortune as well as in terms of the unnatural, for we learn that after the usurpation, the lands and revenues of those who follow the banished duke, enrich Frederick.

(l. 98) As Adam, who urges patience and harmony, gives a vestige of supporting Nature to Orlando, so Celia, we learn, gives this to Rosalind in the court; for she so loves Rosalind that she would have either followed her into exile or died. (ll. 104-5) After this exposition comes a continuation of the earlier part of the scene. Oliver has acted unnaturally, and when Orlando responds in kind, he redoubles his efforts. Orlando's grabbing his brother by the throat does not justify Oliver's plot to murder him, but it certainly urges him to it. One aspect of the appetitive Nature is her growing hunger: she cannot be filled; she must be converted. When Orlando departs, Oliver says to him, "You shall have some part of your 'will'." (l. 73) The pun refers to the father's testament and to Orlando's willingness to act in Oliver's terms--the terms of Fortune and the unnatural. And when Charles says, "I'll give him his payment" (l. 149), he catches up both meanings. The action develops by cause and effect. Orlando's unnaturalness precipitates and, to Oliver, justifies the plot. Oliver's description of Orlando is not simply a ruse to trick Charles:

He is... full of ambition, an envious emulator of every man's good parts, a secret and willanous contriver against me his natural brother: (ll. 134-36)

As far as Oliver is concerned, there is at least some truth in it.¹ The structure mirrors the conflict clearly: unnaturalness in and around Orlando precipitates the combat and so the exile. And again, the scene looks forward to the brother's next meeting--looks forward in contrast and comparison--where Oliver, again responding in kind, is converted to Nature. For there he responds to Orlando's naturalness. The emphasis is on Orlando's growth.

The second scene is similar. It begins with a dialogue that defines the conflict and broadens its implication, and from there its general development shows us Nature-oppressed moving towards Nature-banished from the court. Rosalind is Nature oppressed. She is more natural than Celia, (though, like Orlando, Celia's unnaturalness is a reaction in kind against her usurping father.) But Celia redeems herself in part by saying that she will restore Nature when her father dies. (ll. 15-20) Their discussion of Fortune and Nature broadens in its implications when, turning to "sport", they focus specifically on the subject of love. Nature may make a fair creature, Celia says, but Fortune in turn may drive her into the fire. (ll. 41-2) The link between Fortune and Venus is clear, for Celia refers to appetitive love--Venus and her torch.² They drop the subject when Touchstone appears: "nature's natural" comes in to cut off the argument when Fortune threatens Nature. But the idea reappears when "sport" enters again--this time wrestling which, as I have said, is in part a figure for man's encounter with appetitive love. Both Rosalind's and Orlando's hearts are overthrown in the wrestling match, and from here until they are married

¹ Though from his speech that ends this scene (ll. 152-62), we know that he also recognizes Orlando's natural virtues. Orlando's action simply gives him an excuse and urges him to use it.

² MacQueen, op.cit., p. 225.

they are in danger of "falling into the fire", of falling into appetitive love and, like Touchstone, into propagation unchecked by chastity.

The manner of the play this far has been partly allegory. For instance, allegory appears when the ladies talk of Nature and Fortune, and too, in this scene Rosalind is in a sense "Nature-oppressed". Clearly, the wrestling match as an encounter with the God of Love is structural allegory, and we are meant to see it so:

Sir, you have wrestled well and overthrown
More than your enemies. (ll. 242-43)

An audience as much in the medieval tradition as Shakespeare's would understand it without hesitating. But how is this important? The positions of Rosalind and Orlando have steadily grown together. In this scene alone their movements are parallel. Again, Rosalind begins from the position of Nature oppressed, and so does Orlando. He goes into his "trial" friendless and fortuneless, filling up a place in the world that would be better for him to leave empty:

I shall do my friends no wrong [by dying], for I have
none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have
nothing; only in the world I fill up a place, which may
be better supplied when I have made it empty.
(ll. 179-82)

He wants to die. (1.178) His victory over Charles is the victory of Nature over the unnatural animality of his brother, and yet what should be the crowning reward for such a victory--his chance to identify himself as the natural man, the son of a noble lord (11.210-1)--turns upside and precipitates his exile. Frederick says:

I would thou hadst been son to some man else.
The world esteemed thy father honourable,
But I did find him still mine enemy:
Thou shouldst have better pleased me with this deed,
Hadst thou descended from another house:
(11.212-16)

And shortly, Le Beau points out the upside down value of the court in telling him,

... leave this place ... Albeit you have deserved
High commendation, true applause, and love,
Yet such is now the duke's condition,
That he misconsters all that you have done ...
(ll. 250-53)

This movement from oppressed to banished exactly parallels Rosalind's movement, with whom Frederick has lately taken much displeasure,

Grounded upon no other argument
But that the people praise her for her virtues,
And pity her for her good father's sake;
And, on my life, his malice 'gainst the lady
Will suddenly break forth ... (ll. 267-71)

The structure clearly reflects their parallel movements, and the love allegory of the wrestling match strengthens this parallel by showing them both overthrown by Love. Beyond, and more important, the allegory tries to tie the theme of order and disorder--chastity and unchastity--in love, to the theme of order and disorder--natural and unnatural--in society. The match begins when Oliver plots to use the upside down court to kill his brother, and it ends with Orlando and Rosalind falling dangerously in love. The two themes come together; upside down love and upside down banishment are the simultaneous outcomes of the trial. And there is the implicit suggestion that if the lovers come to Nature's orderly chaste marriage, natural order will again rule society. The imaginative link which is essential to an understanding of the play, is rooted in the allegory and in the structure. Yet after all, rooted rather obscurely. If seeing the allegory is easy, understanding its implications is not. The court shows itself most upside down when it banishes Orlando, and the lovers show themselves--their reason and sensuality--upside down when they are

overthrown by love. Seeing the connection between order in love and order in society, as I have said, is necessary to understanding the play. The connection should have clear expression here, so that as this theme develops, our understanding might be complete. Yet the connection here is too obscure to be seen in performance. It does not have a clear and compelling expression in the structure, and either we miss the point entirely in this scene, or our attention falters as we stop and try to reason the connection out. And thus the connection at this point lacks real authority.

The next four scenes (Act One, scene three, through Act Two, scene three) make up the second movement or sequence, and these scenes complete the banishment of Nature from the court and bring her towards the forest. The structure is more or less circular, and the scene introducing Arden, the destiny of all those outlawed by the court, comes in the middle. This balanced, circular structure drives the lovers together. It also makes this sequence of the play static. When we stand far enough back, we see the scenes in tableau. Rosalind and Celia on one side, Orlando and Adam on the other, come towards each other as they come towards the forest. And this static quality, I suggest, by forcing us to stand back and see the movement as a whole, emphasizes the allegory. At the end of Act One, scene two, Orlando gives us a kind of epitome of the whole play:

Thus must I from the smoke into the smother,
From tyrant duke unto a tyrant brother ...
But heavenly Rosalind! (ll. 275-77)

Heavenly Rosalind--marriage with her--is the salvation from the evil duke and brother, and this sequence of scenes moves Orlando closer to her and to that element--Nature's forest--where their love can grow. And the allegory in the second sequence underscores their moving together, towards

orderly marriage, because as each is driven towards that ultimate union in Nature's forest, each establishes or re-establishes a saving "marriage". Each imagines the forest to be appetitive, and each is strengthened and in part saved by a "marriage" which for Rosalind is true friendship, and for Orlando a true master-servant relationship. The structure skilfully brings this out.

The opening dialogue in the first scene (scene three) looks forward over the whole play. First it suggests that in her love for Orlando, Rosalind's reason and sensuality are upside down. Celia asks her to speak:

... come, lame me with reasons.
 Rosalind. Then there were two cousins laid up, when the one
 should be lamed with reasons, and the other mad without
 any. (ll. 6-9)

The figure of love as a wrestling match recurs (l. 22), and Celia assures her that in time her love will right itself despite her initial fall:

O, a good wish upon you! you will try in time, in
 despite of a fall. (ll. 24-25)

Immediately juxtaposed with this talk of upside down reason and sensuality, Frederick enters and, in banishing Rosalind, shows unwittingly the upside down reason of the court. Rosalind, makes an appeal based on self-knowledge. (l. 46) She would know the reason for her exile. You are your father's daughter, he says, and that is reason enough. But as is clear, he banishes her at least in part to make Celia seem more virtuous (ll. 77-82), and this valuing in the court of illusion rather than truth is clearly upside down. The connection with Rosalind's upside down love is implicit. She says that she loves Orlando because her father loved his father, (l. 29), and this appeal to Nature goes some way towards justifying and perhaps even righting her love. It follows in the juxtaposition that the return of Nature, in the person of the banished duke, will right the

upside down court. The love plot connects with society, but again the connection is obscure.

Rosalind's banishment throws her and Celia even closer together. They were always close (like Juno's swans (1.75)), but now Celia breaks her bond with her father,

let my father seek another heir ... (1. 99)

and cleaves inseparably to her friend. Twice this marriage-friendship helps Rosalind. She does not know where to go (1. 106), and Celia tells her--to her father in the forest. She does not know how to cope with the appetitive Nature she expects to find there,

Alas, what danger will it be to us,
Maids as we are, to travel forth so far!
Beauty provokes thieves sooner than gold. (11. 108-10)

and again Celia tells her--by art. They will disguise themselves and so outface the appetitive in the forest. (11.111-4) And thus in their "marriage" of friendship, they go off "content". (1. 137)

The central scene (Act Two, scene one) in this circular movement defines life in the forest, where the oppressed characters are seeking refuge. There are two attitudes towards life in the forest: Duke Senior's is reasonable; Jaques' is exaggerated and foolish. Again, Duke Senior emphasizes the presence in the forest of palpable truth, as against the illusion of flattery in the court. And this simplicity in Nature leads him to self-knowledge. About the weather he says:

This is no flattery: these are counsellors
That feelingly persuade me what I am ... (11. 10-11)

Like Robin Hode, the duke and his fellows are dressed as "foresters" and "outlaws",¹ but they are somewhat out of their element in the woods, and

¹Folio stage directions.

Duke Senior implies this when he regrets shooting the deer. The deer hunting again suggests a parallel with The Book of the Duchess (see above) where the noise of Fortune's hunt is out of accord with the harmony of Nature's birds and her orderly forest. The duke recognizes and regrets the unnaturalness of the hunt. (ll. 21-5) On the other hand, when Jaques takes up the theme, his attitude is exaggerated. He spends his time "weeping and commenting upon the sobbing deer". (ll. 65-6) The picture is absurd. He moralizes the deer into a "thousand similies":

"Poor deer," quoth he, "thou mak'st a testament
As worldlings do, giving the sum of more
To that which had too much" (ll. 47-49)

The contrast between the duke and Jaques appears in the attitude each has towards Fortune and Time. Duke Senior uses Time--the "seasons' difference" --to get self-knowledge. He can

... translate the stubbornness of fortune
Into so quiet and sweet a style. (ll. 19-20)

Jaques merely weeps and mourns; he rails against the country and the court. (l. 59) Rosalind and Celia already ally themselves with Duke Senior, for they go into the forest "content". And as we shall see shortly, so does Orlando.

The short, following scene, (Two, two) begins a plot to retrieve Celia and Touchstone. Celia's bed is "untreasured", and Frederick wants to get his treasure back. The scene augments the circular movement by suggesting that the women are with Orlando:

That youth is surely in their company. (l. 16)

And the next scene (Two, three) adds to this suggestion by closely paralleling Rosalind and Celia's departure.

Like the court, Oliver's house is a world upside down (11.14-5), and natural and unnatural again appear in terms of Time. Orlando makes Time defeat itself; as the "memory" of his father (1.3) he recreates his father's nobility and thus, through continuance in change, defeats Time. Oliver on the other hand helps destructive Time by trying to kill Orlando and by trying thus to kill the nobility of the father. Adam describes him:

Your brother--no, no brother--yet the son
 (Yet not the son, I will not call him son)
 Of him I was about to call his father-- (11. 19-21)

But as the friendship-marriage saves Rosalind, the master-servant "marriage" here counteracts Oliver's unnaturalness and saves Orlando. Like Rosalind, Orlando does not know what to do:¹

... wouldst thou have me go and beg my food?
 Or with a base and boisterous sword enforce
 A thievish living on the common road?
 This I must do, or know not what to do:
 Yet this I will not do, (11. 31-35)

He too fears that life outside society must be savage, appetitive. Adam saves him with service: let me be your servant, he says and gives him gold, trusting his own care to a divine Nature:

He that doth the raven feed,
 Yea providently caters for the sparrow,
 Be comfort to my age. (11. 43-45)

Adam is the true servant--a natural man himself. (11. 47-53) and Orlando recognizes the man's truth and loyalty:

O good old man, how well in thee appears
 The constant service of the antique world,
 When service sweat for duty, not for meed! (11. 56-58)

Immured by this "marriage" against the appetitive in both Oliver and the

¹There is some suggestion here of the parable of the unjust steward. (Luke, 16) The unjust steward, when he is driven out of his master's house, makes a place for himself in the house of the unrighteous. Likewise, Orlando is tempted to become a thief.

"common road", he goes off with Adam towards "some settled low content". (1.68) The circular movement brings these four scenes into a tableau: instead of moving linearly towards the forest, they focus around it. This balance in the structure underscores the balance in Rosalind's and Orlando's situations, and draws us back into a wider view, that we may clearly see the allegorical connection between Nature's orderly "marriages" and natural order in society.

In the next sequence, which completes Act Two (scenes four through seven), we see the exiles in the forest, and as they meet the persons of the forest, they re-shape their attitudes towards Nature and life there. The sequence breaks into two parts, and the first two scenes balance the second. In the first two scenes Rosalind strengthens and in part saves Celia, and in the second two Orlando does the same for Adam. Both groups are forced to re-define their conceptions of Nature in the forest, and while Rosalind must think about order and reason in love, Orlando must think about the proper basis for an ordered society. Again the balanced structure underscores the essential imaginative link in the play-- marriage and society.

In the last movement, Celia helps Rosalind in their union of friendship, and here (scene four) with the situations reversed and Celia in trouble, Rosalind helps her. Celia is weak with hunger:

I faint almost to death. (1. 63)

And Rosalind see that she must comfort her. (1. 6) Her kindness appears clearly through juxtaposition with Touchstone. Touchstone would begrudge helping Celia if at the same time he would not increase his own Fortune:

For my part, I had rather bear with you than bear you;
yet I should bear no cross if I did bear you, for I
think you have no money in your purse. (11. 11-13)

His wisdom is practical, and he cannot follow Nature without Fortune.

Touchstone becomes a prime example of the unnatural in the forest, and by comparing him with Corin, we again see just how unnatural he is.

Corin pities Celia and wishes more for her than for himself that he had Fortune, that he might help her:

I pity her,
And wish, for her sake more than for mine own
My fortunes were more able to relieve her: (11. 72-74)

Fortune is subordinate to Nature. This quite reverses Touchstone's values. He greets Corin, "Holla; you clown!" and identifies himself, "Your betters, sir"; and we see how little he understands the forest and how unnatural his thinking is there. At first Rosalind and Celia misunderstand the forest as well. They are kind to each other, but they still think, as they thought in the last movement, that Nature in the forest will be appetitive, that only Fortune (gold) will win help. Celia wonders whether Corin

for gold will give us any food, (1. 62)

Rosalind at least provides an alternative:

I prithee, shepherd, if that love or gold
Can in this desert place buy entertainment,
Bring us where we may rest ourselves and feed: (11. 68-70)

Corin of course does it for love--pity. They learn this, and their presence in the forest helps make society there kind and orderly. They will not act like Corin's old master "of churlish disposition"; they will mend Corin's wages, and he will be a loyal true servant.

In the midst of this, Rosalind is forced to think about reason and folly in love. Silvius describes some of the follies love has driven him

to, and she identifies her passion with his:

Jove, Jove! this shepherd's passion
Is much upon my fashion. (11. 58-59)

But so does Touchstone. As Silvius reminds Rosalind, so he reminds Touchstone, and Touchstone remembers the foolish extremities of his love:

I remember the kissing of her batler and the cow's dugs
that her pretty chopt hands had milked; and I remember
the wooing of a peascod instead of her ... (11. 48-50)

The suggestion of "codpiece" in "peascod" underscores the appetitiveness behind "folly", behind upside down love. And the connection between the loves of Silvius and Touchstone and Rosalind, makes her stop and think about love's being "mortal in folly":

Thou speak'st wiser than thou art ware of. (1. 55)

In much the same way, in the other half of this sequence Orlando stops and thinks about order in society. Again, like Rosalind and Celia he begins by thinking the forest must be appetitive. Like Rosalind he wants to help his companion, and he thinks he must do this by forcing a living with his sword. Duke Senior however does not respond in kind: as Corin meets the offer of gold with kindness, so the duke meets Orlando's bold force with gentleness and civility. Immediately Orlando is converted. He changes his appeal from force to the ideal of a natural ordered society. (2,7, 109-19) And Duke Senior is moved by this ideal where he is not moved by strength:

True it is that we have seen better days,
And have with holy bell been knolled to church,
And sat at good men's feasts, and wiped our eyes
Of drops that sacred pity hath engendered:
And therefore sit you down in gentleness, (11. 120-24)

In the earlier scene the contrast between Touchstone and both Corin and Rosalind defines Nature in the forest, and here the contrast between Jaques and both the duke and Orlando does the same. In the first place Jaques

identifies himself with Touchstone. In the song (scene five) he says that all are fools who come into the forest, leaving wealth and ease (1. 50-4), and this is Touchstone's judgment too:

Ay, now am I in Arden, the more fool I.
When I was at home I was in a better place. (2,4, 15-16)

Jaques identifies himself with Touchstone again when he relates Touchstone's moralizing on Time:

"'Tis but an hour since it was nine,
And after one more hour 'twill be eleven,
And so from hour to hour, we ripe, and ripe,
And then from hour to hour, we rot, and rot--
And thereby hangs a tale." ...
And I [Jaques] did laugh, sans intermission,
An hour by his dial O noble fool! (2,7, 24-33)

He endorses the philosophy of ripening and rotting--the supremacy of Time.

He stands in contrast with Duke Senior in that while the duke advocates self-knowledge, Jaques rails against the world. He would "cleanse the foul body of the infected world". This is upside down, the duke says:

Most mischievous foul sin, in chiding sin:
For thou thyself hast been a libertine
As sensual as the brutish sting itself,
And all th' embossed sores and headed evils,
That thou with license of free foot hast caught,
Wouldst thou disgorge into the general world. (11. 64-69)

And Jaques stands in contrast with Orlando in that while Orlando is converted by the duke's wisdom and Nature, Jaques is not. Indeed, he never hears the criticism.

Why, who cries out on pride,
That can therein tax any private party? (11. 70-71)

His wisdom is only railing, his cleansing is itself infection; the letter and the spirit are upside down, and yet he persists. And later in the scene his vision of life as a futile progression in Time from youth to

senseless death, stands in contrast with the natural behavior of Orlando and the duke towards Adam. Their kindness clearly brings Adam from the point of death back to life, much as Orlando brings to life a "living" image of old Sir Rowland:

If that you were the good Sir Rowland's son,
As you have whispered faithfully you were,
And as mine eye doth his effigy witness
Most truly limed and living in your face,
Be truly welcome hither: (ll. 194-98)

Nature saves man, both in flesh and in spirit, from the ravagement of Time; the unnatural abandons man to Time. And art--here music --epitomizes this:

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude: (ll. 174-76)

By juxtaposition, the scenes in this movement clearly develop the play's basic antithesis between Nature and Fortune, between natural and unnatural. And by balance, this movement shows Rosalind and Orlando coming together in their learning in Nature's forest.

The first three movements are coherent and logical and more or less clear, and thus they compel attention. Generally they develop by cause and effect, although they also contain an interweaving of parallel events--two actions develop side by side. Alone each action develops by conflict; the interwoven actions develop by antithesis. The next movement (Three, one, through Four, two) develops more or less entirely by antithesis rather than by conflict. The structure is a pattern of events, as in The Faerie Queene and in the Sankgreal of Malory. But even so, this movement is episodic and clumsy. We see the general pattern emerge: Rosalind and Orlando's love grows orderly by being set against the loves of Touchstone and of Silvius and by surviving certain tests on its own. Even in the

antithesis of a patterned structure the development must have logic and coherence, but in this movement those qualities are absent, and though many of the episodes are delightful on their own, several are downright dull. In general, authority wanes.

For instance, the first scene in this movement is good on its own; it shows the appetitive fortune beginning to feed on herself (11.9-10), and it drives forward the plot to recover Celia. But as it develops the conflict between Oliver and Orlando, it makes us anticipate some event, some immediate confrontation of the brothers; and ultimately our anticipation is unsatisfied. For when Oliver relates his conversion and when Jaques de Boys relates the conversion of Frederick, we get nothing but anticlimax. The play shifts its technique from a plot structure to a pattern structure, and the conflict that this short scene tries to develop gets swallowed up and forgotten. Similarly, in the next scene the dialogue between Corin and Touchstone is clear and delightful in itself. The unnaturalness of the court in the forest, the naturalness of Corin, the oblique criticism of Orlando's verse writing, appear in witty dialogue; but in terms of coherent structure this episode is merely superfluous. All this is clear either in the last movement or in the next part of this scene; we laugh and yawn. The next two episodes in this scene are downright dull. After reading the poems, Celia and Rosalind woodenly criticize their quality (11.164-71), and Rosalind tries to identify the poet. The dialogue is slap-stick:

Celia. It is young Orlando,

Rosalind. Nay, but the devil take mocking; speak
sad brow and true maid.

Celia. I' faith, coz, 'tis he.

Rosalind. Orlando?

Celia. Orlando.

Rosalind. Alas the day, what shall I do with my
doublet and hose? (11. 210-18)

Likewise, the dialogue between Orlando and Jaques (11.251-92) is hollow and dull. For forty odd lines they exchange taunts. The exchange points their opposition, I suppose, but it does so very lamely. It would be better scratched out.

Through the rest of this movement a pattern does emerge. The two encounters of Orlando and the disguised Rosalind test the constancy of their love, and the intervening episodes with Touchstone and Audrey and with Silvius and Phebe define and refine this love by juxtaposition. In his poem and in his invocation of chaste Diana (3,2, 2-4) Orlando states the goal of his pilgrimage-quest--chaste union with the embodiment on earth of Nature and Truth--and Rosalind tests his constancy by trying to dissuade him from his goal. She would cure him of his sickness (1. 352), of his madness. (1. 390) But he does not want to be cured. (1. 414) Their first meeting in Nature's forest sets up the trial of Orlando's constancy, and the dialogue between Rosalind and Celia (Three, four) emphasizes Rosalind's giddy uncertainty about the answers. His hair, she says, is a dissembling color, somewhat browner than Judas's, and yet it is a good color. (11. 7-10) Her giddiness here is like Phebe's when she describes Ganymede:

His leg is but so so, and yet 'tis well: (3,5, 119)

For both Orlando and Rosalind, the time in the forest tries their constancy and judgment.

The episodes with Touchstone and Audrey and with Silvius and Phebe establish in part the terms of this trial. Touchstone's love is appetitive. He would not have Audrey "honest". (3,3, 25-34) He thanks the gods for her foulness; "sluttishness may come hereafter". (1. 38) Again, horns

for him are inevitable, and his upside down reasoning makes this right. (ll. 45-59) He would not be "married well"; being married under a bush will give him a good excuse to leave his wife. (ll. 84-7) Another aspect of unnatural love appears in the scene (Three, five) with Silvius and Phebe. As the court is out of place in Nature's forest, so is courtly love in these country people. After scorning Silvius' love, Phebe falls hopelessly in love with Ganymede by "tangling" eyes. Her scorning Silvius is unnatural, Rosalind says, because she does not know herself--because she sees herself through another's flattery and not through her own lineaments. (ll. 54-8) And that her love for Ganymede is upside down is clear in that her eye completely deceives her. Romantic, sensual love makes her see not truth but illusion, not nature but disguise.

The scene of the second encounter between Orlando and the disguised Rosalind (Four, one), where she tries him on just these terms, begins with another intrusive dialogue, this time with Jaques. True, the dialogue shows Rosalind exposing Jaques' pretence to wisdom. But it does not follow necessarily and naturally from what has come before and it is mainly dull. On the other hand, the dialogue between Orlando and Rosalind grows logically out of the preceding. Rosalind tries him first in terms of purely appetitive love and then in terms of romantic courtly love¹ and Orlando remains fixed in his ideal, his goal. The outcome of marriage is cuckoldry, she argues (ll. 50-9), and he answers:

Virtue is no horn-maker ... and my Rosalind is
virtuous. (l. 61)

Then she debunks romantic love in her famous speech on the courtly "patterns of love" which ends,

¹Compare Rosalind's attitude here with the Wife of Bath's.

Men have died from time to time, and worms have
eaten them, but not for love. (ll. 102-03)

She puts him through a mock marriage:

Orlando. And wilt thou have me?
Rosalind. Ay, and twenty such ... (ll. 113-14)

But he remains impervious to the cure and constant and faithful to his
ideal of her as virtuous and wise. (l. 154) In the end Time must try:

Well, Time is the old justice that examines all such
offenders, and let Time try: (ll. 194-95)

And though Orlando does not keep the hour of his appointment, his faith-
fulness over this period of separation from her in the forest proves his
constancy in his pilgrimage-quest.

We can nearly always see what Shakespeare is trying to do, but his
treatment--the pattern of scenes in this movement--is not logical and
coherent. The scenes do not grow necessarily and naturally into a whole,
and though a general pattern does emerge, there is too much that seems
random and episodic. Whether a product of necessarily hasty writing or
of hasty revision, this movement is unclear in its development of the
play's basic conflict and antithesis. The playwright does not have firm
control of his material. Our attention jumps abruptly from scene to scene,
and without a clear focus or a clear path to follow, it falters. Authority
waned.

The last movement begins with Oliver's conversion (Four, three) and
ends with the final "music and dance". This movement draws the four pairs
of lovers towards their marriages, and by making Oliver's marriage and
the wedding gifts grow out of his and Frederick's conversions to Nature,
it underscores the basic imaginative link in the play between order in
marriage and order in society. Oliver's story about the "green and gilded"

snake and the hungry lioness, is an allegory of his conversion. The green snake (here as before) is a figure for the devil, the lioness a figure for revenge; and Nature which is strong in Orlando, frightens off the one (ll. 110-3) and defeats the other. (ll. 128-31) The emphasis, again, is on Orlando's choosing kindness rather than revenge. And the scene parallels the first scene in the play, for there Oliver responds to force with force, and here he responds to Nature with Nature. He is converted by Orlando's kindness, and the first sign of this is his binding up Orlando's wounds to revive him (l.150) and his beginning to know himself, past and present:

I do not shame
To tell you what I was, since my conversion
So sweetly tastes, being the thing I am. (ll. 135-37)

But the narrated event is definitely an anticlimax, and in terms of the play, this should not be so. The conflict within Orlando of natural and unnatural precipitates the initial events of the play, and though that conflict is resolved here, our anticipation is unsatisfied. For structure should give significant emphasis to significant themes, and yet Oliver's narration of this major event actually diminishes its significance. Clearly Shakespeare tries to give this scene drama and suspense. We last saw Oliver when Frederick is forcing him to bring Orlando back to the court, dead or alive (3,1,6); and he enters here presenting to Rosalind Orlando's bloody handkerchief. Fifty odd lines pass before we know of Orlando's safety and Oliver's conversion. But the trouble is not got around so easily. The play lacks a structural equivalent for Oliver's conversion. Shakespeare tells rather than shows, and what should have emphasis has none. Instead of an equivalent in the structure, the

conversion has only a narrative equivalent: it cannot compel our attention as it should. Admittedly, if we insist on the snake and the lion, the conversion is hard to put on stage. But why insist, when insisting makes impossible what is necessary and natural--a conversion scene! Similarly, I criticize the narrative of Jaques de Boys, (5,4,148ff.) Frederick's plotting points towards another major event--his conversion¹ which, with the marriages, is essential to the restoration of the world. By merely telling of the conversion, Shakespeare reduces its significance, and that hardly makes sense in the terms he himself initially sets up. Structure does not mirror the ideas adequately, and these episodes lack authority.

The rest of this movement is good. Besides self-knowledge, another consequence of Oliver's conversion to Nature is his falling in love with Celia. Love and marriage are an index for Nature; his conversion, which makes him an orderly and natural head of his household, leads him to marriage, and this progress strengthens the link between marriage and society. But his sudden wooing and her sudden consenting (5,2, 6-7) suggest that after all their marriage is more purely sensual than Rosalind and Orlando's.

... [they] no sooner met but they looked; no sooner looked but they loved; no sooner loved but they sighed ... and in these degrees have they made a pair of stairs to marriage, which they will climb incontinent, or else be incontinent before marriage: (ll. 33-38)

Love has overcome them: it is as sudden as the fight of two rams. (1. 38)
 Oliver the courtier thinks marriage will make him a shepherd, just as the goat-herd Audrey thinks it will make her a "woman of the world". (5,3,4)
 And there is the hint that both these marriages are, in different degrees,

¹ Shakespeare alters his source material here. In Rosalind, the banished duke kills the usurper in battle. The change emphasizes that Nature (the forest) converts rather than subdues. Bullough, op.cit., pp. 255-6.

upside down. Both are certainly less ideal than Orlando and Rosalind's. But as in the Parliament Nature is concerned with all levels of creation.

Nature, which that alwey hadde an ere
To murmur of the lewedness behynde, (519-20)

And this last movement sets up a hierarchy of marriages. In the dialogue between Rosalind, Phebe, Silvius, and Orlando, for instance, we seen an epitome of natural and unnatural love. While Silvius recites the various aspects of love, Orlando stands on one side of Rosalind, Phebe on the other. The one pursues his ideal of truth and beauty, the other pursues an illusion. Orlando, as he tells Duke Senior later, sees in the disguise some "lively touches" of Rosalind (5,4, 27); Phebe looks only with her eye, her sense, and she is deluded. The scene is a nice epitome of natural and unnatural --truth and illusion--in love. It follows that Silvius' marriage is less ideal than Orlando's and even than Oliver's. Hymen confirms this idea of a hierarchy of marriages:

You and you no cross shall part:
You and you are heart in heart:
You to his love must accord,
Or have a woman to your lord.
You and you are sure together,
As the winter to foul weather. (5,4, 128-33)

Most of the marriages owe something to art and magic. Orlando's love is refined by art in the form of disguise. Indeed his marriage is even made possible by disguise, as is Silvius' to Phebe. For Phebe, art and magic make natural what is unnatural. Magic (the "magic" of Nature's forest in the person of the old religious man) makes possible the conversion of Frederick, and so restores a sense of the natural to Oliver's marriage. For he then gets back his lands, as a wedding gift (1. 164), and thus as Nature and Fortune return to their proper positions, through marriage he

may again be the natural head of his household. Likewise, the "magical" conversion of Frederick allows marriage its full significance as a figure for continuance in change, for thus as a wedding gift Orlando and Rosalind inherit a "potent dukedom", an orderly society. Orderly marriage depends on orderly society, and vice versa, as this scene clearly brings out. And in a sense, art in music mirrors all this.¹ Thus Hymen sings, and her songs underscore the significance of marriage:

Then is there mirth in heaven,
When earthly things made even
Atone together ... (ll. 105-07)

Wedding is great Juno's crown
O blessed bond of board and bed:
'Tis Hymen peoples every town ... (ll. 138-40)

Music and dance, after Jaques' interruption (l. 177), complete the play. Marriage, which music celebrates, represents Fortune and Nature's atoning together, represents man's coming to a kind of divine perfection on earth; and the structure of this last scene makes this clear.

As You Like It is an uneven play. It begins and ends well, but in the fourth movement the plot structure gives way to a pattern structure; and while the action initially compels and even taxes our attention, and the terms of the conflict are clearly and logically set forth, later in the pattern structure the initial conflict reaches only an anticlimactic narrative climax, our attention wanders over a clumsy heap of scenes, and authority wanes. As we might expect, Shakespeare gets much better at writing coherent and logical plays later on.

¹Indeed, the songs and people's reactions to them are throughout a key to our understanding. Thus Jaques' songs mock Nature's forest and celebrate appetitive love (2,5, 48-55; 4,2, 10-9), and like Touchstone, he cares more for "noise" than for "tune". (4,2, 8; 5,3, 10-12 & 40)

CHAPTER II

PERICLES

Written some eight years later,¹ Pericles is a more coherent play. But once more, before we can consider the play's structure and its increased authority, we must understand what Shakespeare is trying to do.

Again the basic opposition is Fortune and Nature; the play is full in the medieval tradition. Indeed the play is firmly rooted in the fourteenth century, for its source, either directly or indirectly, is Gower's tale of Appollonius of Tyre. The tale illustrates the laws of marriage which, as I have said, crown the Confessio Amantis. In the Confessio as in The Book of the Duchess and the Faerie Queene, the sea is a figure for Fortune:

Where as fortune doth the lawe
And sheweth, as I shall reherse,
How sche was to this lord diverse,
The which upon the See sche ferketh. (VIII,600-03)

And in Pericles the sea is the sea of Fortune, the element where life is lived: all men are seafarers. Infortune as a sea storm initially separates Pericles from his wife and daughter. In this same way, for Marina whose name connects her with the sea (3,3,12-3), life is a tempest:

This world to me is as a lasting storm,
Whirring me from my friends. (4,1,19-20)

And the opposition of Fortune and Nature is clear in that "friends" is used in its older sense, of kinsman or near relation, to refer specifically to father, mother, and nurse. ("Nurse" too (4, chorus, 42) contains its

¹In 1607-08. See the introduction to the Arden edition (all references are to this edition) ed. by F.D. Hoeniger (London, 1963). About the question of mixed authorship: I believe that we must first see what can be made of the play as it stands. There is a notable lack of external evidence supporting or precluding mixed authorship. If the play is of a piece on its own, the question becomes more or less irrelevant. See P. Edwards, "An Approach to the Problem of Pericles," Shakespeare Survey, 5, 1952, pp. 25-49; G. W. Knight, The Crown of Life (London, 1947) pp. 34 & 74-5. J. Arthos, The Art of Shakespeare (London, 1964) p. 137.

etymological meaning of "one who nourishes".)¹ Another aspect of Fortune in the play is Time. When Pericles experiences Infortune and laments the decline of his kingdom from what it was in his father's time, his perception is

that Time's the king of men;
He's both their parent, and he is their grave, (2,3,45-46)

Time, he thinks, works against natural order and succession in the kingdom. Indeed Fortune as devouring Time precipitates Pericles' journey to Antioch and so the whole action of the play. As he tells Helicanus:

against the face of death
I sought the purchase of a glorious beauty,
From whence an issue I might propagate,
Are arms to princes and bring joy to subjects. (1,2, 71-74)

In the beginning then Pericles goes to Antioch to counter-balance Fortune or Time with Nature's marriage. (The "face of death" refers to the condition of Antiochus' riddle, but more important, to Time and Mutability.) Pericles seeks a remedium fortunae in Nature--in marriage and fruitfulness. He means to perpetuate virtue. Time and Fortune unchecked will bring death to princes and woe to subjects; chaste and fruitful marriage, as a figure for continuance in change, will provide a kind of immortality for princes and so perpetuate a right rule. This basic opposition can also be expressed in terms of natural and unnatural, or chaste and unchaste. Pericles' marriage is natural, and it perpetuates the right rule in Pentapolis and in Tyre; Antiochus' "marriage" with his daughter is unnatural, and it leads to the death of generation:

A fire from heaven came and shrivell'd up
Their bodies, even to loathing; (2,4, 9-10)

Pericles' kind behavior saves the kingdom at Tharsus from the Infortune of famine; Cleon's unkindness causes civil war and brings an end to his generation:

¹ See the Oxford English Dictionary

For wicked Cleon and his wife, when fame
 Had spread his cursed deed to th' honour'd name
 Of Pericles, to rage the city turned,
 That him and his they in his palace burned: (Epilogue)

Similarly the chastity of Marina helps right the government of Mytilene. Before she discovers Lysimachus' virtue, the world there is upside down:

Diseases have been sold dearer than physic -- (4,6,97).

After, he gives her gold to preserve her virtue--Fortune begins to follow Nature. On the other hand, unchastity is again a figure for the proliferation of evil; in the brothel it brings disease (4,2,22), and in Antioch it brings the kingly line to naught. (Epilogue, 1-2)

The basic opposition of Fortune or Time or unnaturalness and Nature recollects much of the earlier literature and particularly the Faerie Queene. Consider once more the lines in the Mutability Cantos:¹

all things stedfastness doe hate
 And changed be: yet being rightly wayd
 They are not changed from their first estate;
 But by their change their being doe dilate:
 And turning to themselves at length againe,
 Doe worke their owne perfection so by fate: (VII, 58)

Pericles is a man "on whom perfections wait" (1,1,80), and the action of the play leads him towards perfection "by fate" --through the use of Fortune and Time. The play's action then works out the idea of man's moving towards perfection through Time and Mutability. The opposition of Fortune and Nature is not absolute. It exists, here as before, because of false human perspective. Proper perspective leads Pericles through Fortune and Time towards perfection. This is the play's basic theme.

To understand this we must understand Fortune more completely.

Recollect first of all the Boece, where all Fortune is good, as Philosophy

¹
 F. Kermode, "Shakespeare: The Final Plays," Writers and Their Work, no. 155, pp. 11 & 18. See also the relevant pages in J.F. Danby's Poets on Fortune's Hill, (London, N.D.).

says, because it is an instrument of God:

The engendrynge of alle thinges...and alle the progressiouns of muable nature, and al that moeveth in any manere, taketh his causes, his ordre, and his formes, of the stablenesse of the devyne thought.... (IV, pr. 6,42-47)

...when that men looken it in thilke pure clenness of the devyne intelligence, it is ycleped purveaunce; but whanne thilke manere is referred by men to thinges that it moeveth and disponyth, than of olde men it was clepyd destyne.... (51-56)

And God yeveth and departeth to other folk prosperites and adversites, imedled to hepe aftir the qualite of hir corages...and other folk he suffreth to ben travailed with harde thinges, for that thei scholden confermen the vertues of corage by the usage and the exeritacioun of pacience. (262-71)

Only our point of view, limited in time and space, makes us think Fortune bad; when we escape these limitations through wisdom and patience we see that Fortune is ultimately good. Fortune is associated with the Many, and when man sees it correctly he sees that it is part of the simplicity or one-ness of the divine thought. Fortune's vicissitudes try men's virtues, and thus through Fortune men move towards perfection.

This is indeed the experience of the major characters in Pericles. Fortune always gives as well as takes. In Act Two she shipwrecks Pericles, but she throws him on the shores of Pentapolis where he may prove his virtues (2,1,144) and find a wife. She takes away all his possessions, all pelf, but gives him the symbolic armour of light, his heritage which is his shield against death:

Thanks Fortune, yet, that after all they crosses
Thou giv'st me somewhat to repair myself;
And though it was mine own, part of mine heritage,
Which my dead father did bequeath to me,
With this strict charge, even as he left his life:
"Keep it, my Pericles; it hath been a shield
'Twixt me and death;"--and pointed to his brace--
"For that it sav'd me, keep it; in like necessity,
The which the gods protect thee from, may defend thee!"
(2,1,120-28).

Later in taking his wife, Fortune gives him his daughter by inducing Thaisa's labor, and so gives him another shield against death and a means of working towards perfection in Time. And of course Fortune does not really take Thaisa, for Fortune immediately throws her on the shores of Ephesus, where Cerimon with kindness gives her a means of proving her virtue (as the fishermen do for Pericles) and so aids providence!

The heavens, through you [Cerimon], increase our wonder,
(3,2,98)

And thus what seems bad Fortune proves in time to be good. Likewise Marina thinks that her deliverance from Leonine and the pirates to the brothel is bad luck:

Alack that Leonine was so slack, so slow!
He should have struck, not spoke; or that these pirates
Not enough barbarous, had not o'erboard
Thrown me to seek my mother! (4,2,61-64)

Later Pericles sees this deliverance as supreme good luck:

but her better stars
Brought her to Mytilene; (5,3,9-10)

Fortune lets her fortify her chastity and so preserve her father from the ravagement of Time. The unlimited view shows Fortune the instrument of providence.

Thou that was born at sea, buried at Tharsus,
And found at sea again. (5,1,196-97)

The opposition of Fortune and Nature appears within the framework of eternity and providence, and when Fortune is in accord with Nature or the "devyne thought" man moves through Mutability towards perfection.

The good man endures the downward movement of Fortune's wheel simply by waiting for the inevitable turn upward. Patience overcomes the storms of life; grief capitulates and so falls prey to Time. Thus Lychorida urges Pericles to be patient after Thaisa's "death", for grief will "assist the

storm". (3,1,19) The storm is in this respect at once a discord in the elements and in man himself. Patience is implicit too in Cerimon's rekindling of life:

Death may usurp on nature many hours,
And yet the fire of life kindle again
The o'erpress'd spirits. (3,2,84-86)

The downward movement which ends in death will turn up into life again through Nature's cures (1.38) and through patience. Grief, again, leads to despair, and in this way Marina's grieving that Leonine did not kill her leads her to thoughts of suicide;

If fires be hot, knives sharp, or waters deep,
Untied I still my virgin knot will keep. (4,2,145-46)

Through her grief she would aid Infortune and Time, much as Pericles aids Time by raging after he supposes Marina dead:

And Pericles, in sorrow all devour'd,
With sighs shot through and biggest tears o'ershower'd,
Leaves Tharsus and again embarks....He bears
A tempest, which his mortal vessel tears, (4,4,25-30)

Again, the pun on "vessel", which invokes its older sense of "body", emphasizes that the tempest is within Pericles as well as outside him. Grief "tears" his body; it ages and disfigures him. (5,1,35) Patience not only endures but even precludes calamity. As Pericles describes Marina:

thou dost look
Like Patience gazing on kings' graves, and smiling
Extremity out of act. (5,1,137-39)

Through patience, tears of woe become tears of joy (5,1,184-9), the sea of woe becomes a "great sea of joys", (1.192) Patience in other words makes Time defeat itself. Winter ends in spring; through patience Time and Fortune come full-circle and so become the agents of their own destruction.

As an aspect of patience, telling the story of grief brings man through woe to joy. Telling grief is a cure to Infortune; again, like patience the telling makes Infortune defeat herself. We see this in Act One, where griefs untold lead towards despair and death:

the passions of the mind,
That have their first conception by mis-dread,
Have after nourishment and life by care:
And what was first but fear what might be done,
Grows elder now and cares it be not done. (1,2,12-16)

Pericles fears for his kingdom's safety from Antiochus (11.86-93) and for the natural succession of his own kingly line. (11.71-4) He tells his fears to Helicanus, and the telling leads towards their assuagement through patience (1.65) and through travel. (1.106) Patience lets Fortune (here called destiny) aid him. (1.108) The same idea appears in Tharsus; the tale of Infortune which involves the confession of sins against Nature is a restorative.¹ (1,4,1-3) Likewise Marina's telling how wayward Fortune assaulted her and how Time rooted out her parentage (5,1,89-92) leads to the restoration of her and Pericles' joys, just as Pericles' giving his griefs "repetition to the life" at Ephesus according to the divine instruction (5,1,244) completes the restoration of his family and kingdom. As marriage makes Time defeat itself through an orderly succession of generations, so these tales, through a patient and orderly repetition of grief,

¹Kermode, "Shakespeare: The Final Plays", p. 14. Kermode seems not to see how Cleon's explanation works into this pattern of the patient telling of griefs.

makes Infortune work its own end.

Indeed, art throughout the play is a "restorative" linked with Nature. Marina's needle composes Nature's own shape (5, chorus, 5), and her song and dance save her from the appetitive diseased world of the brothel and go some way towards setting Nature above Fortune in Mytilene. (11.9-10) Music helps save Pericles from despair and so from Time's ravagement (5,1,78) and later reflects his mind's harmony and accord (5,1,228) when he becomes aware of the kind of perfection chaste marriage has led him to. Recollect the eighth sonnet,¹ where music and marriage come together as a metaphor for continuance in change, leading through the Many to the One:

Mark how one string sweet husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering;
Resembling sire, and child, and happy mother,
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechless song being many, seeming one,
Sing this to thee, "Thou single wilt prove none".

The play itself is a part of this theme. Gower comes back from death to sing an old song that people have used for a restorative. (1, chorus, 1-9) The implication is that people--the audience--may use it so again. Gower himself would use life in order to bring life towards joy:

...to your wishes pleasure bring,
I life would wish, and that I might
Waste it for you like taper-light. (1, chorus, 14-16)

¹G. W. Knight, *op.cit.*, p. 38. For a modern analogue to the idea of this paragraph, see Yeat's Sailing to Byzantium, where the song is about Time. See also Shakespeare's sixteenth sonnet:

But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant Time?
And fortify yourself in your decay
With means more blessed than my barren rhyme?...

Several times the play-goer's experience matches that of the characters in the play. As marriage and patience make Time defeat itself for the characters, so the play and imagination defeat Time for the audience. (3, chorus, 12-3; 4, chorus, 47; 4, 4, 1-4) Likewise the audience is urged towards patience (4, 4, 50) which leads it finally to joy. (Epilogue, 17-8) Moreover, the device of the chorus makes clear to the audience the illusoriness of Infortune, which as I have said is a central theme in the play. When Pericles thinks Marina has died, blasted in the spring of life (4, 4, 23-35), he suffers the storm of Infortune and grief. But the audience sees clearly that Infortune--her burial--is illusion. As Gower says,

See how belief may suffer by foul show!
This borrow'd passion stands for true-ow'd woe; (11.23-24)

The experience of Pericles and that of the audience (we who have just seen the dumb show) come together; but we see the illusoriness of Fortune while he for a time does not. Failure to see leads him to rage and grief which do the work of Time (1.30); our seeing leads us to patience (1.50) and so helps defeat Time and Infortune.

Patience, art, the play itself, are all in a sense expressions of continuance in change, and thus all help bring man towards perfection through the use of Fortune and Time. But the play's major expressions of continuance in change are of course Nature's fruitful marriage and the pilgrimage of the life of man through Time to eternity. As in Reason and Sensuality and the Faerie Queene, the themes come together, so that

throughout his life Pericles is a pilgrim¹, a seafarer, moving towards Truth in the full harmony and accord of marriage. He reaches this perfection when the harmony of his mind's kingdom is in accord with the music of the spheres (5,1, 228) and when his kingdom of the world enjoys the natural succession and orderly rule of a kingly line--when, as Pericles says, he and Thaisa

Will in that kingdom [Pentapolis] spend our following days.
Our son and daughter shall in Tyrus reign. (5,3,81-82)

In the Confessio Amantis right-side up order in one's self and in the land go together:²

And every man for his partie
A kingdom hath to justifie,
That is to sein his oghne dom.
If he misreule that kingdom,
He lest himself, and that is more
Than if he loste Schip and Ore
And al the worldes good withal:
For what man that in special
Hath nocht himself, he hath nocht elles, (VIII, 2111-19)

Likewise here "marriage" is a metaphor for orderly rule--perfection in the kingdom of the mind and in the land. And this marriage is the goal, or Truth, of the pilgrimage of Pericles' life.

As in Reason and Sensuality and the Sankgreal, the pilgrimage here gives a form to Pericles' movement towards perfection. As in Orlando's

¹ cf. D. Traversi, Shakespeare: The Last Phase (London, 1954) p. 20. Compare two Old English poems, The Wanderer and The Seafarer, where the metaphor of man or pilgrim-seafarer appears. Sweet's Anglo Saxon Reader, XXVI & XXVII.

² See also Confessio Amantis, Book VII, 1649-58.

metaphor, the pilgrimage to eternity goes across Time or Fortune--the sea-- and indeed Pericles finds himself subjected to this common element in one form or another from the first:

against the face of death
I sought the purchase of a glorious beauty,
From whence an issue I might propagate, (1,2,72-73)

The metaphoric sea links all the episodes, and as the pilgrim-seafarer Pericles experiences storm and calm, though, as I have said, his experience depends in part on his frame of mind--calm thoughts find the sea calm (4,4,17-8) while rage and grief assist the storm. (11.29-31)

From the first the Truth of his quest is the harmony of "marriage", and this involves both his own progress towards perfection through chaste generation and the succession of orderly rule for Tyre. Throughout, marriage and the kingdom are tied in a fast knot. For instance the unnaturalness and appetite in Antiochus and his daughter closely tie up with the unnaturalness in the kingdom of Antioch; as Pericles says, the evil of the incestuous marriage is proliferous:

For vice repeated is like the wand'ring wind,
Blows dust in others' eyes, to spread itself;
(1,1,97-98)

Law in the kingdom reflects the will of the ruler. (1.104) Antiochus' will is appetitive, and Pericles' marriage into such a corrupt kingdom would itself be upside down. Though the daughter seems fair (1,1,10-2) she is foul, and marriage with her would depend on appetite, the fault of the eye. Reason discerns the riddle and sees clearly her unnaturalness (11.80-1), while the sensuality is fooled by her illusory beauty. (11.13-5) Likewise in Tharsus Cleon's marriage is upside down, and he connives at his wife's crime. He has trained Marina in music (4, chorus, 7), and his wife

plots to undo his good work by murdering her. The murder is of course doubly unnatural because Marina is the daughter of Tharsus' benefactor. This upside down marriage where the man and wife work at cross-purposes and where the wife ultimately rules (4,3,51), precipitates civil mutiny and the end of Cleon's line. (Epilogue, 14) Cleon has said that if he neglects his natural duty to Marina,

the common body,
By you Pericles/reliev'd, would force me to my duty.
But if to that my nature need a spur,
The gods revenge it upon me and mine,
To the end of generation! (3,3,21-24)

His neglect is an expression of his upside down marriage, which thus precipitates the people's rage and their overthrowing him and his line. Order in marriage gives order to society; upside down "marriage" lets Time and Infortune triumph over Nature.

By contrast, Simonides' peaceful reign and good government is mirrored in the honest labor of the fishermen (recollect the workers in Pierre's Flowerman) who work against appetitiveness in the kingdom (2,1,28-47); and thus in Pentapolis Pericles, as a pilgrim-knight, may win his wife through his virtue in art and arms¹, and the marriage will be right-side up:

Sir, my daughter thinks very well of you;
Ay, so well, that you must be her master,
And she will be your scholar: (2,5,37-39)

Fortune separates him from his kingdom and from all pelf save his symbolic armour; Time seems to him supreme in bringing men to naught. (2,3,45-5) But marriage restores his lost fortunes and clearly provides a means in

¹cf. J. H. Long, "Laying the Ghosts in Pericles," Shakespeare Quarterly, VII, 1956, pp. 36-42.

generation for his (and Simonides') moving through Time towards the eternal and for his kingdom's maintaining its glory like the sun and the stars (2,3,39-40) and like heaven above. (11.60-1) For the chaste daughter Marina "begets" her father:

Thou that beget'st him that did thee beget;
Thou that wast born at sea, buried at Tharsus,
And found at sea again. (5,1,195-97)

Unchastity in the brothel is a figure for the proliferation of evil (eleven bastards (4,2,15)), which multiplicity leads in turn towards disease and death. (11.102-9) By preserving the "rose" of her chastity (4,6,33) Marina preserves the "flower" of her life (4,4,35), and so through chastity death becomes a kind of illusion, like Infortune itself.¹ Simultaneously Marina becomes a restorer of order in the kingdom of Mytilene and a part of the natural continuance in change which leads her father's kingdom through generation towards perfection. In the beginning Pericles seeks marriage to provide an orderly succession for his kingdom, and in this quest he undergoes the tempest of Infortune off the shores of Pentapolis and off Ephesus on his return to Tyre to resume his rule. But these same storms give him his wife and child--the means for his kingdom to endure Fortune and Time, to move through Fortune and Time towards Truth.

If what Shakespeare is trying to do in Pericles is more or less clear, perhaps we can consider just how logically and coherently he constructs the play. Remember that in As You Like It there are two basic difficulties:

¹ Contrast both her mother's scented burial and rebirth at Ephesus and Lychorida's burial where the flower-strewn grave suggests a kind of perpetuity (4,1,13-7), with the foul-smelling death of Antiochus, which, as there is no kind burial, means the end of even the memory of his line. (2,4,8-12) Kind burial implies the presence of Nature. Nature allows Fortune to come full-circle, and thus points the illusoriness of Infortune. Compare Sophocles' Ajax, where burial in the end will prove a wall for Ajax' kin against their unnatural and appetitive enemies, while lack of burial will expose them.

The connection between order in marriage and order in society is not always so clear as it might be, and the shift from the plot structure to the pattern structure leads to a certain anticlimax. In the first movements, seeing the allegorical connection between marriage and the kingdom depends on seeing certain imaginative links between the love plot and the plots of intrigue in Oliver's house and in Frederick's court, and these links are at times obscure. Second, the plot-conflict structure of the first movements leads us to expect some direct confrontation between Orlando and Oliver for instance, and this confrontation appears only in the narrative of the pattern-antithesis structure of the fourth movement. In the shift from one kind of structure to another, some of the play's force peters out. In Pericles Shakespeare goes a long way towards avoiding the first difficulty simply by focusing primarily on Pericles the father. In As You Like It the focus on Rosalind and Orlando¹ the younger generation, allows for a gap, especially at first, between marriage as continuance in change in the man and in the realm. In Pericles there is no gap, for king and lover are one, and Marina's experience is always closely subordinate to her father's. The structure necessarily and naturally reflects the metaphor. Second, in Pericles Shakespeare uses primarily a pattern structure. All plot is clearly contained within the larger patterns, as for instance Antiochus' plot is contained within the larger pattern-antithesis of Fortune-Nature, unnatural-natural, in the first two acts. Increased technique, a clearer insight into the links between thought and structure, immediately preclude

¹ In As You Like It Shakespeare is of course more interested in developing the love between Rosalind and Orlando, and thus his intentions are somewhat different there.

the difficulties of the past.

The play breaks down into five movements which correspond with the division into acts. The first sets forth the antithesis of unnatural and natural within the larger pattern-antithesis of Fortune and Nature and of Time and Marriage. It also sets forth the like antithesis of Infortune and patience, of rage and the telling of grief. Each antithesis develops as Pericles tries to perpetuate virtue in a world upside down; the plot of Antiochus' pursuit and Pericles' flight develops within the larger pattern of Pericles' moving through Time towards perfection in the harmony of fruitful chaste marriage. And throughout, as Pericles begins his pilgrimage towards marriage, the connection between the kingdom in the world and the little kingdom of man is clear.

The first chorus develops the idea of the tale as a restorative:

And lords and ladies in their lives
Have read it for restoratives:
The purchase is to make men glorious, (11.7-9)

Music and the tale are conflated as agents of renewal: Gower comes back to life to sing the old song. (11.1-6) And thus music and the tale appear as a metaphor for using life to promote a life of joy and pleasure, a metaphor for continuance and ultimate perfection through change:

And that to hear an old man sing
May to your wishes pleasure bring,
I life would wish, and that I might
Waste it for you like taper-light. (11. 13-16)

The chorus looks forward over the whole play, which itself becomes the metaphor.

The chorus also prefigures Pericles' basic problem. Upside down marriage--the incest in Antioch--corrupts law and government; and in the resulting upside down world many princes die. (11.32-40) This is a pattern

of the proliferation of evil, of the unnatural subduing the natural, which Pericles must suffer and overcome. In scene one, against the face of death, against Time in general, he seeks a wife, that by strengthening his line he may strengthen his kingdom. (1,2,71-4) In the world upside down, however, the unnatural seems natural--the daughter looks like the spring, and heaven's perfections appear to reside in her (11.10-6)--and he nearly capitulates to Time and death by following his eye, his sensuality. But as he is the true pilgrim-knight (1.62), his reason discerns the riddle and sees through the illusory outside into the foul center, and his love follows his reason:

I lov'd you, and could still,
Were not this glorious casket stor'd with ill.
(11.77-78)

Time triumphs through the unnatural: the daughter is an eater of her mother's flesh because her incest brings a fruitful line to ruin. In Nature's marriage one generation redeems the other from Time's ravagement; by perverting marriage this daughter is

... a fair viol, and ...her/sense the strings,
Who, finger'd to make man his lawful music,
Would draw heaven down and all the gods to harken;
But being play'd upon before...her/ time,
Hell only danceth at so harsh a chime. (11.82-86)

Again, bear in mind the eight sonnet where music and marriage work through the Many to the One. Incest, contrarily, gives rise to other evils in the world:

One sin, I know, another doth provoke;
Murder's as near to lust as flame to smoke.
Poison and treason are the hands of sin, (11.138-40)

The unnatural in Antiochus corrupts even language. (11.112-6) Fortune subdues Nature in the world upside down:

Thaliard, behold here's poison, and here's gold; (1.156)

And we see unchastity loosing the Satanic hunt which Pericles must suffer and escape.

As thou wilt live, fly after; and like an arrow shot
from a well-experienc'd archer hits the mark his eye
doth level at, so thou never return unless thou say
"Prince Pericles is dead". (11.163-66)

The first scene pictures how, in the context of Pericles' quest, unchaste "marriage" gives birth to evil throughout the kingdom and, by ending generation both in itself and in other princes, lets Time and Mutability triumph over Nature and bring part of the world to ruin. If we understand the ideas behind the scene, we see that the structure reflects the intentions clearly, and that authority is strong.

Scene two contrasts with scene one by showing us the orderly kingdom of Tyre. No one in Antioch could question Antiochus' will:

It fits thee not to ask the reason why: (1,1,158)

But in Tyre experience has tongue, and lord and subject reinforce each other:

Pericles. Thou know'st I have power
To take thy life from thee.
Helicanus. I have ground the axe myself;
Do but you strike the blow.
Pericles. Rise, prithee, rise;
Sit down; thou art no flatterer; (1,2,57-60)

The problem again is how can a kingdom survive within a world ruled by evil and appetite? How can Pericles save his kingdom from Antiochus' proliferous evil?

... And subjects punish'd that ne'er thought offense:
Which care of them, not pity of myself,--
Who am no more but as the tops of trees
Which fence the roots they grow by and defend them---
Makes both my body pine and soul to languish, (11.29-33)

And the solution is the orderly workings of the natural subject-lord

relationship. Pericles has power because his subjects grind his ax, and they do this because he defends them. This orderly relationship saves Tyre. Helicanus gives good advice because Pericles has his interests at heart, and the kingdom can survive Pericles' departure because good subjects take up the slack. As Pericles says to Helicanus,

But in our orbs we'll live so round and safe,
That time of both this truth shall ne'er convince,
Thou showd'st a subject's shine, I a true prince'.
(11. 122-24)

The subject-prince relationship becomes a figure for continuance in change which Time cannot overwhelm. Compare this with the same relationship in Antioch:

Here must I [Thaliard] kill King Pericles; and if I do
not, I am sure to be hang'd at home: 'tis dangerous...
for if a king bid a man be a villain, he's bound by
the indenture of his oath to be one. (1,3,1-8)

In the natural kingdom, subject and prince move through Time to perfection; in the unnatural, they regress to villainy and baseness. Juxtaposition of scenes within this movement sharpens the antithesis.

The true prince must promote perpetuity in change for his kingdom, and within this task, which is a framework taking up his whole lifetime, he must promote orderly rule. The construction of the first movement shows us this, for within Pericles' larger task of finding a virtuous wife and so establishing a line, we see him struggling to make his kingdom peaceful and orderly in a world upside down. The world upside down threatens Tyre as it threatens its prince (1,2,2-16), and to ensure Tyre's order and peace, Pericles must also right the world, that evil and unnaturalness may not breed and eventually eat him up. In scene four we see him doing this. Tharsus was a corrupt kingdom. Fortune ruled Nature:

All poverty was scorn'd, and pride so great.
The name of help grew odious to repeat. (11.30-31)

Unnaturalness bred itself:

Those mothers who, to nuzzle up their babes
Thought nought too curious, are ready now
To eat those little darlings whom they lov'd. (11.42-44)

Like Antiochus, Cleon cannot endure any questioning of his judgment. (1.74)

And because he has fostered the appetitive and the unnatural in his kingdom,
he expects as much in others:

... some neighbouring nation,
Taking advantage of our misery,
Hath stuff'd the hollow vessels with their power,
To beat us down, the which are down already, (11.65-68)

Pericles of course proves a more natural neighbor. Nature is a cure to Infortune and the unnatural. Both Pericles and Cleon were fooled for a time by the unnatural--the one by its illusory beauty, the other by the illusion of superfluous riches. Pericles sees through the illusion, and to preserve his kingdom in a world upside down, he comes over the sea like good Fortune herself to assuage the Infortune of famine. By helping Cleon with kindness he also helps himself. His coming is the result of the orderly subject-lord relationship, and thus the structure again shows us the orderly relationship as the cure to Infortune and the unnatural. Nature remedies Infortune, and in doing so it tries to teach Cleon, that the world may be right-side up and that peace and order in the kingdom may survive. The structure logically and coherently brings this out within the framework of Pericles' larger quest; the plot conflict of natural and unnatural develops within the encompassing antithesis of Fortune and Nature. The playwright's intentions are clear, and authority is strong.

Act Two counterbalances Act One. In a world upside down the natural man cannot marry to perpetuate his line and kingdom. He is parted from his subjects, and though he helps to right an unfortunate neighbor, as long as evil proliferates in the world he is suppressed. Act Two begins with Pericles' fortunes low. But Pentapolis is a world right-side up, and there the natural man, though he is without Fortune, may prove his virtue and flourish. Within the general antithesis of Fortune and Nature, the plot of this sequence shows Pericles moving from destitution and near despair to renewed Fortune and a natural marriage which will shore up his kingdom against Time.

The chorus in Act Two continues the allegory of Pericles the pilgrim-knight. It shows him driven by appetitive evil across the seas--fato profugus, like Lydgate's pilgrim--as he tries to save himself and his kingdom.¹ Thaliard--the unnatural evil in Antioch--hunts him through the world and subjects him to extreme Infortune. Pericles addresses the angry stars:

Let it suffice the greatness of your powers
To have bereft a prince of all his fortunes;
And having thrown him from your wat'ry grave,
Here to have death in peace is all hell crave. (2,1,8-11)

He begins this act at the bottom of Fortune's wheel because of the unnatural. In this act he moves towards the top by means of Nature. The fishermen reflect the natural good government in Pentapolis. This is clear as they develop the analogy of the sea and the world: Fish live in the sea as men live on land--the big ones eat up the little. (11.26-32) Life is appetitive, and again, the cure is honest labor and natural rule. (11.43-7) The cure

¹Gower gives the episodes coherence, and tells us "what this strange succession of adventures means". J. Arthos, op.cit., p. 147.

is also kind behavior, which uses bad Fortune by making it come full-circle into good. Pericles appeals to them as a natural man, for Infortune gives him self-knowledge and teaches him something of his nature:

What I have been I have forgot to know;
But what I am, want teaches me to think on:
A man throng'd up with cold. (11.71-73)

And they respond with kindness--food, clothing, and shelter. (11.78-83)
By teaching him what he is, Infortune becomes good Fortune. Likewise, the storm, assisted by the fishermen's labor and kindness, returns his hereditary armour--symbolically his armour of light, his shield against death. Nature is the cure for Fortune; in the orderly kingdom it helps Infortune to come full-circle, as this scene clearly brings out.

As Pericles begins to prove his virtues and to flourish by them, we see the pattern develop further: Nature triumphs not by banishing Fortune but by using her. In Pentapolis Pericles' natural virtues in arms can triumph because the king is not fooled by illusory Fortune:

Opinion's but a fool, that makes us scan
The outward habit by the inward man. (2,2,55-56)

The other knights are rich in Fortune, but as is clear in many of their glorious devices, not so rich in Nature. (For instance, the Macedonian prince's device shows a knight conquered by a lady (2,2,26); another's shows a torch burning upside down. (1.36)) Yet Nature's triumph in Pericles involves a use of Fortune. (2,3,12) And in the court all the knights enjoy a respect appropriate to their relative virtues. No reciting of the virtues is needed,

Since every worth in show commends itself. (2,3,6)

And as the knights say,

... we are gentlemen
Have neither in our hearts nor outward eyes
Envied the great nor shall the low despise. (11.24-26)

Fortune in Pentapolis enjoys her place under Nature. Similarly, Pericles must become the natural husband for Thaisa by proving himself in arms, which, again, involves both Fortune and merit (11.9-12) and by proving himself in music and dance. Dancing of course recollects the tradition of the Garden of the Rose, as it appears for instance in the Franklin's Tale. And here as before, Love and Fortune come together. Pericles' marriage does not banish Fortune; his marriage grows towards Nature's ideal by using Fortune--the tradition of courtly love. The structure, the development of the scenes, logically and coherently reflects the thought.

Similarly in the world right-side up Time, far from bringing man to ruin, becomes the agent of man's progress towards stability and perfection. The movement of Act Two develops this as well. Even after proving his virtues in arms, Pericles is near despair. Looking at Simonides he is reminded of his father; and when he compares his father's former glory with his own, he thinks Time the king of men, the beginning and the end:

Yon king's to me like to my father's picture,
Which tells me in that glory once he was;
Had princes sit like stars about his throne,
And he the sun, for them to reverence....
Where now his son's like a glow-worm in the night,
The which hath fire in darkness, none in light:
Whereby I see that Time's the king of men;
He's both their parent, and he is their grave, (11.37-46)

Generation, he implies, deteriorates the natural virtues. By contrast this despair underscores the general movement in Act Two towards marriage and its use of Time and generation in bringing continuance and perfection to the kingdom of man. Clearly, Simonides and Thaisa think of marriage:

She tells me here, she'll wed the stranger knight ...
'Tis well, mistress; your choice agrees with mine;
(2,5,16-18)

The marriage will be right-side up; it grows out of Pericles' virtue in arms and art, and so he will be the master, she the scholar. (11.38-9)
 As in Sonnet Eight, marriage will express music's harmony. Simonides tests him by calling him appetitive ("villain") and traitor. (2,5,49-54)
 The truth of these charges would keep marriage from being chaste and fruitful and so from being a figure for continuance in change in the kingdom. Pericles successfully proves the charges false, and thus marriage through Time and generation will bring the kingdom of man towards perfection. Pericles loves Thaisa,

Even as my life my blood that fosters it. (1.88)

The prospect of generation in marriage gives life to him, as it does to Simonides and Pentapolis. Hence the concern for hasty consummation:

I will see you wed;
 And then, with what haste you can, get you to bed.
 (11.91-92)

The marriage also gives life to Tyre. The report of Antiochus death which comes in the middle of this courtship-marriage sequence, underscores by contrast Nature's general movement in the play towards continuance and perfection in Time:

A fire from heaven came and shrivell'd up
 Their bodies, even to loathing; for they so stunk,
 That all those eyes ador'd them ere their fall
 Scorn now their hand should give them burial. (2,4,9-12)

An heir from Pericles' marriage will bring "joy to subjects" in Tyre. They do not know of course that marriage is about to use Time and generation to provide a line of right rule for the kingdom, and they worry about Pericles' absence:

... this kingdom is without a head--
 Like goodly buildings left without a roof
 Soon fall to ruin (11.35-37)

Even so, through Helicanus' advice they find a way to use Time to ensure orderly rule. Helicanus gives them a year:

If in which Time expir'd he not return,
 I shall with aged patience bear your yoke. (11.47-48)

Time will restore Pericles and make his reign like his father's:

You shall like diamonds sit about his crown. (1.53)

For the line recollects Pericles' image of his father's rule. (2,3,37-40)

In the world right-side up Time and generation lead to perpetuity and perfection in man and in the kingdom; Nature uses Fortune to achieve marriage and order. The structure of these scenes brings these ideas out naturally and clearly. And the movement reverses the pattern of Act One, where in a world upside down the unnatural subjected man to the storm of Infortune and of Time.

Act Three is a small picture of the whole play's pattern. Tyre stands in a "litigious peace", and sailing home with his pregnant wife to ensure the common good, Pericles suffers the storm of Infortune. In this situation we have an image of Pericles' allegorical pilgrimage through Time, where his goal is perpetuity and ultimate perfection for himself and his kingdom. And again, Nature makes Infortune triumph over herself, just as Pericles' fruitful marriage uses Time and generation to triumph over death. The structure of this act reflects these ideas well. Indeed the act is essentially a tableau in which we see the circular movement of bad Fortune's leading to good through Nature. Again allegory in the pilgrimage and in the sea storm allows us to draw back and see the circular movement in this short act as an epitome of the whole play.

In the chorus, for instance, we see the close connection between good and bad Fortune. The good Fortune of Antiochus' and his daughter's death (1.25) leaves Tyre in unfortunate civil disorder. (ll. 26-9) But this bad Fortune reveals to Pentapolis the fulness of its common good in marriage and perpetuity:

Our heir-apparent is a king! (1.37)

Similarly on the sea Fortune varies, and calm becomes storm. (ll.46-8) The following four scenes develop the connection more completely. The death of Thaisa involves the birth of Marina--the "living piece" of Pericles' dead queen. (3,1,17-21) The birth is a product of marriage, Nature's metaphor for continuance in change, and of the intervention of Lucina, which is another name for chaste Diana. Nature and chastity draw good Fortune out of bad, draw life out of death, and so find in Time the means of defeating Time and of saving the kingdom. Likewise Pericles calls upon Marina's "blustering birth" to give her a happy life:

Happy what follows!
 Thou hast as chiding a nativity
 As fire, air, water, earth, and heaven can make,
 To herald thee from the womb. Poor inch of nature!
 Even at the first thy loss is more than can
 Thy portage quit, with all thou canst find here.
 Now the good gods throw their best eyes upon't!
 (ll.31-37)

The storm of course threatens Marina further; life in her cannot hold out all the way to Tyre. (1.79) And again Nature makes Infortune remedy herself, for Pericles can sail the seas to Tharsus where kindness can preserve the child:

I charge your chastity withal; leaving her
 The infant of your care; beseeching you
 To give her princely training, that she may
 Be manner'd as she is born. (3,3,14-17)

As Marina is the "poor inch of nature", the living piece of her mother, so she is a piece of her father; and his kindness to Tharsus in famine

must in your child be thought on. (1.20)

Through Infortune and Time, Nature perpetuates herself and so proves herself the cure to Infortune and death. Neglecting Nature--forgetting Pericles' kindness--lets Time and Infortune triumph, as in the end of Cleon's line. (3,3,17-24)

Between Marina's birth and her temporary preservation at Tharsus comes the burial and resurrection of Thaisa, and in this too we see Nature making Fortune remedy herself. Cerimon uses Fortune's gifts to build an immortality:

And not your knowledge, your personal pain, but even
Your purse, still open, hath built Lord Cerimon
Such strong renown as time shall never raze. (3,2,46-48)

This is Nature's use of Fortune, while hoarding Fortune--Fortune's ruling Nature--only pleases the fool and death:

...I can speak of the disturbances that
Nature works, and of her cures; which doth give me
A more content in course of true delight
Than to be thirsty after tottering honour,
Or tie my treasures up in silken bags,
To please the fool and death. (11.37-42)

Hence immortality--"making a man a god"--comes through Nature's use of Fortune. (11.27-30) In saving Thaisa from death he also uses Fortune--the storm which tosses the coffin on shore. The coffin in his eyes is a good constraint of Fortune. (1.55) Thus through Fortune as well as through Nature's cures (1.38), Thaisa begins to "blow into life's flower again". (1.97) Moreover, Pericles makes Fortune remedy herself in the rich burial. The lavish care Pericles takes, the kindness he manifests in burying Thaisa, also allow her to blow into life's flower:

nor have I time
 To give thee hallow'd to thy grave, but straight
 Must cast thee, scarcely coffin'd, in the ooze;
 Where, for a monument upon thy bones,
 And e'er-remaining lamps, the belching whale
 And humming water must o'erwhelm thy corpse,
 Lying with simple shells. O Lychorida,
 Bid Nestor bring me spices, ink and paper,
 My casket and my jewels; and bid Nicander
 Bring me the satin coffer... whiles I say
 A priestly farewell to her: (3,1,58-69)

The scented and caulked and jewel-crammed chest as well as the sea, the humming water and simple shells, is a use of Fortune which lets Cerimon re-kindle life. (Recollect Antiochus' end which, without burial, ends even the memory of his line. (2,4,5-12)) Again, through Pericles' and Cerimon's kindness Fortune is able to come full-circle and so aid Pericles and Thaisa by allowing her to perfect her virtue in chastity. (3,4) Her resurrection ensures the continuity of Pentapolis's kingly line, for the continuance of the family in Time is the continuance of the kingdom. Her strength in chastity moves her through Time and Infortune towards perfection. The structure of incidents reflects the thought clearly. The movement is circular: death and birth, burial and resurrection, interweave and in doing so let us stand back that we may see in tableau the whole pattern-antithesis of Nature's using Fortune to move man towards continuance and perfection. Authority is strong.

Act four further develops the idea of continuance and ultimate perfection in change. Marina manifests continuance in that as long as she lives she is the heir to Pericles' kingdom, and in that she preserves her chastity just as he preserves his in Act One. Shakespeare develops this idea of continuance by making Marina suffer because of the unnatural in Tharsus, a world upside down, just as Pericles suffered in Antioch. Marina

also manifests, or begins to manifest, ultimate perfection in generation, in that she rights the upside down world of Mytilene and thus proves her ability to make Tyre "atone together", and in that while Pericles despairs because of Infortune she goes beyond despair into patience. Pericles stands in the background in this act. And thus in the structure, as the choruses show Pericles reacting in joy and grief to the fate of his daughter, we see not only the symbolic movement of mankind through generations of birth and death towards perfection, but the actual movement of one man through spiritual death and rebirth to perfection in life. In Spenser's terms, the world of Pericles approaches that "stedfast rest of all things firmly stayd upon the pillours of eternity" and the Lord of Hosts. The development is clear and compelling.

Like Pericles, Marina is trained in art, particularly music; and she is master, perfect in accomplishment. (4, chorus, 31) But Tharsus, like Antioch, is a world upside down, as is clear in the king and queen's upside down marriage. The queen plots to undo both the king's natural training of Marina and the princess's friendship. Fortune and the unnatural dominate; as Dionyza says to Leonine,

Thou canst not do a thing in the world so soon,
To yield thee so much profit. (4,1,3-4)

Her upside down reasoning subverts Leonine's natural instinct (11.9-10), making him a "villain" like Thaliard. (1.92) Allegorically, by subverting the nobility of Leonine (the lion), she loses the appetitive bestiality.¹ The action develops as an allegory: In the world upside down, Marina is

¹ cf. Knight, op.cit. p.227, and AYLI, 4,3,110-31.

without a true nurse. She has an illusory nurse in Dionyza (1.24), but this illusoriness is clear in Dionyza's advice:

... give me your flowers. On the sea-margent
Walk with Leonine; (11.26-27)

Again, flowers suggest life in Nature (11.13-7), the sea suggests Infortune. The advice is ominously unkind. Unnaturalness in Antioch subjected Pericles and Tyre to extreme Infortune, and so here Dionyza subjects Marina and Tyre (as Marina is heir) to Infortune in the sea. Marina's recollection of the storm when she was born creates an atmosphere of tempest and confusion into which Leonine's attempted murder and the pirates' abduction naturally fit. She is heir to Pericles' virtues through Cleon's naturalness, and to Pericles' Infortune through Dionyza's unnaturalness. Likewise, as lust in Antioch grew into murder, so evil for Marina proliferates. The brothel epitomizes the proliferation of evil, the growth of disease out of appetite, and the ultimate triumph of Time through unchastity:

... they [the whores] with continual action are even
as good as rotten. (4,2,8-9)

The scene is comic and grotesque.

Boult. To-night, to-night. But, mistress, do you know the
French knight that cowers i' the hams?
Bawd. Who? Monsieur Verolles?
Boult. Ay, he; he offer'd to cut a caper at the proclamation;
but he made a groan at it, and swore he would see her
to-morrow.
Bawd. Well, well; as for him, he brought his disease hither;
here he does but repair it. (11.101-09)

Indeed, the comedy focuses on the appetitive and so underscores the evil in the brothel:

Bawd. 'Tis not our bringing up of poor bastards--as I think
I have brought up some eleven--
Boult. Ay, to eleven; and brought them down again. (4,2,13-15)

Thus the scene parallels Pericles in Act One and mirrors the idea of continuance in generation in a different key. The parallel is close; the structure reflects the thought clearly.

Scenes five and six also reflect Marina's agency in continuance in change, as she preserves her chastity. In Act One Pericles is the man "on whom perfections wait", and thus he cannot love Antiochus' unchaste daughter; and likewise after Thaisa's death he leaves his hair unshorn

By bright Diana, whom we honour ... (3,3,28)

Marina parallels his concern throughout the brothel scenes by preserving her chastity, and thus we see his virtue continuing through Time and generation. Her proving her virtue in chastity also perfects Pericles' line in Time, and this too appears in the parallel between Pericles in the earlier acts and Marina here. For while Pericles in Pentapolis is more or less passive in letting his virtues shine in a world right-side up, here Marina herself actively rights Mytilene, a world upside down. The progress, the movement towards Pericles' and Tyre's perfection in Time and generation, is clear. In scene five we see an epitome: Marina converts Mytilene's citizens:

2. Gent. Come, I am for no more bawdy-houses. Shall's go
hear the vestals sing? (11.6-7)

In scene six she converts the governor Lysimachus. The governor is disguised--a figure for a man's natural virtues obscured but not erased by an unnatural attitude. The brothel is "bound to" Lysimachus: it is a part of his kingdom, and as it satisfies his appetite, he gives it gold--Fortune and the appetitive Nature are linked. (4,6,51-8) Order in the kingdom, as before, reflects its ruler's will. Marina's chastity converts Lysimachus, and he gives her gold to preserve it--Fortune begins to follow the divine Nature in Mytilene:

Hold, here's gold for thee.
 Persever in that clear way thou goest,
 And the gods strengthen thee! (11.104-06)

Likewise she goes some ways towards setting the brothel right-side up by making Fortune follow art:

If that thy [Boult's] master would gain by me,
 Proclaim that I can sing, weave, sew, and dance,
 (11.181-82)

The progress towards perfection through generation appears in the parallel between Marina's and Pericles' adventures. And authority in the structure is strong.

The two choruses of this act again force us into the broader view, that we may see not only the plot where the unnatural subjects Marina to Infortune and evil, but also the encompassing pattern of continuance in change. For the choruses put Pericles in the background, and as he reacts to Marina's fate, again we see continuance in change in its simple form--living, she is life to him; dead, she subjects him to Time. Thus when he thinks her safe in Tharsus' care, he is "settled to his own desires" (4, chorus, 2); when he thinks her dead, he rages, and his rage assists the storm of Infortune or Time by "tearing" his body. (4,4,29-31) As the choruses establish Pericles in the background, they also enforce structurally the idea of his moving to perfection through generation. For while he capitulates to grief and so to Lady Fortune, letting her direct his course¹ (4,4,46-8), Marina overcomes grief and despair (4,2,60 & 145-6) and works against Infortune, directed always by chastity and Nature. Likewise he thus capitulates to the illusion of the unnatural and Infortune--he is fooled by Dionyza's illusory kindness and by Marina's illusory death--While Marina

¹ Pericles becomes a wandering pilgrim here, out of accord with Nature and Providence. Compare Alcyon in Spenser's Daphnaida who refuses to be consoled and so goes forth a poor pilgrim "in wandring desert wayes". (1.534)

works against the illusion of Infortune and the unnatural in as far as she refuses to believe in Lysimachus' disguise (4,6,91-3), in Leonine's bestiality (4,1,85-7), or even in Boult's unnaturalness. (4,6,173-9) She tries always to remove the unnatural disguise and so expose the natural virtue, and in this way too she is more perfect than Pericles. Structure brings this out through the parallels. Moreover, by showing us Pericles in the background and by forcing us to see this encompassing pattern of continuance and perfection in generation, the choruses prepare for the reconciliation in Act Five, the rebirth of Pericles from grief into joy. And thus these choruses and the structure of the act in general prepare us to see man's symbolic movement through the generations towards Truth--to see this in the actual movement of one man towards Truth in life. The structure is simple and yet complete; the fourth act is perhaps the most compelling in the play.

In the play's first two acts Pericles is oppressed and then uplifted as he moves from Antioch to Pentapolis--from a kingdom upside down to a kingdom right-side up --and similarly in the last two acts he moves from low to high as his spirit lives in the fate of Marina. In Act Four Infortune, promoted by the unnatural in Tharsus, brings him low, and in the beginning of Act Five we see him at this low point, entombed in silence and grief. (5,1,23-6) Fortune brings him over the seas to Mytilene (4,4,47-8), a kingdom made right-side up by Marina; and thus through her and through Fortune in an orderly world, his kingdom of man may come to the full harmony and accord of marriage as continuance and final perfection in change. And this last act shows his movement towards perfection in Time through patience and the telling of griefs. Again, Act Five counterbalances and yet grows logically out of Act Four.

Marina's perfect virtue and her patient telling of griefs make Mytilene right-side up and so allow Pericles to dwell in the full harmony of "marriage". In this, her virtue and patience let bad Fortune become good. This is clear in the development of the chorus and the first scene of Act Five. Her singing and dancing are "goddess-like", and thus she makes Fortune in Mytilene follow Nature.¹ (5,chorus,1-10) Similarly, as she has converted Lysimachus and so made him an appropriate husband, he honors Neptune the god of the sea; and when the storm-driven Pericles sails into Mytilene, the festival turns storm metaphorically into calm and ultimately into accord. (5,1,17-9) Marina draws Pericles out of silence by her singing and by her telling of grief. (11.84-96) He first responds to her account of Infortune:

My fortunes--parentage--good parentage--
To equal mine--was it not thus? what say you?
(11.97-98)

Thus as she tells her grief he begins to see in her the continuance of his kind:

My dearest wife
Was like this maid, and such a one
My daughter might have been: my queen's square brows;
Her stature to an inch; as wand-like straight...
(11.106-09)

In her he also sees the ultimate perfection:

Falseness cannot come from thee, for thou look'st
Modest as Justice, and thou seem'st a palace
For the crown'd Truth to dwell in. (11.120-22)

¹ See also these lines which recall Cleon (3,3,20-5):

Lysimachus. O, sir, a courtesy
Which, if we should deny, the most just God
For every graft would send a caterpillar,
And so inflict our province.
(5,1,57-60)

She recollects the perfection of White in The Book of the Duchess.
 Through the patient telling,¹ as I have said, tears of woe become tears
 of joy (ll.184-9), the sea of woe becomes a great sea of joys. (ll.192-9)
 And he sees the fullness of "marriage" as the metaphor for continuance and
 perfection in generation, for both himself and his kingdom.

Thou hast been godlike perfect, the heir of kingdoms,
 And another life to Pericles thy father.
 (ll.206-07)

This fullness appears symbolically in the music of the spheres² (which is
 itself a traditional expression of the One in the Many) and in the theophany
 of chaste Diana.

Marina's virtue and patience thus lead Pericles' line towards
 perfection through Time, and Pericles himself towards perfection in Time'
 on earth. For Diana's appearance, again, symbolizes the fullness that
 Marina has just brought him to, and when Diana tells him to honor chastity
 (l.239) and patiently retell his griefs,

... give them repetition to the life. (l.244)

she helps him bring life metaphorically out of death, that he and Thaisa
 may enjoy present immortality and rebirth. Thaisa's rebirth through patience,
 chastity, and Nature appears in tableau. Pericles tells his history at
 Ephesus, and when Thaisa faints, he interprets this as death:

What means the nun? she dies, (5,3,15)

¹Note the emphasis on Pericles' discovery rather than on hers, which
 emphasis reflects the metaphor. Consider also how many times patience
 and telling have emphasis: lines 98, 118, 125f., 131, 138, 141, 144, 164,
 and so forth.

²J. P. Cutts, "Pericles' Most Heavenly Music'," Notes and Queries,
 n.s. VII (May, 1960) pp. 172-4.

In the dozen odd lines it takes her to recover (11.15-28), Pericles and Cerimon recount the whole cycle of her sea-burial and her rebirth:

Early one blustering morn this lady was
 Thrown upon this shore. I op'd the coffin,
 Found there rich jewels; recover'd her, and plac'd her
 Here in Diana's temple. (11.22-25)

And thus in her fainting and recovery we see an epitome of death and rebirth through the patient telling of grief, through chastity, and through Nature's use of Fortune. Later in the scene we see another tableau. Pericles says to Thaisa,

O come, be buried
 A second time within these arms.
 Marina. My heart
 Leaps to be gone into my mother's bosom.
 Pericles. Look, who kneels here, flesh of thy flesh, Thaisa;
 (11.43-46)

Again we see in epitome the cycle of birth and death, of continuance in change, this time through chaste and fruitful marriage. Likewise marriage means perpetuity for the kingdom, and with the assurance of this the play ends. Thaisa says,

My father's dead.
 Pericles. Heavens make a star of him! Yet there, my queen,
 We'll celebrate their nuptials, and ourselves
 Will in that kingdom spend our following days.
 Our son and daughter shall in Tyrus reign.
 (11.78-82)

This last scene catches up and epitomizes all the play's major themes. And in the epilogue even the idea of the tale as a restorative finds final expression; Pericles' experience and our own come together:

So on your patience evermore attending,
 New joy wait on you! Here our play has ending.

As continuance in change means that things in Time follow a kind of spiral movement upwards to perfection, so the overall structure of this

play appears as a kind of double circle or spiral. And as in the first two acts Pericles himself struggles against the unnatural, falls low on Fortune's wheel, and finally rises up by proving his virtues; so in the last two acts he goes through the same cycle of overthrowal and triumph through his daughter's fortunes, arriving finally at perfection on earth in the "married" harmony of the spheres. The structure mirrors the thought perfectly. In terms of logic and coherence, authority is complete, for each idea finds a correlative in the structure, and the whole fits tightly together. Indeed the play is a systematically complete working out of all the possibilities of the theme of continuance in change--in the pilgrimage, in marriage, in patience, in art, in the play itself.

Shakespeare seems to be developing the idea to its limit. Still Pericles is not a perfect play. The problem stems from Shakespeare's following a narrative source too closely. Thus while a strict use of the pilgrimage theme as a structural device may give a narrative poem coherence, it tends to make this play episodic, and so to make it depend too much on its chorus and on imaginative leaps. The episodes cohere well, but as we cover the fourteen odd years with Gower, the episodes tend to proliferate excessively, as do the characters. We are introduced into no less than six kingdoms--Antioch, Tyre, Tharsus, Pentapolis, Ephesus, and Mytilene. And we cannot but wonder whether in the action some of them could not have been conflated. In other words, the double movement from low to high in the first and last two acts gives one possible structural equivalent for the theme. The equivalent is systematic and complete; the double movement of the two generations clearly reflects the idea; but it does not do so very economically. Moreover the double movement demands that a chorus fill in the

gaps and thus too much subordinates the plot, which develops by conflict, to the encompassing pattern of antitheses. The detachment which results from this episodic, antithetical development is perhaps more appropriate to narrative poetry, such as The Book of the Duchess and the Parliament of Birds, than to drama. Indeed by fostering this detachment, Shakespeare immediately precludes the simple and basic means of compelling attention and so of gaining authority--suspense. These are minor defects however which do not seriously mar the authority that logical and coherent structure give to this play. Still they are defects which Shakespeare eliminates in The Tempest.

CHAPTER III

THE TEMPEST

The last play in this sequence is The Tempest, written in 1611.¹ The Tempest draws upon the medieval literature and upon the plays that come before it, particularly As You Like It and Pericles. Indeed the basic antithesis in The Tempest is again Nature and Fortune, and this is epitomized for instance in the opposition of the island and the sea or of the island and the court. The sea as in Pericles is the sea of Fortune, and man's life is a voyage (5,1,208); likewise the court is the realm of Fortune, for in Naples Fortune rules Nature (1,2,121-7) and in Milan the unnatural banishes the natural as long as the usurper Antonio holds the throne. The island on the other hand is like the forest of Arden, for Nature and truth reside there. Note in Gonzalo's words the difference between truth on the island and in the court and the like opposition of natural and unnatural:

If in Naples
I should report this now, would they believe me?
If I should say, I saw such islanders,--
For, certes, these are people of the island,--
Who, though they are of monstrous shape, yet, note,
Their manners are more gentle, kind, than of
Our human generation you shall find
Many, nay, almost any, (3,3,27-34)

And too, in Caliban's words note the island's harmonious music which orders the mind like sleep and so suggests the subordination on the island of Fortune (riches) to Nature:

¹References are to the Arden edition of The Tempest, edited by Frank Kermode, (London, 1954).

Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
 Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.
 Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
 Will hum about mine ears; and sometime voices,
 That, if I then had wak'd after long sleep,
 Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,
 The clouds methought would open, and show riches
 Ready to drop upon me; that, when I wak'd,
 I cried to dream again. (3,2,133-41)

Again the opposition of sea or court and island is not absolute. Gonzalo who is a product of the court, is a natural counsellor, patient and loyal. Though the island represents Nature, it also contains the unnatural, chiefly in the courtiers who are as out of place on the island as Duke Senior's followers are in the forest of Arden. For instance Gonzalo recognizes abundant fruitful Nature on the island, and he would establish a kingdom there in accord with this simple ideal. Antonio and Sebastian represent the unnatural and appetitive which would turn such a kingdom on the island upside down. The juxtaposition of attitudes in Act Two, scene one, makes it clear that the court on the island is unnatural:

Gonzalo. ... but Nature should bring forth,
 Of it own kind, all foison, all abundance, ...
 Sebastian. No marrying 'mong his subjects?
 Antonio. None, man; all idle; whores and knaves. (11.158-62)

Or for instance Caliban identifies himself with Nature on the island, first to Prospero (1,2,338-41) and then to Stephano. (2,2,160 & 167-72) He is natural unaccommodated man, like Spenser's cannibale, and his Nature implies both fruitfulness and appetite, the divine Nature and the appetitive Nature.¹ (1,2,349-53) But Prospero makes Nature upside down for Caliban. Consider Caliban's description of his torments:

¹ See W. H. Auden, The Dyer's Hand (London, 1962) p. 129. See also the Arden introduction, pp. XXXVIII-XLiii, on Caliban's nature.

For every trifle are they [Prospero's spirits] set upon me;
 Sometime like apes, that mow and chatter at me,
 And after bite me; then like hedgehogs, which
 Lie tumbling in my barefoot way, and mount
 Their pricks at my footfall; sometime am I
 All wound with adders, who with cloven tongues
 Do hiss me into madness (2,2,8-14)

Likewise the opposition of Fortune and Nature is not absolute, for Prospero through his supernatural art uses Fortune in order to come to the full harmony of Nature. Fortune as he says brings his enemies to the island (1,2,178-80), and thus he raises the tempest, which is a figure as in Pericles for Infortune, and which suggests etymologically Time. The tempest is a figure for Infortune linked with Time, but Prospero means to use Infortune, to make it come full-circle, for he raises the tempest by his art in order to arrange the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand which in its fruitfulness will fulfil Nature's ideal of continuance in change (4,1,106-15), bring order to the upside down kingdoms of Naples and Milan, and so move Prospero himself towards perfection, his "zenith". (1,2,180-4) (The name Prospero even suggests one gets what he hopes for, one who enjoys good Fortune.) Prospero uses the unnatural as well in order to come to the harmony of Nature, for his tempest is also an unnatural event, a confusion in Nature:

The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch,
 But that the sea, mounting to th' welkin's cheek,
 Dashes the fire out. (1,2,3-5)

Sky and sea become confused, indistinguishable. Indeed much of Prospero's art is unnatural, like the black art of Ovid's Medea,¹ as is clear in his

¹
 M. W. Bundy, "The Allegory in The Tempest," Research Studies (Washington State Univ.) XXXII Sept. 1964, pp. 196-7, 204. See Kermode, "Shakespeare: The Final Plays", "Time is the unfold of error and the servant of eternity, as chance is the servant of providence." p. 39. See also the Arden introduction. p. xlvi.

famous renunciation, "Ye elves...." (5,1,33-57) Supernatural art is either white or black--it accords with Nature or it does not. And thus the speech contains two basic contrasts: One between the relatively harmless activities of the elves (chasing tides, making sour ringlets and mushrooms and so forth) and the cataclysmic tasks Prospero puts them to such as making eclipses, tempests, and earthquakes, rending and uprooting trees, opening graves and waking the dead. The other between these same unnatural tasks which he here gives up and the final "heavenly music". First Prospero uses "rough art" to get revenge: Ariel as a "minister of Fate" drives Alonzo and Sebastian and Antonio towards despair and suicide:

I have made you mad;
And even with such-like valour men hang and drown
Their proper selves. (3,3,58-60)

Revenge is an aspect of Fortune: They expose Prospero to the sea of Fortune, and the sea revenges it. (3,3,71)

The powers, delaying, not forgetting, have
Incens'd the seas and shores, yea, all the creatures,
Against your peace. Thee of thy son, Alonzo,
They have bereft; and do pronounce by me
Ling'ring perdition--worse than any death
Can be at once--shall step by step attend
You and your ways; (3,3,73-79)

But in the end Nature controls Fortune, mercy which is an expression of Nature controls revenge, and Prospero by his art invokes heavenly music to clear their brains, muddled by the rough art of his tempest, much as his servant Ariel's music calms the tempest in the sea and in man:

Weeping again the King my [Ferdinand's] father's wrack,
This music crept by me upon the waters,
Allaying both their fury and my passion
With its sweet air: (1,2,393-96)

Fortune and rough art and revenge turn Nature against Alonzo and the others and drive them towards ultimate destruction without the consolation of continuance in Time, but they also cause at least Alonzo to repent.

(5,1,28) Art or magic is an important element in The Tempest as in Pericles, where art, particularly in the form of story-telling, allows Nature and Truth finally to triumph. And thus here Fortune and art and revenge allow for purgation and redemption and for the upward turning of the wheel, when they are controlled by Nature and mercy:

Hast thou [Ariel], which art but air, a touch, a feeling
 Of their afflictions, and shall not myself,
 One of their kind, that relish all as sharply
 Passion as they, be kindlier mov'd than thou art?
 Though with their high wrongs I am struck to th' quick,
 Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
 Do I take part: the rarer action is
 In virtue than in vengeance: they being penitent,
 The sole drift of my purpose doth extend
 Not a frown further. (5,1,21-30)

When Nature rules over Fortune, man moves through Time towards eternity. And thus through Nature, magic, and mercy, the Infortune of shipwreck and death comes full-circle into the harmony of fruitful marriage, the disorderly kingdoms of Milan and Naples come to right-side up order, and the upside down kingdoms of man in Prospero and Alonzo, who are dominated by rage (4,1,158-63) and despair (3,3,100-2), come to Nature's accord in patience, mercy, and self-knowledges

Was Milan thrust from Milan, that his issue
 Should become Kings of Naples? O, rejoice
 Beyond a common joy! and set it down
 With gold on lasting pillars: in one voyage
 Did Claribel her husband find at Tunis,
 And Ferdinand, her brother, found a wife
 Where he himself was lost, Prospero his dukedom
 In a poor isle, and all of us ourselves
 When no man was his own. (5,1,205-13)

The kingdoms of Milan and Naples must be set right-side up; there must be an orderly "marriage" of Nature and Fortune, where Nature rules and controls. Milan is upside down because Prospero violates this "marriage" by putting the government in his brother's hands:¹

The government I cast upon my brother,
And to my state grew stranger, being transported
And rapt in secret studies. (1,2,75-77)

He violates the "marriage", Nature ceases to control Fortune and appetite, and this awakens in Antonio an "evil nature". (1.93) One broken bond allows another to break, and so Prospero's laxity allows his inveterate enemy Alonso to banish him (11.121-7) and to expose him to Infortune in the form of the sea:

...Bore us some leagues to sea; where they prepared
A rotten carcass of a butt, not rigg'd,
Nor tackle, sail, nor mast; the very rats
Instinctively have quit it: there they hoist us,
To cry to th' sea that roar'd to us; to sigh
To th' winds, whose pity, sighing back again,
Did us but loving wrong. (1,2,145-51)

Breaking the bonds of Nature exposes men to unrestrained appetite and to the ravagement of headlong mutability and decay. And we see the chaos of such a world in the first scene of the play as the courtiers are exposed to the storm. Again all men are pilgrims, seafarers driven by fate, and the water is the world, "ay waldorand". The bonds help the pilgrim to ride out the storm; breaking them "assists the storm":

Boatswain. You [the courtiers] mar our labour: keep your
cabins: you do assist the storm. (1,1,13-14)

¹ See E.M.W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's Last Plays (London, 1938) p.49. "Like Basilius in Sidney's Arcadia, he commits the error of not attending carefully enough to affairs of state." See also the Arden introduction. pp. lixff.

There are no bonds on the ship; it is each man for himself--the law of survival of the strongest. (1.20) The courtiers hinder the sailors, and the sailors give up their labors. (1.52) Moreover, the storm itself as we soon learn is in part Prospero's revenge. When Antonio and Alonzo banish him, he too "expels remorse and nature". Like Orlando in the first act of As You Like It, he responds to his brother in kind by exposing him through his rough art to the shipwrecking storm and by denying him the name of brother. (1,2,118) When Nature no longer controls Fortune and the unnatural, magic becomes black magic and evil proliferates in the kingdom and all the bonds break, exposing the pilgrims to appetite which devours itself, and to Time.

Likewise, when the courtiers land on the island we see appetite and Fortune ruling in a world upside down. The juxtaposition of attitudes between Gonzalo on the one side and Antonio and Sebastian on the other represents the opposition of Nature and Fortune, natural and unnatural, patience and despair. Gonzalo comforts grief, Sebastian drives it towards despair. (2,1,119-35) Like Lydgate (see above), Gonzalo refers somewhat naively to Dido's chaste widowhood when he praises Claribel in Tunis, while Antonio can think only of Dido's unchastity. (2,1,66-97) Gonzalo, again, would found a kingdom on the simple harmony of Nature; Antonio and Sebastian would turn this upside down:

... all idle; whores and knaves. (1.162)

And appetite and Fortune rule because Alonzo "entertains grief", regrets the marriage of Claribel in Tunis, and despairs at the loss of his heir while rejecting hope and Nature. (11.102-9) He blows like a vane in the wind, as Antonio and Sebastian encourage him to do. Gonzalo's constancy comes to nothing here, for mutability and appetite rule:

Gonzalo. You are gentlemen of brave mettle; you would lift the moon out of her sphere, if she would continue in it five weeks without changing.

Sebastian. We would so, and then go a bat-fowling (2,1,177-80)
 Moreover, as Prospero's studying lost control over Fortune and allowed the
 unnatural to awake, so Alonzo's sleeping here does the same. Sleep in a
 world upside down does not control Fortune and appetite, and so it awakens
 rebellion. Alonzo gives up the rule, the guard (11.191-3), like Prospero;
 and one unnatural act becomes precedent for another as evil proliferates:

Thy [Antonio's] case, dear friend,
 Shall be my precedent; as thou got'st Milan,
 I'll come by Naples. Draw thy sword: one stroke
 Shall free thee from the tribute which thou payest; (2,1,285-88)

When the world is upside down characters must seek refuge in Nature,
 present metaphorically in the desert island, as in the desert Forest of
 Arden in As You Like It. Recollect the line from Gamelyn:

He moste needes walke in woode, that may not walke in
 towne. (1.672)

Caliban emphasizes the abundance of Nature on the island (2,2,148-72) But
 the island, like the forest, is no more than a temporary refuge. Even
 Prospero the natural duke is out of place there, and the whole world will
 be right-side up when he sails the seas to carry right rule back to Milan¹.

¹See Sophocles' Philoctetes (below) where too the basic contrast is
 between the island and the sea, and where in the end Philoctetes must sail
 back to the world of men. The world of the Trojan War is no less corrupt
 than the court of Milan or of Naples, but Neoptolemus' friendship is a
 bond of Nature for Philoctetes which will heal his wound and too prove a
 wall against the purely appetitive instincts of Odysseus, who would leave
 Philoctetes defenseless on the island, food for some beast. I don't mean
 to suggest that Shakespeare based his play on Philoctetes, any more than
 I meant to suggest earlier that Yeats based any of his poems on medieval
 or Elizabethan literature. Themes such as the antithesis of Nature and
 Fortune, Nature and Time, are simply the great themes of literature of all
 ages. What are Oedipus Rex, Medea, The Bacchae, The Trojan Women, Ajax,
Philoctetes, and so forth about if not these themes! What is Dostoevski's
Brother's Karamazov about if not the conflict of natural and unnatural,
 Nature and Fortune, Alyosha's kindness and Ivan's anarchy! For Dostoevski's
 interest for instance in such ideas as continuance and ultimate perfection
 in change, see Jessie Coulson, Dostoevski, A Self-Portrait. (London, 1962)
 pp. 216-7.

The essential ingredients of right rule are control and mercy. All the workings of the play witness Prospero's having learned that control is necessary. His minister Ariel overwatches the landed courtiers and circumscribes the appetitive Antonio and Sebastian (2,1,292-4); he himself watches Miranda and Ferdinand (3,1) and controls the "fire in the blood" (4,1,53); and of course Ariel sees and diverts the plot of Caliban. (3,2,113 & 146; 4,1,171-84) In the end there is no question of Prospero's losing himself again in study; he will control his appetitive and unregenerate brother--Nature will rule over Fortune and the unnatural in Milan:

For you, most wicked sir, whom to call brother
 Would even infect my mouth, I do forgive
 Thy rankest fault,--all of them; and require
 My dukedom of thee, which perforce, I know,
 Thou must restore. (5,1,130-34)

But control without mercy or forgiveness is no more than revenge. It is against reason to hate the wicked, Lady Philosophy tells Boethius,¹ and in The Tempest we see that Prospero's initial hatred for the wicked characters turns all Nature against them and drives them towards madness, suicide, and despair:²

Alonzo. O, it is monstrous, monstrous!
 Methought the billows spoke, and told me of it;
 The winds did sing it to me; and the thunder,
 That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounc'd
 The name of Prosper: it did base my trespass.
 Therefor my son i' th' ooze is bedded; and
 I'll seek him deeper than e'er plummet sounded,
 And with him there lie mudded. (3,3,95-102)

¹ Arden introduction. p. 1. Consolatione, IV, pr. 4.

² Arden introduction, p. 85n. Kermode suggests that the action of Act Three, scene three, may perhaps look back to Job XX, 23 & 27: "When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him ... The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him."

His mercy on the other hand causes at least Alonzo to repent:

Thy dukedom I resign, and do entreat
Thou pardon me my wrongs. (5,1,118-19)

Control led by mercy and patience makes Fortune and revenge defeat themselves by making them come full-circle into repentance and purgation and regeneration. Control without mercy leaves unnatural men temporarily subdued but ever unregenerate. The unnatural cannot be subdued for long; they must be converted. And thus mercy and patience lead to the fullness of continuance in change, where men move through Time and Infortune towards perfection and Truth.

When Prospero gives up the government to his brother he allows the kingdom of Milan to turn upside down, and when he denies Antonio the name of brother and banishes Nature in himself by seeking revenge against the courtiers, as Lady Philosophy would say, he reveals Nature and reason in himself upside down. Again, the kingdom in the world and the little kingdom of man come together. At the beginning of the play, Dover Wilson says, Prospero "is a terrible old man, almost as tyrannical and irascible as Lear at the opening of his play".¹ The thought of his brother's unnaturalness works him into a rage, so that he snaps at Miranda. Note the first of his many warnings to her to attend:

My brother, and thy uncle, call'd Antonio,--
I pray thee, mark me, that a brother should
Be so perfidious! (1,2,66-68)

Again, unnaturalness makes him respond unnaturally. It contorts the rhythm of his speech. And Prospero cannot right the kingdom of Milan till he rights his own kingdom of man. This is perhaps the play's major theme.

¹ The Meaning of "The Tempest" (published by the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1936) p. 14.

Like the forest of Arden, the island is the refuge of Nature and Truth and so the place to acquire self-knowledge.¹ Prospero says to Miranda:

... thee, my daughter, who
 Art ignorant of what thou art; nought knowing
 Of whence I am, nor that I am more better
 Than Prospero, master of a full poor cell,
 And thy no greater father.
 Miranda. More to know
 Did never meddle with my thoughts. (1,2,17-22)

He must once a month remind Ariel
 what thou hast been,
 Which thou forget'st. (1,2,262-63)

And in the end the island is the place where each finds himself, when "no man was his own". (5,1,213)

There is a certain irony when Prospero speaks to Miranda, for he does not know that he is not in fact "more better than Prospero", much as Alonzo does not know that his "hint of woe is common", as Gonzalo says (2,1,3-6), the daily experience of the sailor's wife, the ship's masters, and the merchant. And indeed Prospero's tale, which he hopes will tell Miranda who she is, tells us much of him and of his faults, which he reveals apparently unawares when he tells us how he grew stranger to his state and when he shows us his rage. Similarly when he means to tell Ariel what Ariel is, he defines himself further; and thus in recalling Sycorax for Ariel and the dozen years of torment, he in fact shows us that he is partly like Sycorax. Both Sycorax and Prospero were banished to the island, she with Caliban, he with Miranda. Note the parallel as he speaks to Ariel:

Thou, my slave,
 As thou report'st thyself, was then her servant;
 And, for thou wast a spirit too delicate
 To act her earthy and abhorr'd commands,
 Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,
 By help of her more potent ministers,
 And in her most unmitigable rage,
 Into a cloven pine; (1,2,270-77)

¹See D. Traversi, *op.cit.*, p. 223. Traversi says that by bringing to the island the persons who have affected his past, Prospero forces them to see themselves as they are and to come to terms with their responsibilities.

Prospero in his rage threatens Ariel, and we see how like Sycorax he is, for though he never carries out his threat, in his rage the possibility is present:

If thou more murmur'st, I will rend an oak,
And peg thee in his knotty entrails, till
Thou hast howl'd away twelve winters. (11.294-96)

Both deal in magic or art or the supernatural, but even though Prospero's art is partly black, as is clear in his famous renunciation, he is not so black a sorcerer as Sycorax. He does not fornicate with the devil as she did (1.321), and the possibility of regeneration exists for him, for his counsellor is the merciful Ariel whom Sycorax confined, and his child is Miranda who, like Rosalind and White, is a perfect woman, a quintessential spirit:

but you, O you,
So perfect and so peerless, are created
Of every creature's best! (3,1,46-48)

Prospero has two servants by the strength of his supernatural art, one a creature of air and fire, the other of earth.¹ (5,1,21 & 88-94 ; 1,2,316) Ariel is too "delicate" a spirit to enact Sycorax's "earthly and abhorr'd commands"; Caliban was got by the devil himself, and he seeks to violate the perfect Miranda (1,2,349) whose name alone suggests her virtue. Caliban whose name is an anagram of cannibal, is in part a creature of murder and revenge (3,2); Ariel of mercy:

Ariel. Your [Prospero's] charm so strongly works 'em,
That if you now beheld them, your affections
Would become tender.

Prospero. Dost thou think so, spirit?
Ariel. Mine would, sir, were I human.

¹ See Knight, The Crown of Life, p. 240. Compare sonnets 44 and 45.

Prospero. And mine shall.
 Hast thou, which art but air, a touch, a feeling
 Of their afflictions, and shall not myself, (5,1,17-22)

As David William says, "Perhaps it is a mistake to approach either character in terms solely of itself. In fact, I find it difficult to think of either of them apart from Prospero, and believe that they only make full imaginative sense if apprehended as externalized aspects of Prospero--the one of his spiritual, the other of his sensual appetencies"¹. And although Ariel and Caliban figure in the play in many other ways, this is partly true, for the island is the place where the spiritual or ideal world has embodiment:

Now I will believe
 That there are Unicorns; that in Arabia
 There is one tree, the phoenix' throne; one phoenix
 At this hour reigning there. (3,3,21-24)

And thus Caliban is like Ferdinand's "worser genius" whom Ferdinand will not listen to; for to listen to the worser genius is to violate Miranda's chastity. (4,1,23-8) And then,

No sweet aspersion shall the heavens let fall
 To make this contract grow; but barren hate,
 Sour-ey'd disdain and discord shall bestrew
 The union of your bed with weeds so loathly
 That you shall hate it both: therefore take heed,
 As Hymen's lamp shall light you. (4,1,18-23)

Implicitly, the better genius leads to "quiet days, fair issue and long life" (1.24), and to the fullness of marriage which Ariel brings about (1,2,422-3), as that fullness appears in the masque he helps conduct. (5,1,35-9 & 57) Or again, Ariel and Caliban are like the forward and the backward voice of Stephano's four-legged monster. (2,2,91-4) One

¹ Jacobean Theatre: Stratford-upon-Avon Studies I, ed. J.R. Brown & B. Harris (London, 1960). Compare an interesting essay by B. Knox, "The Tempest" and the Ancient Comic Tradition" English Stage Comedy, ed. W.K. Wemsatt (New York, 1955) pp. 52-73.

speaks well, the other foully to Stephano, whose first encounter with Caliban (see below) indeed parodies Prospero's own. At times Prospero and the delicate Ariel are at odds, at times they are friendly. (4,1,48-9) But in the end Prospero comes to self-knowledge and wisdom in as far as he listens to Ariel, in as far as he makes his art accord with Nature. (5,1,17-28) In Ariel we see the full-circle from storm to safety in the harbor (1,2,195-227), from the initial tempest to the final "calm seas, auspicious gales," his first and last charges. Listening to Ariel, Prospero puts his reason above his rage:

Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
Do I take part: (5,1,26-27)

And as he makes reason in himself right-side up, he rights his kingdom in the world as well, for reason and mercy and white magic convert Alonzo and even perhaps Sebastian, and so move man through Time towards regeneration and Truth.

When Prospero unnaturally becomes a stranger to his state he starts a chain-reaction of unnatural acts in the kingdom, between himself and Antonio, Sebastian and Alonzo; and likewise when he unnaturally usurps Caliban's domain he turns language in Caliban into cursing and makes Caliban seek revenge. If we accept David William's imaginative connection, Caliban's revenge is in part a rebellion in Prospero's little kingdom of man. Again, Caliban is partly the appetite, the sensuality. In Lydgate's Pilgrimage the pilgrim was not to kill the body but to chasten and convert it, to subject it to reason in a true marriage of reason and sensuality. In The Tempest Prospero, after he tries to instruct Caliban, revenges himself on Caliban. Caliban tries to rape Miranda, and so Prospero curses him, sets

Nature against him, and generally treats Caliban as Caliban treats him. For instance he thwarts Caliban's revenge plot by grinding Caliban's joints, shortening up his sinews, and hunting the Fortune-hunters with Tyrant and Fury, the dogs of revenge. (4,1,255-61) But in the end Prospero must right his kingdom of man, not by treating Caliban in kind, but by showing him mercy, by converting him:

Go, sirrah, to my cell;
Take with you your companions; as you look
To have my pardon, trim it handsomely.
Caliban. Ay, that I will; and I'll be wise hereafter,
And seek for grace. (5,1,291-95)

Control and mercy. Prospero comes to self-knowledge on the island when he listens to Ariel and when he "knows" Caliban his own. His words echo Gonzalo's description of self-discovery, where "no man was his own".

(1.213) Self-knowledge and possession, the kingdom of man and the kingdom of the world, come together:

Two of these fellows you [Alonzo]
Must know and own; this thing of darkness I
Acknowledge mine. (5,1,274-76)

The link between man and the kingdom is clear, for ruling an orderly kingdom and knowing the self combine.

Harmony and accord mean a right-side up "marriage" of Nature and Fortune in the kingdom, an orderly "marriage" of reason and sensuality in the man. And indeed marriage is central to The Tempest, figuratively in Prospero and Milan, literally in Miranda and Ferdinand. Their marriage reflects the harmonious music on the island:

Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands:
Courtsied when you have and kiss'd
The wild waves whist:
Foot it featly here and there, (1,2,377-81)

Kissing and joining hands mirror the harmony that calms the fury of storm and grief. (1.395) Prospero of course tests Ferdinand, as Simonides tests Pericles, and calls him usurper and traitor. (11.456,472) The charges are perhaps more serious than they seem, for Ferdinand is Alonzo's son and so perhaps too an "inveterate enemy" who would keep Prospero and his kingdom from enjoying the full accord of continuance in generation. The log-bearing on the desert island where Nature is both fruitful and savage, forces Ferdinand to prove himself as Orlando proves himself in As You Like It by making the desert forest civil. It also forces him, as in the earlier literature, to mature from service in love to lordship in marriage, for Ferdinand is decidedly the courtly lover. Consider ^{his} stilted first words to Miranda, where he reacts as Palamon and Arcite react to Emilie:

Most sure the goddess
On whom these airs attend! Vouchsafe my prayer
May know if you remain upon this island;
And that you will some good instruction give
How I may bear me here: (1,2,424-28)

That the lovers go through courtly love is also clear in their symbolic game of chess (5,1,172) which here as before is the game of the Garden of the Rose. Like Marina in Act Four of Pericles, Miranda proves herself a natural and merciful mistress:

The mistress which I [Ferdinand] serve quickens what's dead,
And makes my labours pleasures: O, she is
Ten times more gentle than her father's crabbed, (3,1,7-9)

She has already tried of course to make civil what is savage, when she tries to teach Caliban language. (1,2,354-64) And their surviving Prospero's trial ensures that their marriage will fully realize the ideal in Juno and Ceres' song:

Honour, riches, marriage-blessing,
Long continuance, and increasing,
Hourly joys be still upon you!...
Earth's increase, foison plenty...
Spring come to you at the farthest
In the very end of harvest! (4,1,105-115)

The song celebrates continuance in generation; it is perhaps as close to an utterance of Truth as Diana's heavenly music is in Pericles. And thus in the end we see man in epitome--the pilgrim sailing the sea towards marriage:

... in the morn
 I'll bring you to your ship, and so to Naples,
 Where I have hope to see the nuptial
 Of these our dear-belov'd solemnized;... (5,1,306-09)

Towards marriage which reflects the harmony of self-knowledge and of order in the kingdom, and which will lead man to Truth.

If the terms of the play are more or less clear, perhaps we can consider the logical and coherent structure. Bear in mind that in Pericles the double movement from low to high in the first and last two acts gave a systematically complete but uneconomical structural equivalent for the theme. The chorus became necessary, and this subordinated plot and conflict too much to the encompassing pattern of antitheses. Suspense and the sense of crisis vanished. On the other hand The Tempest is less systematic, more imaginative. Then too, as Clifford Leech says, we are aware in The Tempest of both pattern and crisis,¹ for though despair and rage finally come full-circle into continuance and hope and mercy, and though Prospero always works towards Miranda's and Ferdinand's marriage, until Act Five he also drives forward his revenge. Indeed The Tempest represents the fullness of Shakespeare's dramatic authority.

¹"The Structure of the Last Plays," Shakespeare Survey XI (1958) p. 19.

The first act of The Tempest in a sense epitomizes the whole play. For from the upside down world of the court where Infortune brings man to chaos, the first act moves through refining self-knowledge, mercy, and control, towards the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand, which will allay the wild waves and so prove a means for the kingdom of man to come towards perfection in Time. Prospero raises the storm, and Act One also epitomizes the conflict in him of natural and unnatural, of Ariel's reason (in as far as "reason" has to do with the celestial or divine) and Caliban's sensuality, of mercy and revenge--the conflict that implicitly threatens to disrupt the harmony of marriage and bring man to naught. This conflict is not necessarily contained within the cyclical pattern-antithesis of moving through Fortune to Nature's marriage, for the conflict seriously threatens to break that cycle. Pattern and conflict develop side by side; the movement compels attention.

First consider the pattern of Nature's using Fortune to come to the harmony of marriage. The play begins, as I have said, with a picture of an upside down court at the mercy of the storm of Infortune. It is a vicious, cursing, disorderly world:

Sebastian. A pox o' your throat, you bawling, blasphemous,
incharitable dog!

Boatswain. Work you, then.

Antonio. Hang, cur! hang, you whoreson, insolent, noisemaker.
(1,1,40-44)

Dover Wilson is right in recognizing here the essence of tragedy.¹ There is no degree, no respect of office (1.20); and this disorder "assists the storm" (1.14) so that Fortune defeats Nature by breaking all the bonds:

¹The Meaning of "The Tempest", pp. 1-23.

"We split, we split!"--"Farewell, my wife and children!"--
 "Farewell, brother!"--"We split, we split, we split!"--(11.60-61)

Immediately set against this chaos is the natural order on the island,
 where the bonds of love make men kin and control the Infortune of storm:

Miranda. If by your Art, my dearest Father, you have
 Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them. (1,2,1-2)

Prospero is her "dearest father", and he does nothing but in care of her.

(1.16) For his art when it is tempered by Nature controls the full-circle
 of tempest and calm, death and regeneration:

The direful spectacle of the wrack, which touch'd
 The very virtue of compassion in thee,
 I have with such provision of mine Art
 So safely ordered, that there is no soul--
 No, not so much perdition as an hair
 Betid to any creature in the vessel
 Which thou heard'st cry, which thou saw'st sink. (11.26-32)

We see the full-circle in his servant Ariel. Again as in Pericles Infortune
 is illusion which through the guidance of Nature will come round into
 harmony and the final good Fortune of Truth. In the storm Ariel "flames
 amazement" so that he is as stunning as the lightning that precedes Jove's
 dreadful thunder. (11.198-203) In this manner he drives the courtiers
 desperate and mad:

Not a soul
 But felt a fever of the mad, and play'd
 Some trick of desperation. All but mariners
 Plung'd in the foaming brine, and quit the vessel,
 Then all afire with me: (11.208-12)

The full-circle appears in that through Ariel all end safely--the ship in
 a harbor, the sailors asleep, the courtier's garments not only intact but
 fresher than before:

Not a hair perish'd;
 On their sustaining garments not a blemish,
 But fresher than before: (11.217-19)

The full-circle also appears imaginatively in this scene's development, in Alonzo and Ferdinand. Alonzo is Prospero's inveterate enemy, who would expose him to the Infortune of the waves. (11.121-51) But Prospero works to bring enemies in Time to accord, for by means of the delicate Ariel and Ariel's music, he isolates Alonzo's son Ferdinand (1.221) and encourages his love and courtship of Miranda. Music celebrates the way kissing and dancing calm the wild waves, allaying both the fury of storm and the suffering of loss (1.395); and music also leads Ferdinand to Miranda, whom he addresses in terms of courtly love (11.424-30) and whom he asks to be his queen. (11.450-2) Prospero is distempered by the unnatural in the world (11.117-8), but the marriage which the better servant Ariel can bring about, will bring his mind into peace and harmony:

It goes on, I see,
As my soul prompts it. Spirit, fine spirit! I'll free
thee
Within two days for this. (11.422-24)

And thus in music and in the proposal of marriage which end this act, we see the possibility of the full-circle that will assuage the harm of Infortune, order Prospero's reason above his rage, and make the upside down kingdoms right-side up in a natural succession of right rule.

The pattern of possible harmony and atonement which this first act develops, with Nature changing bad Fortune into good, in fact epitomizes the movement of the whole play. But in the first act, beside this pattern of possible continuance in change runs the conflicting pattern of possible tragedy, revenge, in Prospero's rage. For the tempest is also Prospero's revenge. And though the virtue of Nature and patience and mercy is clear to him in each episode in the second scene, we see Fortune, rage, and revenge move him strongly. For instance in the first episode which describes

the kingdoms of the world, Prospero recognizes the "virtue of compassion" when Miranda pities those in the wreck:

O, I have suffered
 With those that I saw suffer! a brave vessel,
 (Who had, no doubt, some noble creature in her,)
 Dash'd all to pieces. O, the cry did knock
 Against my very heart! Poor souls, they perish'd!
 Had I been any god of power, I would
 Have sunk the sea within the earth, or ere
 It should the good ship so have swallow'd, and
 The fraughting souls within her. (11.5-13)

But as he tells the tale of the past, we hear rage contort him, as I have said, until he speaks with unwonted harshness to her and expels Nature in himself, for instance by denying Antonio the name of brother:

Mark his condition, and th' event; then tell me
 If this might be a brother.
 Miranda. I should sin
 To think but nobly of my grandmother:
 Good wombs have borne bad sons. (11.117-20)

Like Oliver in As You Like It, he implies the unchastity of his parent--the appetitive Nature. She corrects him, for the divine Nature in her is constant, but he does not seem to hear. Similarly the virtue of the natural bonds is clear in his description of how he and she came ashore:

By Providence divine.
 Some food we had, and some fresh water, that
 A noble Neapolitan, Gonzalo,
 Out of his charity... did give us, (11.159-60)

When Nature thus rules, Infortune for man comes round into good Fortune so that man enjoys the harmony of divine providence. But at the end of this episode Prospero proclaims Fortune his lady and ominously implies perhaps that his rise to the zenith depends on his enemies' low descent on Fortune's wheel:

... bountiful Fortune,
 (Now my dear lady) hath mine enemies
 Brought to this shore; and by my prescience
 I find my zenith doth depend upon
 A most auspicious star, whose influence
 If now I court not, but omit, my fortunes
 Will ever after droop. (11.178-84)

He implies perhaps that Nature and Fortune in him are upside down--that he is going to subordinate Nature and mercy to Fortune and revenge. In the next episode which defines his kingdom of man, we see the full-circle in Ariel, while Prospero himself gives way to rage. (11.257-285) He unwittingly identifies himself and his art with Sycorax and her art of revenge (1.294), and similarly he gets right down on Caliban's level and exchanges threat for threat :

Caliban. As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd
 With raven's feather from unwholesome fen
 Drop on you both! a south-west blow on ye
 And blister you all o'er!
 Prospero. For this, be sure, to-night thou shalt have cramps,
 Side-stitches that shall pen thy breath up;...(11.323-28)

And too, as Ariel and Caliban are extensions of himself, imaginatively perhaps his reason and sensuality, when he rages against the one--a spirit too delicate to enact "earthy and abhorr'd commands"--we see that his kingdom of himself is upside down and that he becomes like the other--a creature of cursing and revenge. The imaginative link is that rage and revenge--an upside down kingdom in himself--will set Fortune above Nature and violate Miranda's marriage by destroying Ferdinand's father, so that instead of moving through generation to harmony, things will fall into discord. And thus in the last episode, where Prospero calls Ferdinand a usurper and traitor (11.454-61), as I have said, the charges are more serious than they seem. Prospero's anger is calculated to test Ferdinand, but it also fits into the pattern of his ungovernable rage, which has earlier made him speak harshly to Miranda and Ariel. Throughout this first act two possibilities exist--continuance in generation, tragedy in revenge. And the structure mirrors this antithesis in two conflicting patterns--one moving

from discord to harmony in marriage, the other moving always towards dissolution and death. The tension between the two patterns provides suspense, which compels attention. Authority is complete.

The scenes of Act Two clearly mirror the upside down court and Prospero's upside down kingdom on the island. In scene one Alonzo's self is upside down--his despair overcomes patience and hope--and this disorder is reflected in his court where Antonio and Sebastian mock the good Gonzalo. Lack of control by Alonzo precipitates their revolt. In scene two Prospero's upside down self is reflected in his setting Nature against Caliban, and here control without mercy too precipitates revolt. The scenes are linked moreover by the suggestion of Prospero's revenge, which on the one hand may help teach Gonzalo and Alonzo a lesson in control (2,1,294ff), but which on the other, drives Caliban and Stephano and Trinculo together in rebellion. The structure reflects the themes clearly.

From the first words of Act Two, scene one, it is clear that Alonzo lacks self-knowledge and that his reason is upside down, for he does not know his common humanity and does not see that escape outweighs loss:

Gonzalo. ... Our hint of woe
 Is common; every day, some sailor's wife,
 The masters of some merchant, and the merchant,
 Have just our theme of woe; but for the miracle,
 I mean our preservation, few in millions
 Can speak like us: (11.3-8)

This disorder in himself is reflected in his court, and indeed Shakespeare makes good men seem foolish and bad men seem wise in the world upside down, as he constructs the scene to mirror the thought. Things appear upside down because we look through the eyes of Antonio and Sebastian, whose unnaturalness, as I have said, Alonzo does not control. Consider the way the truth of Gonzalo's words about patience and loss is reduced to tedious foolishness

when we hear that truth amidst the asides:

Sebastian, Look, he's winding up the watch of his wit; by
and by it will strike.

Gonzalo. Sir,--

Sebastian. One: tell.

Gonzalo. When every grief is entertain'd that's offer'd,
Comes to th' entertainer--

Sebastian. A dollar.

Gonzalo. Dolour comes to him, indeed....

Antonio. Fie, what a spendthrift is he of his tongue!
(11.12-23)

Gonzalo is somewhat naive, and he thinks only ideally, so that Antonio easily turns his praise of Claribel upside down:

Adrian. Tunis was never grac'd before with such a paragon
to their queen.

Gonzalo. Not since widow Dido's time.

Antonio. Widow! a pox o' that. How came that widow in?
widow Dido! (11.71-75)

Similarly, Gonzalo's commonwealth is naively ideal--it provides no means of controlling the unnatural, the appetitive Nature. (11.157-8) In this respect it mirrors Alonzo's court, where as long as the unnatural is awake, sleep loses control and so lets loose rebellion. In a world upside down the natural harmony of sleep becomes discord, and sleeping and waking themselves become confused, as is clear in Sebastian's words. (11.204-13) In the first part of this scene we laugh at goodness, we applaud evil, for the point of view, where we see goodness through the eyes of evil, reflects the disorder in Alonzo's court and in himself. But Ariel's song brings the hint of change. The song is about the impossibility of "sleep" in a world upside down:

While you here do snoring lie,

Open-ey'd conspiracy

His time doth take.

(11.295-97)

After the song at least Gonzalo has grown wiser, for he knows, " 'Tis best we stand upon our guard". (1.316) And this change is reflected too perhaps

in the point of view: Gonzalo loses his tedious verbosity and assumes an urgent tone of command, while Sebastian and Antonio grow foolish and absurd. We no longer look through the unnatural characters' eyes:

Antonio. O, 'twas a din to fright a monster's ear,
 To make an earthquake! sure, it was the roar
 Of a whole herd of lions.
 Alonzo. Heard you this, Gonzalo?
 Gonzalo. Upon mine honour, sir, I heard a humming,
 And that a strange one too, which did awake me:
 I shak'd you, sir, and cried: ...
 'Tis best we stand upon our guard,
 Or that we quit this place: let's draw our weapons.
 (11.309-17)

And the king takes Gonzalo's advice. (1.318) Imaginatively, we see the possibility of regeneration and order through Ariel's music.

Scene two follows scene one thematically, for it shows Prospero's upside down kingdom on the island where, not a lack of control, but control without mercy, causes rebellion. The link with scene one is also imaginative: Ariel saves Alonzo so that Prospero's "project" will not die (2,1,294), and so saves him perhaps for a worse fate --Prospero's revenge. Likewise, Antonio's hearing "a din to fright a monster's ear" recalls Prospero's merciless punishing of Caliban where monsters shall tremble at his din. (1,2,737) And indeed scene two opens with a reminder of Prospero's revenge-- the thunder of the initial stage direction--and with Caliban's description of Prospero's merciless control, where "for every trifle" Nature is set against him, driving him to madness. (11.4-14) As the scene develops we see that Caliban's fear of punishment (11.15-7) and Trinculo's fear of the storm which symbolizes Infortune and Prospero's revenge ("yond same black cloud, yond huge one" (1.20)) drive them together and so precipitate Caliban's revolt:

... misery acquaints a man with strange bed-fellows.
 (1.41)

Trinculo and Stephano are like a duck and a goose (11.129-32), and as I have said, their meeting with Caliban broadly parodies Prospero's, so that as we laugh at Stephano's lordship over Caliban we are also laughing at Prospero's lordship, which appears unnatural through the rapid descent of this comparison. All the courtiers and Prospero included bring something of the unnatural to the island. Stephano gives Caliban "celestial liquor", as Prospero gave him water with berries (1,2,336); Stephano makes him swear allegiance upon the bottle, his "book" ("Come, swear to that; kiss the book" (1.143)), as Prospero makes Caliban obey by his book, his art. And Caliban will show Stephano every fertile inch of the island (11.148-72), as he did Prospero. Then too, Caliban and Trinculo under the gaberdine parodies Prospero's two servants, the one reasonable, the other appetitive:

a most delicate monster! His forward voice, now, is
to speak well of his friend; his backward voice is to
utter foul speeches and to detract. (11.91-94)

The scene grows in excitement, and with Trinculo's chorus--a credulous monster, a perfidious monster, a puppy-headed monster, a scurvy abominable monster, a howling monster, a drunken monster (11.146-79)--the scene grows in delight. Caliban rebels :

A plague upon the tyrant that I serve! (1.162)

And we are pleased with his rebellion:

... 'Ban, 'Ban, Cacaliban
Has a new master:--get a new man.
Freedom, high-day! high-day, freedom! freedom,
high-day, freedom! (11.184-87)

Skillfully Shakespeare guides our response to the upside-down kingdoms. In Alonzo's disordered court, we see goodness through the eyes of evil, and on the island, where the emphasis is in part on Prospero's setting Nature

against Caliban (11.1-17), we delight in Caliban's revolt against Prospero's harsh control. The development of this act is logical and coherent, but also imaginative and daring. Shakespeare is pulling out all the stops in his dramatic technique, and authority is complete.

The scenes of Act Three set forth the possibility of regeneration through marriage and the conflicting possibility of revenge. Though we are aware of the chance of cycle and regeneration, --the good possibilities of his art-- the act itself moves away from marriage towards crisis and tragedy --the use of art to promote the unnatural. In this way Prospero watches and approves as the courtly love in Miranda and Ferdinand matures into a plight of truth. But the next scene shows Caliban's rebellion--imaginatively the rebellion in Prospero himself--ripen to revenge. In scene two Ariel easily diverts revenge with art--music--and this suggests that the proper hierarchy in Prospero himself is not yet completely overturned. But in scene three Ariel has become a harpy, a minister of fate; and music no longer diverts revenge, for it becomes an agent of revenge, driving Alonso towards suicide. (3,3,98-102) Again the structure is logical and imaginative, dramatic and compelling.

In the first scene we see the possibility of regeneration in marriage, the fullness of continuance in change. And regeneration and continuance are clearly Prospero's wish at this point, for he overwatches the scene and in the end pronounces a kind of benediction:

Heavens rain grace	
On that which breeds between 'em!	(11.75-76)
... my rejoicing	
At nothing can be more.	(11.93-94)

Ferdinand must help make the desert island orderly, metaphorically by piling up the logs, and in this "wooden slavery" we see an image of what a perfect

master-servant relationship should be: Miranda's kindness makes service ennobling and "quickens what's dead";

Some kinds of baseness
Are nobly undergone; and most poor matters
Point to rich ends. This my mean task
Would be as heavy to me as odious, but
The mistress which I serve quickens what's dead,
And makes my labours pleasures: O, she is
Ten times more gentle than her father's crabbed,
(11.2-8)

Similarly courtly love matures and, as in the epilogue of Chaucer's Troilus, leads upwards to love of Truth, which Ferdinand sees embodied in Miranda:

Full many a lady
I have ey'd with best regard, and many a time
Th' harmony of their tongues hath into bondage
Brought my too diligent ear: for several virtues
Have I lik'd several women; ... but you, O you,
So perfect and so peerless, are created
Of every creature's best! (11.39-48)

He matures from love of the Many to love of the One. The lines recall Orlando's poem in As You Like It where at heaven's bidding, Nature distilled all the best into the making of Rosalind. (3,2,149-54) And as Ferdinand and Miranda plight their troths the correspondence of Truth and Nature, and contrarily of falseness and Infortune, is clear:

Miranda. Do you love me?
Ferdinand. O heaven, O earth, bear witness to this sound,
And crown what I profess with kind event,
If I speak true! if hollowly, invert
What best is boded me to mischief!... (11.67-71)

Truth in marriage breeds "kind event", continuance in generation; falseness breeds Infortune and evil. The development of this scene clearly brings out the ideals of Truth and Nature in the marriage.

The next two scenes move away from the perfection of this marriage towards the disorder of revenge, where Fortune rules over mercy and Nature.

Scene two metaphorically shows us the "marriage" is Prospero of reason and rage--Ariel and Caliban--about to turn upside down. Caliban's revolt grows into a revenge plot--metaphorically Prospero's own revenge--which threatens to violate Miranda's chaste marriage:

... that most deeply to consider is
 The beauty of his daughter; he himself
 Calls her a nonpareil: ...
 Ay, lord; she will become thy bed, I warrant,
 And bring thee forth brave brood. (11.96-103)

Caliban grows unruly, but Ariel--the good aspects of Prospero's art--can still control him. For instance, when the low characters fall out among themselves,

Trinculo. Thou liest, most ignorant monster: I am in case
 to justle a constable. Why, thou debosh'd fish, thou...
 Wilt thou tell a monstrous lie, being but half a fish
 and half a monster?
 Caliban. Lo, how he mocks me! wilt thou let him, my lord?
 Trinculo. "Lord," quoth he? That a monster should be such
 a natural! (11.24-31)

Ariel makes them in their disorder defeat themselves:

Ariel. Thou liest.
 Stephano. Do I so? take thou that. [Beats Trinculo.]
 (11.73-74)

Then too Ariel can still divert their revenge by music:

Trinculo. The sound is going away; let's follow it, and after
 do our work.
 Stephano. Lead, monster; we'll follow. I would I could
 see this taborer; he lays it on.
 Trinculo. Wilt come? I'll follow, Stephano. (11.146-50)

In Act Two Caliban rebelled against unnatural subjection, and we cheered him. Here instead of cheering him we laugh at the disorderly squabbling. For as rebellion grows into revenge which will violate chastity and proliferate evil (1.103), Shakespeare stresses the violence and disorder in the act (11.60 & 86-9) and so again guides our response. Reason still

controls rage and music still controls revenge.

But in scene three the control dissolves, and we see Prospero get part of his revenge. There is continuity between scenes two and three, for as Caliban and Stephano and Trinculo are led astray by Ariel's music, so Alonzo and the courtiers are led through a maze:

... here's a maze trod, indeed,
Through forth-rights and meanders! By your patience,
I needs must rest me. (11.2-4)

There is imaginative continuity, but there is also a clear change from mercy to revenge, for while Caliban is led astray by harmonious music, Alonzo is led in a vain search and mocked by Fortune:

Even here I will put off my hope, and keep it
No longer for my flatterer: he is drown'd
Whom thus we stray to find; and the sea mocks
Our frustrate search on land. (11.7-10)

Caliban was aware of the harmony of music; he "cried to dream again".

(3,2,141) Alonzo is aware only of the downward turning of the wheel--of loss. Similarly, the courtiers see Nature and Truth in the island when they see the several "strange Shapes" that make Sebastian believe in unicorns and the phoenix (which suggest symbolic purity and chastity)¹ and make Gonzalo note manners more gentle and kind than those of human generation. (11.21-34) But this only heightens the movement in this scene towards despair and madness, for when the courtiers try to enjoy that kindness--when they try to eat (1.49)--Ariel enters as the harpy to drive them to despair:

You are three men of sin, whom Destiny--
That hath to instrument this lower world
And what is in 't,--the never-surfeited sea
Hath caus'd to belch up you; and on this island,
Where men doth not inhabit,--you 'mongst men
Being most unfit to live. I have made you mad;
And even with such-like valour men hang and drown
Their proper selves. (11.53-60)

¹See for instance the tapestry "La Dame à la licorne" in Musée de Cluny, Paris, and Shakespeare's poem, The Phoenix and the Turtle.

He turns Nature--the sea, the shores, and all the creatures--against their peace, and unless Alonzo repents, he condemns him to a slow death--Time's ravagement--without the consolation of continuance in his son. (11.74-82) The possibility of repentance is clear; the Infortune of revenge can come full-circle into the harmony of repentance and purgation. But here the possibility of revenge and Infortune has emphasis. From a spirit of music and control Ariel has become a minister of revenge, binding Prospero's enemies in distraction, driving them to suicide.(11.101-2) Music too turns upside down, and now instead of controlling Fortune and revenge, it is their agent ("The winds did sing it to me..."), which the "Shapes" use to mock the courtiers. (11.82ff.) Only Gonzalo is constant, and his patience, we may presume, keeps Alonzo from suicide:

I do beseech you,
That are of suppler joints, follow them swiftly,
And hinder them from what this ecstasy
May now provoke them to (11.106-09)

This act begins with the possibility of the full-circle of continuance and perfection through generation. But the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand depends in part on the "married" harmony of Prospero's self. And thus as rage and revenge overcome reason and Nature in himself, instead of a cycle of things moving through Fortune to Nature and harmony and Truth, we see the descent on Fortune's wheel to despair and death. The tension between these conflicting tendencies towards harmony in marriage and towards discord in revenge, creates suspense. This and the powerful, imaginative, dramatic structuring of the ideas, compels attention.

Act Four in a sense parallels Act Three, for athwart marriage Prospero drives forward his revenge. Again, just as the fruitful harmony of Miranda

and Ferdinand's marriage depends on their chastity--on their controlling the "fire in the blood"--so it depends on a "married" harmony in Prospero's self. And though with his better servant Ariel he prepares for the wedding and produces the masque, rage works him strongly, and the thought of Caliban's conspiracy torments him and so disrupts the music and dancing which celebrate marriage as continuance and good Fortune in change. The conspiracy against his life and his own revenge on the "beast Caliban" represent the upside down order in his kingdom of man, when rage and Fortune and the unnatural supplant mercy and Nature. The structure of this act clearly reflects the way revenge and the unnatural disrupt the "married" harmony in Prospero's self and work to preclude his coming to the fullness of continuance in generation. The structure is logical and imaginative. This is one of Shakespeare's best acts, and authority is strong.

The act begins by developing the possibility of cycle through regeneration. Miranda is what Prospero lives for (4,1,4), and thus in giving her to Ferdinand he must make sure that the lovers remain chaste, for unchastity here as before means not continuance in change but the degeneration of the line to "villainy" and the proliferation of evil. (4,1,14-23) Their love does not banish sensuality; clearly Prospero's second admonition (1.51) follows their kissing on the stage. Their love controls sensuality, as Ferdinand says:

As I hope
 For quiet days, fair issue and long life,
 With such love as 'tis now, the murkiest den,
 The most opportune place, the strong'st suggestion
 Our worser genius can, shall never melt
 Mine honour into lust, (11.23-28)

Similarly, Prospero is in accord with his "better genius" Ariel:

Ariel. Before you can say, "come," and "go,"
 And breathe twice, and cry, "so, so,"
 Each one, tripping on his toe,
 Will be here with mop and mow.
 Do you love me, master? no?
 Prospero. Dearly, my delicate Ariel. (11.44-49)

Indeed the masque which Ariel brings about celebrates the harmony of marriage for the lovers and for Prospero. Unrestrained appetite, the Venus Pandemos, is absent. (11.92-101) But in the meeting of Iris and abundant Ceres we see that fertility is present. (11.60-6,78-82) Then too, the song of Juno and Ceres, the goddesses of marriage and of earth's fertility, blesses the couple with good Fortune, increase, and continuance:

Honour, riches, marriage-blessing,
Long continuance, and increasing,
Hourly joys be still upon you!
Juno sings her blessings on you.
Earth's increase, foison plenty,
Barns and garners never empty;...
Spring come to you at the farthest
In the very end of harvest!
Scarcity and want shall shun you;
Ceres' blessing so is on you. (11.106-17)

Moreover, the dance of the river nymphs and the "sunburned" reapers of harvest suggests perhaps a harmonious and fertile marriage of the elements, the union of fall and spring without the stint of winter. The coming together of the river nymphs in the harmony of the dance too recalls perhaps the coming together of the rivers and ocean in Proteus' hall in the Faerie Queene, and so suggests fertility in a figure of the One and the Many:

So fertile be the flouds in generation,
 So huge their numbers, and so numberlesse their nation.
 (IV, Xii, 1)
 Therefore the antique wisards well invented,
 That Venus of the fomy sea was bred;
 For that the seas by her are most augmented..(IV, Xii, 2)

Thus far the scene depicts the possibility of cycle in regeneration for both Prospero and the lovers.

The masque which Prospero puts on epitomizes Truth--in continuance in change, in the marriage of reason and sensuality in the couple and in Prospero himself. And the central speech in this scene suggests that on the island the spirit or sentence of this masque is as real as its letters, and correspondingly that the spirit or "truth" of life on earth is as real as that life itself. By stressing the insubstantialness of the letter of things, Prospero focuses on the spirit. Indeed the speech implies a Platonic outlook, I suggest, where from the sleep of death we awaken to a "truth" more real than life:

These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep. (11.148-58)

Recollect Donne's holy sonnet, though of course in Prospero's words there is nothing so explicit as Donne's final couplet:

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me...
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

The speech encourages us to understand the scene metaphorically, and we see that the harmony of the masque depends on the harmony of those whose "marriage" it celebrates. Thus when Prospero is vexed, troubled, distempered in his mind, the spirits "to a strange, hollow, and confused noise...

heavily vanish". (11.138ff.) Prospero describes himself:

I am vex'd;
 Bear with my weakness; my old brain is troubled:
 Be not disturb'd with my infirmity:
 ... a turn or two I'll walk,
 To still my beating mind. (11.158-63)

And the suggestion of age and infirmity in the description links him with Caliban, whose mind cankers as his body grows uglier with age. (11.190-1)

The conspirators reflect Prospero's upside down kingdom of man on the island as they strike the air and beat the ground for "kissing of their feet". (1.174)

We see that they are Fortune-hunters as well as unnatural conspirators (11.220-54), and as I have said, Prospero responds to them unnaturally in turn by hunting them with Tyrant and Fury, the hounds of revenge. The hunt suggests the hunt of Diana, who keeps her forest free from savage beasts, but more important, the hunt of Fortune and revenge. Prospero charges his goblins to

... grind their joints
 With dry convulsions; shorten up their sinews
 With aged cramps; ... (11.258-60)

The conflict is in Prospero's self--he subjects his reason to his rage and grows unnatural in putting revenge and justice above mercy, Fortune above Nature. And the act shows the conflict disrupting the masque which celebrates marriage and Truth. His kingdom of man must be in harmony before he can enjoy the fullness of marriage and approach Truth. The act perfectly sets forth the possibility of cycle in regeneration and the disruptive possibility of tragedy in revenge. And as revenge seems to preclude marriage here, the sense of impending crisis compels our attention. The act is indeed among Shakespeare's best.

The fourth act ends with the prospect of imminent revenge,

Let them be hunted soundly. At this hour
Lies at my mercy all mine enemies:
Shortly shall all my labours end, (4,1,262-64)

and correspondingly of imminent disorder in the kingdom. The word "mercy" is purposefully ambiguous, for as the OED notes, "at the mercy of" meant liable to harm or in danger, to Shakespeare as it does to us.¹ Act Five shows Prospero rejecting revenge for mercy, rough art for heavenly music, unnatural fury for noble reason. The change, which witnesses Prospero's coming to self-knowledge, is not psychological but conceptual. After the change the scene shows us an epitome of control and mercy on the island turning madness and chaos into harmony, Infortune into Nature's marriage. In another epitome the scene shows us control and self-knowledge in the kingdom of man turning disorder into order. From impending crisis and tragedy the act moves into the full harmony of regeneration and comedy. Nature allows Infortune and revenge and rough art to come round into good Fortune and repentance and harmony. The movement is sudden and dramatic, and authority is full.

The act begins, as I have said, with Ariel's description of Gonzalo mourning over the distracted characters, whom Ariel says Prospero would pity if he saw. Prospero listens to Ariel's suggestion, and then rejects fury and accepts "nobler reason". (5,1,26) He grows merciful, and in his famous renunciation we see him turn his elves and demi-puppets away from their unnatural tasks towards heavenly music, which will comfort the desperate characters:

A solemn air, and the best comforter
To an unsettled fancy, cure thy brains,
Now useless, boil'd within thy skull! (11.58-60)

¹The O.E.D. article 5c. cites as examples Lucr. 364., LLL. 5,2,856., and 2 Henry VI, 1,3,137.

Prospero's turning to music and mercy assures us that madness and disorder and Infortune will finally come full-circle into the harmony of Nature's marriage. Prospero's listening to Ariel rights his little kingdom of man, and as Ariel is a part of that kingdom, Ariel's song celebrates his own new-found harmony with Nature:

Where the bee sucks, there suck I:
In a cowslip's bell I lie; (11.88-89)

Similarly we see in epitome forgiveness and control leading to the harmony of marriage, in which Infortune can come round into good Fortune and Nature. Prospero forgives and embraces Alonzo (1.109) who in turn asks forgiveness, and he also forgives and controls the unregenerate Antonio. (11.131-4) Both acts secure for him his dukedom (11.118 & 133), and thus he in turn can make Alonzo's Infortune come into the harmony of marriage:

My dukedom since you have given me again,
 I will requite you with as good a thing; (11.168-69)

He reveals Miranda and Ferdinand playing chess, the game of courtly love, and in the orderly marriage that this courtship will lead to, we see the kingdom of the world and the little kingdom of man come together in order and accord. Ferdinand underlines the cycle:

Though the seas threaten, they are merciful;
 I have curs'd them without cause. (11.178-79)

"Without cause" emphasizes the illusoriness of Infortune, which is clear when Nature or patience or mercy allows Infortune to come round into good Fortune. Marriage means a "second life". (1.195) Gonzalo summarizes how for the pilgrim-seafarer, self-knowledge, order in the kingdom, and marriage grow of a piece on Nature's island:

in one voyage
 Did Claribel a husband find at Tunis,
 And Ferdinand, her brother, found a wife
 Where he himself was lost, Prospero his dukedom
 In a poor isle, and all of us ourselves
 When no man was his own. (11.208-13)

After Prospero listens to his better spirit Ariel the act moves from torment and the prospect of tragedy to regeneration and harmony, the fullness of comedy. Gonzalo's first words here in a sense prefigure this movement:

All torment, trouble, wonder and amazement
 Inhabits here: some heavenly power guide us
 Out of this fearful country! (11.104-06)

We see this movement too in another epitome, which shows the sailors converted from blasphemy and self-seeking (11.218-20) to order and respect:

The best news is, that we have safely found
 Our King, and company; the next, our ship --
 (11.221-22)

Like Alonzo, the sailors undergo a period of madness:

with strange and several noises
 Of roaring, shrieking, howling, jingling chains,
 And no diversity of sounds, all horrible,
 We were awak'd;... (11.232-35)

Their conversion is a "strange maze" which Ariel leads them through (11.240-2) till they become part of Alonzo's newly ordered kingdom.

Similarly in epitome we see Caliban and Stephano and Trinculo coming from disorder into order. As Stephano enters he says:

Every man shift for all the rest, and let no man take
 care for himself; for all is but fortune.
 (11.256-57)

Everything is upside down, but in the end he and Caliban and Trinculo go willingly to Prospero's cell to "trim it handsomely". (11.291-5) Prospero's control and mercy, and too his self-knowledge, precipitate the change from

disorder to order in Alonzo's kingdom of the world and in his own kingdom of man:

Two of these fellow you
Must know and own; this thing of darkness I
Acknowledge mine. (11.274-76)

Ariel's mercy and reason and self-knowledge are the "heavenly power" that leads all the characters out of torment and tragedy. And thus the initial tempest gives way to "calm seas, auspicious gales", and the pilgrims sail back to the world that self-knowledge, control, and mercy have set right-side up in the true harmony and accord of marriage. Marriage in Ferdinand and Miranda, in Milan and Naples, and in Prospero himself, lets man move in Time towards perfection. The cycle is complete. Marriage turns Infortune and evil into harmony, turns the crisis of tragedy into the cycle of comedy. The structure mirrors this logically and imaginatively, and authority is complete.

* * *

In his introduction to the Arden edition of The Tempest Frank Kermode defines romance as "a mode of exhibiting the action of magical and moral laws in a version of human life so selective as to obscure, for the special purpose of concentrating attention on these laws, the fact that in reality their force is intermittent and only fitfully glimpsed".¹ Some of those "magical or moral laws", as I have tried to show, appear in the medieval metaphors of marriage and the pilgrimage of the life of man, which epitomize

¹ op.cit., p. liv.

man's moving towards perfection or harmony or Truth through continuance in change. Shakespearian romance establishes a pattern which illustrates these truths. In this sense much of Shakespearian comedy tends towards becoming romance. The Two Gentlemen of Verona is like As You Like It and The Tempest, for instance, for when the court is upside down man must retreat to the forest, and by making the forest civil he rights the world so that things can end in the harmony of friendship and marriage. Similarly A Midsummer Night's Dream begins with a disagreement between father and daughter and moves into the woods where through the vicissitudes of love and madness the characters may emerge again into the harmony of mercy and marriage. Or in As You Like It, as I have said, if Shakespeare had focused primarily on Duke Senior and secondarily on Rosalind and Orlando, and so had foreshortened the long fourth movement which defines love, we would have a full-blown romance instead of a late comedy. Even so the difference is not much, and not much because As You Like It realizes its philosophical basis where by comparison the earlier comedies A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Two Gentlemen do not. The possibility is in them, but the possibility is not fulfilled. Romance fully realizes its philosophical basis, like Chaucer's allegories and Spenser's Faerie Queene. It develops this basis at the expense of developing love and character psychology, and thus it tends to become a pattern.

Shakespearian romance establishes a philosophical pattern, and this is particularly clear in its use of humor. Comic scenes, when they involve a change of tone or of level of seriousness from what has come before, always widen our view point by forcing us back into a broader perspective. Indeed when we laugh at something, we usually are at a certain distance

from it. The distance precludes the kind of sympathy that could make the situation serious or sad. A traditional example is the dialogue in Wilde's Importance of Being Earnest about "losing" parents. Another is the porter's scene in Macbeth, where the porter's comic discourse on the professions is a choric speech which widens our perspective by underscoring in terms of the eternal judgment, the evil Macbeth has done. We see the professions as types of evil or, if as human beings, only in as far as human beings are sometimes types of evil; and this distancing allows us to laugh. Comic scenes in the comedies too widen our perspective. For instance in A Midsummer Night's Dream Bottom's scenes parody the lovers in the woods and provide a general comment on the quality of love in the play, so that beyond the specific examples the lovers give us, we get a more general vision of love in the world of that play. But the vision of love there is more or less limited; in all, the perspective is not very broad. In the late comedies and romances, humor establishes the broader perspective in which we see the philosophic pattern. For instance in As You Like It the scene between Touchstone and Corin develops the play's basic antithesis of natural and unnatural, forest and court:

Corin. And they [our hands] are often tarred over with the surgery of our sheep, and would you have us kiss tar? The courtier's hands are perfumed with civet.

Touchstone. Most shallow man! Thou wormsmeat in respect of a good piece of flesh indeed! Learn of the wise, and perpend. Civet is of a baser birth than tar, the very uncleanly flux of a cat. Mend thy instance, shepherd. (3,2,64-71)

Touchstone is witty, but the scene essentially makes us see the pattern-antithesis in which the courtiers appear unnatural and foolish, the shepherds natural and wise. In other words the scene underlines the play's basic

antithesis. Comic characters have a certain license. They can speak chorically, as does the fool in Lear for instance when he speaks a prophecy about truth and falsehood, the world right-side up and the world upside down. (3,2,80-94) But a comic character's choricness is not limited to his set speeches, and thus Lear's fool is also choric when he offers Kent his coxcomb. (1,4,109ff.) He represents here a point of view--the foolishness of being loyal to one who is out of favor--which is part of the play's basic antithesis. While Shakespearian tragedy tends to focus on the passions and torments of one man, the comic scenes focus our attention on the broader patterns underlying the action. Similarly in Pericles the dialogue between Boult and the bawd underscores the pattern-antithesis basic to that play--chastity and unchastity. There is a certain grotesqueness when the characters from the whore-house confront Marina. We see her subjected to them, and the humor lacerates. But too, we see the pattern emerge. Boult and the bawd talk about bringing up eleven bastards and "bringing them down again" (4,2,14ff.), and their dialogue develops the idea of unchastity as a figure for the proliferation of evil, the degeneration of a line. We see Boult and the bawd from a distance. If we saw them up close and got to know their torments and troubles and to sense their humanity,¹ the scene would perhaps be tragic. For the idea of the proliferation of evil, the degeneration of a line, lies behind much tragedy. Thus as we see Marina's trouble and torment and know her humanity, we see her (and Pericles') potential tragedy, and we feel the humor lacerate. But we remain at a distance from Boult and the Bawd, and this distance emphasizes the pattern of chastity and unchastity, rather than their individual grief.

Pericles in a sense epitomizes romance, for as I have said, Shakespeare

¹We almost do in scene six when Boult says, "What would you have me do?..." (4,6,180ff) And this nearly plunges the scene into a whole new set of problems, not the least of which would be our increased sympathy for Boult. See Hilliard, Shakespeare's Last Plays, pp. 23-4.

entirely subordinates plot, conflict to the encompassing pattern of antitheses. The pattern is a systematically complete working out of the basic philosophical concepts underlying the play--continuance and ultimate perfection in change. Romance, again, is the fulfillment of this pattern, and though Antiochus and Dionyza and Boult threaten at times to break the cycle and turn romance into tragedy, the chorus minimizes these threats by continually forcing us back into the wider perspective. Indeed Pericles is a kind of everyman, and even grief in him is stylized:

A terrible childbed hast thou had, my dear;
 No light, no fire: th' unfriendly elements
 Forgot thee utterly; (3,1,56-58)

This is not the psychological reality of grief, but its stylized, lyric form. Everything about the play forces us to see not conflict by cycle, not passion and drama and suspense but pattern. The Tempest on the other hand transcends this limitation, and herein lies its greatness. Indeed it realizes the philosophical pattern of things moving through Time to eternity, but for four acts it also realizes the full dramatic potential of Prospero's unnatural rage. Passion contorts his speech; we hear him snap at his daughter, rage against Ariel, curse Caliban. We are not allowed to sit back and observe a kind of everyman, a symbolic pilgrim, move through a life-time of storm and Infortune to final harmony. Conflict in The Tempest, the real possibility of rage and revenge disrupting the marriage, compels our attention. The play is by no means a superficial gloss on the conceptual basis of its conflict, and yet it is fully dramatic. Shakespeare's authority in The Tempest is complete.

PART THREE

SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDY

Shakespearian tragedy is rooted in these same ideals. Tragedy in general, as I have said, is the failure of the pilgrimage or the failure of the marriage, where things on earth do not move upward towards one-ness and harmony and accord, but move downward instead into multiplicity and discord and grief. Shakespearian tragedy focuses in part on individual suffering and individual loss, but it has the same themes at its root--the theme of Nature's "marriages", the antithesis of Nature and Fortune, of natural and unnatural, of one-ness and multiplicity. Like Shakespearian comedy it does not always fully realize its philosophical basis. For instance the early tragedies that I mean to consider, Richard II and Julius Caesar, tend to make a simple conflict out of the opposition of Nature and Fortune and out of the related opposition of natural and unnatural, while the later tragedies, Coriolanus and King Lear, develop these oppositions as antitheses. Thus the early tragedies emphasize the unavoidable unfolding of the plot, while the late tragedies go on to develop the full potential of the thematic basis as well. Each of the tragedies that I mean to consider develops by pattern and by straightforward plot, and Shakespeare's authority grows in large part as he is able to develop his themes fully and as he is able to pace his plays so that even when a play develops by pattern there is a force or movement running through the pattern that keeps us expectant and eager to see what is coming next. As Northrop Frye says, "the first datum is the drive or impetus toward the working through of a certain kind of action. The poet then has the problem of pacing the play to provide

a continuity of interest. The more restless his audience, the more strongly accented the pacing has to be. On the lowest level it must be as violent as possible, with constant running about and shouting, the action described by a character in Sinclair Lewis' Main Street as having 'some git to it, and not all this talky-talk.' But even with a civilized audience vigorous pacing is easier to take in."¹ In this section on tragedy, with these themes and ideas as a background, I want to consider Shakespeare's increasing authority at first briefly in Richard II and Coriolanus, and then in more detail in Julius Caesar and King Lear. Two are clearly in the medieval tradition, as that tradition appears in the Mirror for Magistrates. The other two are from Roman history, and yet it is worth noting how well the medieval terms apply.

¹A Natural Perspective (New York, 1965) p. 47.

CHAPTER I

RICHARD II and CORIOLANUS

In The Tragedy of King Richard the Second,¹ which was written about 1595, the conflict is between the natural and the unnatural. The play begins the second tetralogy of history plays, and in doing so it shows the proliferations of evil and unnaturalness that follow the breaking of the bonds of kind. Richard is bound to England as the hereditary king, and to the kin of Edward III as grandchild and heir. He breaks the bond with England in as far as he "farms" the realm and excessively taxes the people to deck out his court and support his war. (1,4,42-62) He breaks the bond with his kin when he causes his uncle Gloucester's death (1,2,37-9) and when he cuts off his cousin Bolingbroke's patrimony. As York says:

Take Hereford's rights away, and take from Time
His charters and his customary rights;
Let not to-morrow then ensue to-day;
Be not thyself ...for how art thou a king
But by fair sequence and succession?

(2,1,195-99)

The order and harmony of England with Richard as king depends on these bonds, and when he breaks them he allows others to break them as well. War supplants peace, and disorder and tragedy follow.

Though Richard violates the "marriages" between kin and kin, subject and lord, which bind society together,² others are equally unnatural in fol-

¹References are to The New Cambridge "Richard II", ed. by J. D. Wilson (Cambridge, 1951).

²Bolingbroke even suggests that Richard breaks his bond with his queen (3,1,11-3), but this goes against the general tone of those scenes where the queen appears, particularly (5,1,) where not Richard but Bolingbroke in fact violates the marriage. (11.71-3)

lowing suit and breaking their bonds in turn. This is clear when Gaunt tells the Duchess of Gloucester, who would have Bolingbroke revenge her husband's death, that a subject must not strike at his natural king (1,2,37-47); and clear when the Bishop of Carlisle repeats this principle and prophesies the evil that will follow if the principle is violated. (4,1,114-44) This is also clear when Gaunt and York try to correct Richard as natural subjects and kinsmen should. (2,1,91-214) But one broken bond allows others to break, and when Richard will not bear correction Bolingbroke and Northumberland and the others unnaturally revolt. (2,1,277-93)

Bolingbroke's motives in the first three acts are vague, and it is unclear whether he is intentionally acting unnaturally against the king, for instance when he accuses and threatens Mowbray and when he returns to England from banishment, or whether he is merely seeking redress of wrongs and trying to secure his private fortunes.¹ He is in part a minister of justice, a righter of wrongs, but when he accuses Mowbray he implicitly threatens Richard, as Gaunt makes clear (1,2,37-9), and we never know whether Bolingbroke realizes the implications and acts unnaturally by choice. Similarly Northumberland clearly means to use Bolingbroke unnaturally, to "shake off our slavish yoke" (2,1,291); and Bolingbroke in exile is an unregenerate pilgrim, a wanderer (1,3,264-78, 308), and he implicitly strikes at Richard again when he kills Bushy and Green. (3,1) But Bolingbroke insists several times that he returns merely to secure his patrimony; he claims that he is not opposing the "will of heaven", that he is not unnatural. (3,3,15-9) There is an opposition throughout the play of true words and false, of straight-talk and double-talk, as here for instance where Bolingbroke's rhetoric about Richard's

¹ B. Stirling, Unity in Shakespearian Tragedy, (New York, 1956) pp. 26-39.

appearing like a discontented sun obscures the plain truth of Bolingbroke's threatening to use the "advantage of his power". (3,3,37-67) But Shakespeare so qualifies this opposition by generally contrasting the style of Richard II with that of the plays that follow in the tetralogy, that there is always some confusion whether Bolingbroke is an unnatural subject and kinsman in response to Richard's unnaturalness, or whether he is seeking to correct injustice in the land, or whether he is merely a Fortune-hunter who, in riding Fortune's wheel, reveals the weakness of the king and then profits by his fall.¹ But whether Bolingbroke is intentionally unnatural from the beginning, or a corrector of injustice, or merely a Fortune-hunter, he threatens to use his power unnaturally against Richard (3,3,42), makes Richard see the weakness and falseness of himself as a king (3,3,127-8), and so forces him to capitulate:

What must the king do now? must he submit?
The king shall do it:

(3,3,143-44)

And thus Bolingbroke, like an upside down, unregenerate pilgrim, lets the unnatural and Fortune triumph over Nature when he takes the throne and when he has Richard murdered. Gaunt and York make it clear that the natural way is to seek redress of wrongs by advising the king. In Piers Plowman when the king is willing to let Mede have rule in the land--when he is unwise and even unregenerate--Conscience the good counsellor corrects him by means of Reason and kynde wit:

I conscience knowe þis, for kynde wit me tauȝte,
þat resoun shal regne & reumes governe,

(passus 3,260-61)

More particularly John Gower (see above) dedicates his Confessio Amantis to Richard the Second and thus implies the proper way to right an upside down kingdom--through Nature and good counsel. But Richard himself here is pri-

¹
See Dover Wilson's introduction, p. xx; and Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays, p. 237.

marily at fault for letting Infortune and the unnatural triumph over Nature. He breaks the bonds of kind when he kills Gloucester and when he abuses his realm. He will not bear correction. He is foolish and vain in his self-dramatizing self-pitying vacillations in Act Three, scene two; and where Bolingbroke in the previous scene is strong and active,¹ Richard is as weak as a reed in the wind. As the gardeners point out, he is false to himself when he lets his "unruly children" make him stoop under their "prodigal weight". (3,4,30-1) Such unnaturalness lets evils proliferate and violate the marriages in himself and in his kingdom:

Doubly divorced! Bad man, you violate
 A twofold marriage--'twixt my crown and me,
 And then betwixt me and my married wife....
 (5,1,71-73)

and finally kills him.

The play is about the proliferations of evil that follow the breaking of Nature's bonds and turn the land England upside down. In this way the Bishop of Carlisle's prophecy follows John of Gaunt's lament that the land,

This other Eden, demi-paradise,
 This fortress built by nature for herself
 Against infection and the hand of war,
 (2,1,42-44)

should be leased out like a pelting farm. Gaunt likens the realm to paradise, to heaven's and Nature's ideal. The Bishop says that if the usurper rules, the land will be another Golgotha:

And if you crown him, let me prophesy,
 The blood of English shall manure the ground,
 And future ages groan for this foul act,
 Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,
 And, in this seat of peace, tumultuous wars
 Shall kin with kin, and kind with kind confound;
 Disorder, horror, fear, and mutiny
 Shall here inhabit, and this land be called
 The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls.
 (4,1,136-44)

¹ Stirling, op.cit., p. 30.

Though in Golgotha the possibility of regeneration exists, this descent from Eden to Golgotha suggests how the kingdom will degenerate in Time if the unnatural supplants the natural. And indeed the last two acts show subjects plotting against subjects, Aumerle plotting to kill his cousin Bolingbroke (4,1,325ff.), York denouncing his son as a traitor. (5,2,3) Likewise, Bolingbroke's description of his son as a "wanton and effeminate boy" who keeps with a "dissolute crew" and frequents the stews (5,3,1-20) suggests that here too father is set against son and that Gaunt's line may perhaps degenerate in Time, though the possibility of regeneration in Hal is also clear. (5,3,20-3) The Bishop's speech looks forward to the two parts of Henry IV which are concerned with the rebellion of Northumberland and the rest of the kingdom and with the disorder in Hal, the successor to the throne, and more particularly looks forward to the Henry VI plays. The tragedy is in part the tragedy of England, where things do not move upwards through continuance in Time towards the perfection of paradise, but move downward into discord and chaos and death. The play also exists on its own, and thus the tragedy is Richard's, who does not use Time to realize the fullness of his position as God's minister on earth, and so who falls prey to Time:

--how sour sweet music is,
 When time is broke and no proportion kept!
 So it is in the music of men's lives:
 And here have I the daintiness of ear
 To check time broke in a disordered string;
 But for the concord of my state and time
 Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.
 I wasted time, and now doth time waste me:

(5,5,42-49)

When Nature rules over Fortune and the unnatural, man makes Time defeat itself and so moves towards perfection; but when the unnatural rules, Time brings man to naught. And so Richard here must be "eased with being nothing". (5,5,41)

Our understanding of the play depends on our understanding the several "marriages" that, when whole, bind society together, and when violated, bring England to civil war and King Richard to death. Our seeing the philosophical basis depends in part on our seeing that the fullness of marriage leads man towards the simplicity of Truth, and that marriage upside down leads downward to multiplicity and evil; and this basis is weak in Richard II, partly because it depends on the rhetoric of Richard's self-pitying self-dramatization--on his seeing himself as a kind of Christ:

...So Judas did to Christ: but he, in twelve,
Found truth in all, but one; I, in twelve thousand, none....
(4,1,170-71)

The basis is also weak because the possibilities of the opposition of natural and unnatural are not fully set forth. The opposition in the play is more a simple conflict than an antithesis as it is in As You Like It, Pericles, and The Tempest, where Infortune and the unnatural can come full-circle into Nature. True, the possibility exists in Golgotha and in Richard's being a kind of Christ, but in large part Shakespeare does not develop the possibility till the later plays. By making the opposition a conflict rather than an antithesis, Shakespeare minimizes the alternatives that Bolingbroke has, and so gives the tragedy a sense of heavy fatality.

If the terms of the play are more or less clear, let us consider Shakespeare's authority in the structure. As Tillyard says, "Richard II is imperfectly executed, and yet, that imperfection granted, perfectly planned as part of a great structure".¹ Act One, scene one, is a good instance of this, for it portrays Richard's court, which contrasts with the court in the plays to come, and yet the scene is largely imperfect. The scene sets forth the con-

¹Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays, p. 244.

flict of natural and unnatural in the kingdom. It is formal, the speeches decked out in the elaborate rhetoric of the antique court:

Bolingbroke. First--heaven be the record to my speech
 In the devotion of a subject's love,
 Tend'ring the precious safety of my prince,
 And free from other misbegotten hate,
 Come I appellat to this princely presence....
 (11.30-34)

Bolingbroke accuses Mowbray of murdering Gloucester, the uncle to the king, and of misusing public money--unnatural and treasonous acts. (11.87-108) And behind this overt accusation lies a subtle accusation of the king, for as Gaunt says in scene two, Richard had Gloucester murdered. Again, however, Bolingbroke's character is unclear. Everything he says seems to accuse Richard of violating the natural bonds, and thus even Mowbray's misuse of the money points to Richard's misuse. (1,1,25-30 & 1,4,42-64) But Bolingbroke speaks formally here in keeping with Richard's formality, and we cannot know for certain how far he is intentionally and unnaturally challenging Richard. (And how much did an Elizabethan audience know? We may perhaps suppose they knew Richard was responsible for the murder, but surely we cannot suppose them to know from Bolingbroke's indirect accusation that Richard was guilty of misusing public money. They would not know this until Act One, scene four. Yet the subtle accusation of Richard is here.) Then too, in disclaiming kinship with the king, Bolingbroke speaks formally in courteous response to Mowbray who asks to meet him on equal footing (11.58-71), but there is an ominous undertone in the disclaiming. Similarly, when Richard says that Bolingbroke's kinship shall not privilege him, which he too says in order to make the footing between the challengers equal, the theme of the unnatural breaking of the bonds appears again:

Were he my brother, nay, my kingdom's heir,
 As he is but my father's brother's son,
 Now by my sceptre's awe I make a vow,

Such neighbour nearness to our sacred blood
Should nothing privilege him nor partialize
The unstooping firmness of my upright soul.

(11.116-21)

In general so many words suggest the breaking of the bonds, that Shakespeare must be trying to make Bolingbroke appear in unnatural and insidious rebellion, though this is not at all clear in performance. In this way in letter Bolingbroke accuses Mowbray of murdering a fellow subject and of misusing public money, and they prepare to try their "truths" in mortal combat. In spirit Bolingbroke accuses Richard of breaking the bonds with kin and subject, while he himself in turn unnaturally breaks the bonds to right these wrongs. And the scene ends with a picture of Richard's weakness, as we look forward to the empty ritual of the trial:

We were not born to sue, but to command,
Which since we cannot do,...

(11.196-97)

He cannot make subjects "atone" together (1.202), for the natural bonds are broken, and he is weak and short-sighted. He sets up the trial to prove "truths" (11.199-201), but the trial in scene three is a hollow show.

Shakespeare tries (I think) to show the conflict of natural and unnatural in a stately medieval court which has grown enervated in part and overblown. Embellishment has become the crutch of weakness, formality the ruse of deception. But in trying to set forth this conflict within the complex layering of formality and weakness, tumidity and deception, Shakespeare lets the scene itself become tumid and weak and indefinite. The scene becomes a maze of elaborate speeches we try to wind our way through, the characters become a lot of poses we cannot see behind. Bolingbroke, again, is not clearly motivated, and this unclarity eats away at the logic and coherence of the scene. In scene two Shakespeare shows us a clear picture of the court upside down, where because of Richard's unnaturalness part of the line of Edward III does

not grow in Time, but dies out:

One vial full of Edward's sacred blood,
 One flourishing branch of his most royal root,
 Is cracked, and all the precious liquor spilt,
 Is hacked down, and his summer leaves all faded,
 By envy's hand, and murder's bloody axe.

(1,2,17-21)

Scene two clearly shows two possibilities--one leaves Richard's chastisement to God, according to Nature; the other unnaturally seeks revenge by setting Bolingbroke against his fellow subject and his lord.¹ (1,2,37-47) And because this is the world upside down, scene two ends on a note of broken marriage and death. (11.66-73) But dramatically the scene cannot clear up the obscurity and indefiniteness of scene one, any more than it can keep the third scene from being weak and anticlimactic. The audience is at first confused and at last unsatisfied, and authority in this early act wanes.

Act Two, scene one, is much more coherent and clear, and we see the natural kinsmen and counsellors, Gaunt and York, try to set the kingdom right-side up and to make the family follow the bonds of kind. We see the king false to his land and to himself by ignoring the advice, and we see plot and rebellion ensue. Gaunt's dying suggests the death perhaps of the older order, and his formal speech has the "deep harmony" of music (2,1,6-13) which we may associate with the older, more perfect rule of Edward III. His well-known set piece celebrates England, the other Eden built by Nature, and laments its degeneration. (11.40-60) He upbraids Richard for misrule and for murdering kin (11.91-114) and implicitly advises him, trying to enforce his attention "like deep harmony". (1.6) Richard threatens Gaunt (11.121-3), and as Gaunt says, such unkindness lets Time triumph:

¹Perhaps two possibilities exist also in scene one--one natural, in the letter of Bolingbroke's words, the other unnatural, in the spirit. Thus when he seems the natural kinsman who answers "sacrificing Abel's" call for justice, he is also furtively threatening Richard. (1,1,100-8) See D. Wilson's note, and also his introduction, p. lxvii.

... thou respect'st not spilling Edward's blood!
 Join with the present sickness that I have,
 And thy unkindness be like crooked age,
 To crop at once a too long withered flower.

(11.131-34)

Gaunt dies, and when Richard begins seizing all Bolingbroke's patrimony, cutting off Gaunt's heir, York notes the degeneration of the line from the Black Prince to Richard:

In war was never lion raged more fierce,
 In peace was never gentle lamb more mild,
 Than was that young and princely gentlemen: ...
 But when he frowned it was against the French,
 And not against his friends; ...
 His hands were guilty of no kindred blood,
 But bloody with the enemies of his kin:

(11.173-83)

Again, York advises Richard not to violate the rules of natural succession and inheritance, to which Richard owes his own kingship. (11.195-9) "You pluck a thousand dangers on your head." (1.205) Ignoring this, Richard looses Fortune and appetite. And presently we see Northumberland stirring up rebellion. The king is not himself, he says. (1.241) He sees the tempest of Infortune that Richard is loosing, and unlike Gaunt and York, he does not try to avoid the storm:

We hear this fearful tempest sing,
 Yet seek no shelter to avoid the storm:

(11.263-64)

He encourages the storm by nourishing rebellion. (11.277-46) The scene clearly sets forth the degeneration in the king, which looses Time and Infortune and the unnatural in the kingdom.

The following scenes show the division this rebellion makes in the kingdom, as for instance it breaks up friendships (2,2,13-51), and show the weakness of the kingdom to resist rebellion (2,3,83-171) and the like weakness in the king himself, who is easily given to grief and despair. (3,2) These scenes

lead up to Act Three, scene three, which sets forth Richard's capitulation. The general movement of this scene shows unnatural rebellion (which links itself with, and more or less goes under, the guise of Fortune-hunting) surround the king, who in turn sees himself false to himself and powerless to resist, and so who capitulates. Rebellion here feigns loyalty, and in this way Northumberland who is clearly rebellious, intending to "shake off our slavish yoke", pretends that he comes only for Bolingbroke's "lineal royalties", Bolingbroke's fortunes:

The king of heaven forbid our lord the king
Should so with civil and uncivil arms
Be rushed upon!

(11.100-03)

While the letter of his words stresses loyalty, the spirit stresses the threat of Bolingbroke's "glittering arms" and "barbed steeds". (11.116-7) Bolingbroke's intentions, again, are not entirely clear, but he fits into this pattern of feigning loyalty and claiming only his own fortunes, while threatening rebellion. Thus he sends allegiance and true faith to Richard (1.37), but says that if his fortunes are not restored he will

use the advantage of my power,
And lay the summer's dust with showers of blood.

(11.42-43)

In other words he puts Fortune above Nature. Similarly when he suggests that he and Richard should meet like the elements, though he means perhaps that the elements should finally accord, as in Boethius (II, met.8), he suggests more strongly the tempest of Infortune, a cataclysm in Nature:

Methinks, King Richard and myself should meet
With no less terror than the elements
Of fire and water, when their thund'ring shock
At meeting tears the cloudy cheeks of heaven.
Be he the fire, I'll be the yielding water;

(11.54-58)

Richard when he appears invokes symbolic support for himself and prophesies the evil and destruction that will light upon the generations to come:

Yet know, my master, God omnipotent,
Is mustering in his clouds, on our behalf,
Armies of pestilence, and they shall strike
Your children yet unborn, and unbegot,
That lift your vassal hands against my head,
(1.89)

Shakespeare makes him refer to the division and rebellion of the Henry VI plays primarily, but also to the disorder in the kingdom that is to follow immediately in the reign of Henry IV. Though Richard can invoke these images of chaos he is powerless, and he sees ⁱⁿ this disparity of being a king and not being able to control Fortune and the unnatural in the kingdom, that he is false to himself and to his crown:

We do debase ourselves, cousin, do we not,
To look so poorly, and to speak so fair?
(11.127-28)

And he capitulates. The capitulation logically follows his vacillations in Act Three, scene two. There he swings from the empty hope of symbols ("Is not the king's name twenty thousand names?" (1.85)) to despair at his own weakness and mortality (11.145-77), just as here he swings from hope in God's symbolic support to despair at his own impotence. The scene moves iconographically as well, and thus Richard at first appears above on Flint Castle's walls (1.62) and at last descends into the base court:

Down, down I come, like glist'ring Phaeton:
Wanting the manage of unruly jades....
In the base court? Base court, where kings grow base,
(11.178-80)

The world turns upside down when Nature bows down to Fortune and the unnatural (11.181 & 207), and like the survivors at the end of the Morte Arthur Richard seeks to retire from the world to a hermitage and there to wait death. (11.147-53)

Richard is false to himself when he does not control the "unruly jades" who, in seeking Fortune, supplant Nature. Authority is strong, for the scene clearly sets forth this complex of Fortune-hunting and unnaturalness and personal falseness, which ends in Richard's stepping down. Scene four develops these themes by pattern and antithesis, and the gardeners work out the allegorical implications of the realm's being a garden enclosed by the sea. They work out the themes in a different key when they say that Richard should have rooted the weeds out of his kingdom. (3,4,29-39) This choric scene also develops the theme that unnaturalness proliferates, so that one gardener wants to stop weeding the garden because Richard stopped weeding the land; and we see that this is wrong--that only natural action can cure unnaturalness. We see generally that England is like a garden (2,1,42ff.), that the family is like a tree (1,2,18-20), that Richard's tragedy is the tragedy of the land. (2,1,91-114; 3,4,65-100) The scene develops this allegorical pattern, but in large part the scene does not advance the conception at all. Most of what the gardeners say is already clear. To say that an Elizabethan audience would immediately look for the symbolic meaning in this emblem scene¹ is to ignore the scene's static and even somewhat pedantic reiteration of what is to a great extent already apparent. Shakespeare must have thought that the themes needed repetition in theatre, but he does not go much beyond mere repetition. In as far as he writes down to his audience, authority falters.

Act Four, scene one, shows the proliferation of evil and rebellion that surrounds the deposition of a king. In this way the scene begins with the accusations of Aumerle and the drawing up of sides, Lancaster and York. Bagot, who was a favorite of Richard's, accuses and betrays Aumerle; Surrey challenges

¹Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays, p. 249.

Fitzwater; the good Bishop of Carlisle is clapped under arms. (1.151) And the scene ends with Aumerle and the Bishop and the Abbot of Westminster going to take the sacrament in order to plot the murder of Aumerle's cousin, the usurping Bolingbroke. Evil proliferates in the world upside down, and as I have said, the Bishop sums up this theme when he prophesies the war that will set kin against kin and make the land another Golgotha. (11.134-49) In the middle of this Richard deposes himself. He makes himself a kind of Christ and makes the rebels Judases who violate heaven's right order. (11.170-5) He points out the triumph of Fortune in his metaphor of the well and the two buckets. (11.181-9) He realizes his own unnaturalness and falseness in deposing himself, which turns the natural hierarchy upside down:

I find myself a traitor with the rest:
 For I have given here my soul's consent
 T' undeck the pompous body of a king;
 Made glory base; and sovereignty, a slave;
(11.248-51)

And in trying to get self-knowledge by reading his face, the book wherein his sins are written (1.275), he sees that sorrow, like Time, is destroying him-- that his kingdom of man is upside down. (11.276-91)

Again, Shakespeare develops the play by pattern. Throughout, his intentions are clear, and we see how a violation of Nature looses a multiplicity of evils. But again, though the intent is clear, the development is static. The initial dissension in the realm, the casting of gages, which parallels Act One, scene one, is slow and wooden; and so many gages finally lie on the stage that we laugh. The exchanges towards the end grow shrill:

Surrey. As false, by heaven, as heaven itself is true.
 Fitzwater. Surrey, thou liest.
 Surrey. Dishonourable boy!
(11.63-65)

Richard's deposing himself is pitiable; the implications of the deposition

are clear. But after all the deposition itself largely repeats Act Three, scene three. Moreover, the second half of this scene is too drawn out (11.162-320), Richard's working out of the various aspects of the deposition too long-winded, and we squirm in our seats. Like As You Like It and Pericles, the plot here develops through a pattern of antitheses, and we can see that all Richard says has significance. But significance alone is not enough. Goethe's Kindred by Choice has significance in every word, but that does not keep it from being a pedantic piece of work, a work without complete authority. A writer must give his words significance, but he must also give them embodiment and energy and life, that his audience may be compelled to follow those words to the end. Reading or attending a play is not an assignment. It is at least an act of will and at most a compulsion, and the writer must make it so--he must give his work authority. To say that Shakespeare means to contrast Richard's rhetoric with Bolingbroke's terseness here, is to ignore the main fault in this scene: Shakespeare's Richard is an undramatic character, and Shakespeare lets this self-pitying, inactive, weak side of Richard eat away at this scene until the scene itself becomes flabby and dull. Even when the scene is well-played--and I have seen it played well in Stratford, Ontario--the audience yawns.

In Act Five again Shakespeare's intentions are everywhere clear as he structures the scene to mirror the thought. In this way the first scene--Richard's parting from his queen--links the violation of his "marriage" to the kingdom with the violation of his marriage to his wife (5,1,71-3), and points out through the prophecy to Northumberland, the appetitiveness of those who break natural bonds:

The time shall not be many hours of age
More that it is, ere foul sin gathering head

Shall break into corruption. Thou shalt think,
 Though he divide the realm and give thee half,
 It is too little, helping him to all....
 And he shall think thatthou, which knowest the way
 To plant unrightful kings, wilt know again,...

(5,1,57-63)

Scenes two and three logically follow scene one by showing families falling apart in a world upside down. To the Duke and Duchess of York, Richard is "King Richard", Bolingbroke "the duke, great Bolingbroke". (5,2,6-7) But in the world upside down people throw rubbish on the king, and York swears allegiance to the usurper. (5,2,39-40) His son is loyal to Richard, however, and so father denounces son as "villian! traitor! slave!" (5,2,72) To denounce the son as a traitor is to let the family wither in Time, as the Duchess says, for Aumerle is their only son, and not a villain, not a bastard. (5,2,88-110) Still York proceeds. Scene three takes up this theme in variation when Bolingbroke and Percy describe Hal. (5,3,1-22) But after Aumerle and his father and mother enter, the scene drags on too long and finally grows ridiculous:

York. Speak it in French, king, say 'pardonne moy'.

(5,3,119)

Shakespeare wants perhaps to vary the tone, to brighten the act for a moment in order abruptly to darken it with Richard's murder. He wants the lightness of humor (5,3,79-80) to make the sudden descent to tragedy more dramatic. But humor in the scene gets out of control and degenerates finally to the ridiculous. Similarly in scene five Shakespeare tries to make Richard active and even heroic in dying, but after all the scene ends in melodrama.¹ Some think this last act contains many unShakespearian interpolations,² but in its structure

¹D. A. Traversi, Shakespeare: from "Richard II" to "Henry V", (London, 1957) p. 48.

²See Dover Wilson's introduction, p. lxviii. Compare Traversi, ibid., pp. 46-8.

the act is generally coherent and logical and clear. Though in writing the scenes Shakespeare does not have full control, nearly everywhere his intent is clear. In other words these are not irredeemable errors. Structure generally mirrors thought, and the act has a good measure of authority.

In short, Shakespeare writes a good play, but he does not have all the mastery and control here that he has later on.

* * *

Coriolanus,¹ written about 1608, generally witnesses the full control that we would expect in Shakespeare's late tragedies. But before we look at Shakespeare's authority in Coriolanus we must look at the play's basic antithesis. Again, like Richard II the antithesis is between the natural and the unnatural.²

But where the world of Richard II is a kingdom, that of Coriolanus is a republic, and it is worth considering what assumptions an Elizabethan may have made about a republic, and particularly about a Roman republic. In Plutarch a republic has two primary ingredients--an hereditary aristocracy who make up the senate, and a voting commonalty--and harmony in the state depends mutually on the paternal care of the senators and on the check or vote of the citizens. In this way Plutarch describes in detail how Marcius descends from the "noble house of Marcians" in Rome, which was³

of the number of the Patricians, out of the which
have sprung many noble personages,

and describes how Brutus came from Junius Brutus who valiantly drove the tyrannical Tarquins out of Rome. The great men who dominate Rome are of the

¹References are to the New Cambridge "Coriolanus", ed. by J. D. Wilson, (Cambridge, 1960). See introduction, pp. ix-xi.

²ibid., p. xix.

³Shakespeare's Plutarch, ed. by W. W. Skeat, (London, 1880), p. 1.

nobility. The other ingredient in a republic is the vote, and in this way Plutarch describes the voting for tribunes and consuls and emphasizes the rightness of the system before it grew corrupt:¹

...for offices of dignity in the city were not then given by favour or corruption. It was but of late time, and long after this, that buying and selling fell out in election of officers, and that the voices of the electors were bought for money. But after corruption had once gotten way into the election of officers, it hath run from man to man, even to the very sentence of judges, and also among captains in the wars; so as in the end, that only turned commonwealths into kingdoms, by making arms subject to money.

There is no idea of the divineness of a king; a king is a tyrant because he is merely a man and because in becoming a king he deprives the people of their choice, their vote. And so when Caesar is chosen "perpetual dictator", which accords with his "covetous desire to be called king", this marks a corruption in the republic. As Plutarch says:²

This was a plain tyranny: for to this absolute power of Dictator, they added this, never to be afraid to be deposed. Cicero pronounced before the Senate, that they should give him such honours as were meet for a man:

It is implicit in what Cicero says that where there is no idea of the divinity of a king, it is unreasonable for a man with this human frailty to seat himself or to be seated beyond the reach of other men. Montaigne implicitly makes the same point when he records the observations of his "Caniballes" on the kingdom:³

...they found it very strange that so many tall men with long beards, strong and well armed, as it were about the Kings person ...would submit themselves to obey a beardless childe, and that we did not rather chuse one amongst them to command the rest.

¹ Shakespeare's Plutarch, p. 14. See also the "Life of Caesar", pp. 95 and 96, where the two basic elements in the republic established by Junius Brutus are senate and commons.

² ibid., pp. 92-94.

³ Montaigne's Essays, the World's Classics (London) Vol. 1, p. 255.

Order in a republic still depends on the full harmony of the natural bonds, but no matter how noble and paternal a ruler is, in a republic the citizens' vote must act as a check on his power.

In Coriolanus Marcius represents the best of the republican virtues, and yet paradoxically as consul he would be a tyrant. Thus on the one hand he springs from the "noble house of the Marcians" (2,3,234-44), and though he descends from King Numa, he wins the oak garland for the first time when he beats Tarquin to his knees--when he opposes a tyrant king and helps free the republic. (2,2,86-96) Cominius stresses this as Marcius' republican virtue which best qualifies him for consul. On the other hand, Marcius tries to take away the citizens' vote, and when he is told he must go to the market-place to seek voices, he says,

It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people.

(2,2,142-44)

We would cut off the power of the tribunes who are the popularly elected officials (3,1,90-112), and as Sicinius accuses him,

you have contrived to take
From Rome all seasoned office, and to wind
Yourself into a power tyrannical;
For which you are a traitor to the people.

(3,3,63-66)

Thus Coriolanus roots itself in Plutarch's idea of a republic. But the play is more complex than I have thus far indicated. The whole Roman republic in the beginning of the play is upside down, and the natural bond between citizens and patricians is broken. The patricians withhold food from the citizens, and the citizens rebel:

If they [the patricians] would yield us but the superfluity while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear: the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them.

(1,1,17-22)

Menenius' parable of the belly, though it suggests in its equation of patricians and belly that rule in the republic is not right, generally outlines the proper relationship between patricians and citizens. The orderly "marriage" in the body mirrors the orderly "marriage" in the republic, so that ideally the citizen-members receive their natural sustenance from the patrician-belly. (1,1,95-154) Clearly this natural relationship is upside down in Rome, for the patricians are not nourishing the people--Menenius "fobs off" their grievance with a tale (1,1,93)--and the citizens in turn rebel. The patricians grant the people five tribunes, and this simply heightens the disorder. As Marcius says:

...when two authorities are up,
Neither supreme, how soon confusion
May enter 'twixt the gap of both and take
The one by th' other.

(3,1,109-12)

A widening vortex, where one broken bond causes another to break, is tearing Rome apart.

Shakespeare shows us no ultimate beginning for the unnatural breaking of the bonds, and in this way the citizens rebel, because the patricians withhold corn, because the citizens are undependable in war (3,1,120-5), because Marcius makes rash demands (1,4,39-54), and so on. Shakespeare shows the republic seizing up because bonds are broken on both sides. Marcius is in part a product of this unnatural situation. In the world upside down war supplants peace--men do not atone together; they fight each other--and Rome has fought 18 times, with Marcius her champion, a Mars among men. (2,2,80-120) His ideal is courage, unflinching soldiery as when he fights all Corioli alone (1,4), and one-ness, "not to be other than one thing" (4,7,42), so that looks and thoughts, heart and mouth, are of a piece. (3,2,120-3; 3,1,256)

...not fierce and terrible
 Only in strokes; but with thy grim looks and
 The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds
 Thou mad'st thine enemies shake,
 (1,4,58-61)

And in the world upside down these soldier virtues become political virtues, and Marcius becomes the likely consul. (2,2,80-131) But he was "bred" in the wars" (3,1,318; 1,3,6-13), and he is so true to his ideal of soldiery and constancy that he hates the citizens who are inconstant in war and in peace. (1,4,27-40; 2,1,202-26) Marcius is unfit to rule, and in this he is a product of the unnatural situation, his unnatural breeding in the wars; for though Menenius and Volumnia would have him "dissemble with his nature" and "speak the people fair" (3,2,62; 3,1,262), in hating the people Marcius simply follows their example:¹ (2,2,76)

I muse my mother
 Does not approve me further, who was wont
 To call them woollen vassals, things created
 To buy and sell with groats;
 (3,2,7-10)

In this way Marcius himself witnesses the unnaturalness to which the broken bonds of kind give birth, and disorder in the republic grows in part out of disorder in the succession of the hereditary aristocracy.

Marcius is bound to the state as a patrician and a soldier, and he is bound to his kin as a son and husband and father. But again, in the beginning each bond is partly upside down, and thus as a patrician he makes his hatred clear to the citizens (1,1,163-5) and says that if the nobility allowed he would

¹For Menenius' shifting values, compare (1,1,61 and 1,1,201-2 and 2,2,76-7). Menenius makes himself out to be Marcius "father". (5,2,68-9). The Watch clearly sees his duplicity. (5,2,14-32) For Volumnia's shifting value, compare (3,2,40-1) and (4,1,3-4). See W. Farnham, Shakespeare's Tragic Frontiers, (Berkeley, 1950), p. 248. D. A. Traversi, Shakespeare: the Roman Plays, (London, 1963), p. 247.

make a quarry
 With thousand of these quartered slaves, as high
 As I could pick my lance.

(1,1,197-99)

In a world right-side up, honor and fame follow a soldier's bond of service; but here Marcius inverts the natural order and puts honor above service:¹

Were half to half the world by th' ears, and he [Aufidius]
 Upon my party, I'd revolt, to make
 Only my wars with him.

(1,1,232-34)

In war he quickly turns on his own men. (1,4,28-40) His bonds of kin in the beginning are also partly upside down. His wife and mother for instance admire conflicting images of him, and in this way Virgilia thinks that Marcius' boy, who is the picture of his father, is a little imp when he tears the butterfly, while Volumnia applauds how closely son follows father. (1,3,58-69) As Marcius fulfils his mother's ideal, he upholds the succession of kind; but her ideal of him as a harvest-man of death (1,3,38) is upside down, and as he fulfils this ideal while running athwart his wife, his bonds seem unnatural. Bearing new wounds for instance he fulfils Volumnia's wishes and brings her home the garland, but he greets his wife with a rough joke:

My gracious silence, hail!
 Wouldst thou have laughed had I come coffined home,
 (2,1,173-74)

In the beginning even his bonds of kin are partly upside down.

Tragedy springs from this unnatural situation. Victory and the military title in this disordered world make Marcius a possible consul. Pride puffs him up till he is false to himself--pride and self-knowledge in the play are clearly at odds (2,1,21-6; 37-8)--for he sees at first that ruling will falsify his single, unbending nature:

¹ See E. Honig, "Sejanus and Coriolanus", M.L.Q. XII, p. 421.

I had rather be their servant in my way
Than sway with them in theirs.

(2,1,200-01)

And yet after Cominius' hyperbolic praise he goes to the market-place to seek votes as "mine own desert". (2,3,64) He is unnatural in as far as he loses self-knowledge. Moreover, Volumnia wants him consul to complete her life's wish, to fulfil her idea of natural succession:

I have lived
To see inherited my very wishes
And the buildings of my fancy; only
There's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

(2,1,195-99)

Again, despite his pride he knows that he should not rule, that in the market-place he ceases to "honor mine own truth". (3,2,121) But she sets Nature and Fortune upside down:

I would dissemble with my nature, where
My fortunes and my friends at stake required...

(3,2,62-63)

To make him fill her idea of a natural succession and return to the market-place she unnaturally denies in part her own maternity, and he in turn unnaturally gives in to this perverse twisting of the bonds:

Volumnia. Do as thou list.
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me,
But owe thy pride thyself.

Coriolanus. Pray, be content:
Mother, I am going to the market-place;

(3,2,128-31)

Disorder in the "marriages" in the state grows out of the upside down bonds in the family and in the self.

In the market-place Marcius falsifies his own truth, that the citizens might elect him. In breaking this bond with himself and deceiving the people, he corrupts the election and causes them in turn to break a bond with themselves, and they do not look after their own interests when they elect him.

(2,3,175-89) Immediately he takes off the false gown of humility and "knows himself" again (2,3,145-6), and in turn the people take back their "voices" and know their enemy. One violation of Nature gives birth to another. Again, in the world upside down when patricians and people are not naturally "married" but unnaturally hostile, the tribunes who represent the people only heighten the hostility. In the disordered world the dominant law is survival of the strongest, and when Marcius takes off the false gown and again knows himself, the tribunes know that he will be a tyrant, themselves superfluous. (2,1,219) The charge "traitor!" strikes Marcius' honor and so precipitates his rage, then exile. The charge strikes ironically as well, for Marcius betrays himself and the republic when to rule he dissembles with his nature and breaks his bond of service. An exiled patrician-soldier however is a kind of "whoreson zed", an unnecessary letter, and to grow necessary again in the upside down world of Act Four, Marcius serves the Volscians. Again he sets honor above Nature in revenging himself on Rome. Now he becomes more obviously disloyal; now he runs fatally against his bonds as father, husband, and son. He is a compound traitor,¹ an unnatural man. Outside Rome he will not give in to Volumnia's natural use of the bonds of kind (5,3,94-131); he will give in only to her unnatural twisting of them:

This fellow had a Volscian to his mother;
His wife is in Corioli, and his child
Like him by chance.

(5,3,178-80)

Unnaturalness proliferates until he dies alone in a foreign town,² hewn up by a rout of conspirators.

¹ J. Palmer, Political Characters of Shakespeare, (London, 1945) pp. 250-310

² On the isolation theme, see M. Charney, Shakespeare's Roman Plays (Cambridge, Mass. 1961) pp. 177ff.. See also M. MacLure, "Shakespeare and the Lonely Dragon", Toronto Quarterly, XXIV, pp. 111-7. E. M. Waith, The Herculean Hero (London, 1962) pp. 121-43. I. Ribner, "The Tragedy of Coriolanus", E.S. XXXIV, pp. 1-9. A. C. Bradley, "Coriolanus", Publication of the British Academy, (London, 1912).

Marcus is the son and heir to an upside down world, and the play is about the rapid multiplication of unnaturalness. As a man in the world he stands not above the other characters but apart from them, for on a human level all his bonds are in part upside down. But Marcus is also a man in a world of deception and falseness who is striving to be a god, with godlike magnificence, godlike one-ness. As Menenius says, "He wants nothing of a god but eternity". (5,4,23) And this is Marcus' dilemma too--mortal man seeking to be immortal against mutability and decay. Thus he plays the god to punish, as Brutus says (3,1,81), and thus he is the Volscians' god. (4,7,3-4) Thus in war he is continually the widower, the killer of sons or of whole tribes (4,2,26; 4,4,2; 5,6,122)--opposing successiveness--for successiveness is a form of mutability and change. Then too war breeds in him a love with both Aufidius and Cominius that precludes reproduction (4,5,117; 1,6,29), and thus opposing generation, if you will, he "virgins" himself and his wife (5,3,48) and ironically turns his son, who is his image in Time, against him. (5,3,128) Finally he leaves Volumnia issueless, for he dies, and his good name which she would have made her issue, dies with him. (1,3,20) But as he is a creature in Time, Marcus' absolute opposition to change defeats him. Successiveness of course is a means for man to move through Time and mutability towards the natural constancy or one-ness of continuance in change. Marcus' one-ness is unnatural, and he becomes the tragic figure who, instead of moving through Nature towards harmony and accord, moves against Nature into discord and death and final loss. Aufidius is appetitive and unnatural:

The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,
 Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up
 Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst
 My hate to Marcus. Where I find him, were it
 At home, upon my brother's guard, even there,
 Against the hospitable canon, would I
 Wash my fierce hand in's heart.

(1,10,21-27)

When he kills Marcius, Time and appetite triumph.

In Coriolanus, as in Richard II, tragedy follows the breaking of the bonds of kind, and Time and Fortune and appetite triumph over Nature. The basis of both plays is more or less the same--the opposition of the natural and the unnatural. But where in Richard II the structure does not always reveal the thought with clearness, in Coriolanus the two cleave in a fast knot and structure mirrors thought perfectly. Shakespeare's dramatic authority in Coriolanus is full.

Act One for instance begins by showing us the Roman republic upside down, where patricians do not fulfil their duties and where citizens rebel. The first scene shows us Marcius, an outgrowth of this unnatural situation, who on the one hand would gladly use his lance to make a heap of dead citizens (1,1,196-9) and would unnaturally throw up his loyalty for fame and honor (1,1,232-4), and yet who on the other hand honorably opposes the unstableness of the people and the duplicity of the patricians. The scene begins with a violent picture of the republic upside down as the citizens rebel. Menenius' parable, as I have said, ironically points out just how badly the patricians have fulfilled their bonds to the people:

Touching the weal o' th' common, you shall find
 No public benefit which you receive
 But it proceeds or comes from them to you,
 And no way from yourselves.

(11.150-53)

For the citizens rebel against the lack of just such benefits:

They ne'er cared for us yet. Suffer us to famish, and
 their store-houses crammed with grain; make edicts for
 usury, to support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome
 act established against the rich, and provide more
 piercing statutes daily to chain up and restrain the
 poor. If the wars eat us not up, they will;

(11.78-84)

Appetite rules in the republic during peace and during war. Menenius indeed fobs off their grievance with a tale, and in doing so he reveals the unnaturalness of the patricians, who should exercise father-like care. (1.76) Here too he dissembles, for though he addresses the citizens as good friends, honest neighbors (1-61), he really despises them:

For though abundantly they lack discretion,
Yet are they passing cowardly.

(11.201-02)

Marcus when he enters reveals himself a product of the unnatural situation by violently opposing the citizen:

What's the matter, you dissentious rogues
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
Make yourself scabs?

(11.163-65)

But he rises above Menenius' duplicity; who deserves greatness, he says, deserves the fickle citizens' hate. (11.170-6) In opposing the citizens' fickleness and rebellion and the patricians' deceit, he allies himself in part with constancy and order and truth. (11.166-87) But he values war above peace (1.224), qualifies his loyalty unnaturally (1.233); and as the tribunes say, he will not spare to "gird the gods" or mock the "modest moon". (11.255-6) And thus the scene ends with an image of Marcus' real unnaturalness, for although the moon represents mutability, the "modest moon" also represents chastity--continuance in change, the means for man to make mutable things atone together. Scene one sets forth the oppositions clearly and logically, and the strength of this setting forth compels attention.

The act goes on to show the imperfect bonds that tie him to his soldiers and his kin. He is at once godlike alone and hopelessly flawed in bond with others. Scene three develops the idea of successiveness and at the same time

suggests that Marcius' bonds of kin are upside down. Volumnia begins the scene with a note of the unnatural:

if my son were my husband, I should freelier rejoice in
that absence wherein he won honour than in the embrace-
ments of his bed where he would show most love.

(1,3,2-5)

She sets war above love. A warlike bloody brow is more lovely than a nursing breast, she says (1,3,41-3), while Virgilia quails at the thought of blood. (1,3,39) Likewise, were Marcius to die in war, Volumnia seems content that his good fame should be her son and that therein she should find successive-ness. (1,3,20-1) Volumnia and Valeria even mock Virgilia's chastity and patience a little as they try to draw her out of her home:

You would be another Penelope; yet, they say, all the
yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca
with moths.

(1.1.83-85)

Volumnia is no doubt a noble Roman matron, much like Antony's Fulvia, and she wants her son to achieve high honor in a true succession of her blood, just as she wants Marcius' boy to be the image of the father. (1,3,58-69) But her idea of honor is in part upside down; she sees successive-ness paradoxically in her son's being a harvest-man of death (1,3,37) and in her grandson's tearing butterflies. The scene clearly contrasts wife and mother; Marcius' bonds are partly upside down. Similarly, we next see Marcius at his best and worst--at war--and scenes four, five, and the beginning of six embody this paradox by juxtaposition. Marcius prays to Mars for instance that the fighting may be quick so that he can help Cominius (1,4,10) and the prayer shows a soldier's virtue. So does his urging his troops:

Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight
With hearts more proof than shields.

(1,4,24-25)

But when he is angry this becomes:

He that retires, I'll take him for a Volsce,
And he shall feel mine edge.

(1,4,28-29)

Until sensing defeat and the loss of honor, he turns on his fellows:

...by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe.
And make my wars on you.

(1,4,40)

Swearing by "the fires of heaven" suggests that the oath is upside down. Juxtaposition shows Marcius allied only to honor--honor perhaps noble in itself, but destructive of his ward, his soldiers. Contrarily out of his virulence springs his most godlike image, defying the death implied in Titus' elegy (1,4,55-62), fighting all Corioli alone. Likewise, he stands far above those soldiers who pack away spoils before the fighting is done, and despite wounds he goes to fight Aufidius and to gather more honor. But Cominius becomes a general's paradigm:

Breathe you, my friends: well fought; we are come off
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands
Nor cowardly in retire.

(1,6,1-3)

Brave but discrete. And as Marcius is a general, the words undercut him.

The scenes are lively and dramatic, and their juxtapositions show him magnificent alone but deeply flawed in bond with others.

Marcius' fall depends in part on his rising to power. He cannot become consul however without being false to himself, without being unnatural, for Shakespeare makes it clear that Marcius has enough self-knowledge at first to know that he is naturally a servant to the state and unnaturally a consul. (2,1,200-1) Self-knowledge and Nature go together, here as before. In Act Two Shakespeare develops the opposition of pride and self-knowledge as Menenius and Brutus upbraid each other:

You [the tribunes] talk of pride. O that you could turn
your eyes toward the napes of your necks, and make but
an interior survey of your good selves!

(2,1,37-39)

And this springs of course from their discussing Marcius' pride. (2,1,18-37)
Scenes one and two go on to show how victory and the full-blown title
aggrandize him (2,1,144), how Rome worships him (2,1,215-8), how Menenius
and Cominius glorify him. (2,2,76-130) He is "vengeance proud", and his
pride is a product of the disorderly republic, where war supplants peace and
patricians disdain citizens. Again as I have said, he would violate the
ideal of a republic by taking away the people's vote (2,2,142-4) and so by
being himself a tyrant. All this leads up to Act Two, scene three, which
shows Marcius false to himself when he dissembles with his nature and shows
the ensuing proliferation of unnaturalness which makes the state finally seize
up.

Marcius' falseness first appears when he enters in the gown of humility,
a false vesture that covers his great pride. Although he insists for a time
on true words, the ensuing episodes shows his reversal from true words to
false: At first despite Menenius' advising him to dissemble, he refuses to
say "I pray", because begging falsifies his tongue. And he cannot remind the
people simply of his service, for that neglects the whole truth:

your brethren roared and ran
From th' noise of our own drums.

(2,3,52-53)

In the first episode after Menenius leaves, Marcius begins to dissemble.
Though haughty, he says "I pray", and with gruff mockery asks kindly:

Kindly, sir, I pray let me ha't.

(1.75)

In the next episode he goes farther and takes up false words with heavy irony:

I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man,
and give it bountiful to the desirers. Therefore,
beseech you I may be consul.

(11.100-02)

In the third, he reverses completely. He sees that his natural way is either to raze what he thinks false custom or to let him rule who would use a false tongue, but pride forgets this truth that he may win voices:

Your voices! For your voices I have fought;
Watched for your voices;...

(11.125-26)

Ironically here he seeks as his desert (1.64) what earlier he rebukes as false. (1,9,41-53) He turns completely against natural inclination and becomes his false dress. In a moment of course he takes off the garment and again knows himself. (11.145-6) He is upside down first in making the gown of humility a false gown and in hating the citizens. Second, he is false to his own truth in hiding behind the gown and in feigning love. Complimenting his falseness is that of the people. They too go against instinct and neglect their own interests in giving him their voices. In the opening dialogue the citizens remember Marcius' old antipathy on the corn, but decide to give their voices if he fulfills the custom. The more he dissembles, the more they accept him. Thus their first acceptance in grudging:

An 'twere to give again--but 'tis no matter. (1.83)

And their last wholehearted:

Amen, amen. God save thee, noble consul! (1.135)

But just as Marcius finally throws off the false garment, the people take back their voices. The thought that Marcius mocked them unsettles the citizens, and the tribunes use the memory of his inveterate malice to turn the people against him. Marcius personal falseness falls in the center and sends out

successive waves of falseness in the citizen and perverts the natural checks and balances of an election. (11.175-89) The people's acceptance clearly reflects his falseness to himself, and their ensuing reversal reflects the way this falseness works against itself. The scene logically and dramatically sets forth the proliferations of unnaturalness that follow the breaking of the bonds, and authority is strong.

Unnaturalness proliferates till Rome is in civil confusion. Act Three begins with mutiny and ends with Marcius' banishment as appetite rules in the world upside down. Rome becomes the unnatural dam who eats up her own kind. (3,1,291) In the middle of this, scene two ties the unnaturalness in the state to the unnaturalness in the family (for Marcius clearly inherits his hatred of the people from Volumnia), so that the disorderly republic where patricians hate citizens springs in part from an upside down succession in the hereditary, paternal aristocracy. To get Marcius to return to the marketplace Volumnia twists the bonds of kind, and when he surrenders to her twisting he is false to himself: and so mother and son promote a degenerate succession. Orderly "marriage" in the republic would mirror true succession in the family, but here false bonds in the family cause rebellion and so bring Rome towards chaos, and too, make the family degenerate in Time.

Again, Marcius inherits his unnatural pride and antipathy from his mother,

who was wont
To call them [the people] woollen vassals, things created
To buy and sell with groats;

(3,2,8-10)

He asks whether she would have him false to his nature (1.15), but clearly she inverts the natural order and values power more than truth:

I would have had you put your power well on,
Before you had worn it out.

(11.17-18)

Likewise, in asking him to return to the agora and secure power, she confuses war and peace. (11.39-51) Finally she enforces her request with the bonds of kin, and at the same time puts Fortune above Nature:

I would dissemble with my nature, where
My fortunes and my friends at stake required
I should do so in honour. I am in this,
Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles;
(11.62-65)

The bonds nearly make him agree (11.101-4), but he knows that he cannot con a part and that what she urges, far from giving him honor, will give him an inherent baseness. He sees himself a harlot, a eunuch, a knave, and a beggar; for in his simplicity he knows that his action mirrors his spirit. And he reasserts his single truth against this multiple falseness:

I will not do 't;
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,
And by my body's action teach my mind
A most inherent baseness.
(11.120-23)

The scene builds to a pitch till, as I have said, she denies the bond in herself by denying in part her maternity (11.128-30), and at last he surrenders. Irony lies in that what she invokes as Nature becomes unnatural. He tries by being consul to fulfil her life's wish (2,1,196) and so to fulfil the succession that Nature's bonds imply. But by giving in to the bond's misuse, he underwrites a false successiveness, and his spirit becomes subject to mutability and decay. The conflict of characters here reflects the conflicting values--natural and unnatural--and Marcius' surrender reflects the dissolving of his self. As Rome sinks into mutiny and chaos, the "noble house of Marcians" correspondingly degenerates and moves towards exile and death. The scene clearly works out the degeneration in the republic and in the family that follows the inversion of the natural order, and again authority is strong.

Marcius' exile turns the world more violently upside down. Bonds of service and of gratitude are broken on each side as the will for power rules,

and Act Four shows these violations of Nature loose Fortune and appetite in a completely disordered world. Exile exposes Marcius to chance (4,1,36), and like Bolingbroke he in turn becomes a kind of unregenerate wanderer who will not fasten on any course but merely stray over the wide world. (4,1,34-42) Likewise, Virgilia begins to sound as fierce and appetitive as Volumnia:

Virgilia. He'd make an end of thy [Sicinius'] posterity.

Volumnia. Bastards and all.

(4,2,26-27)

Traitors thrive in the world upside down, and so in scene three a Roman traitor hears how the Volscians hope to use the division in Rome to bring about Rome's defeat. (4,3,16-9)

I have heard it said the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she's fall'n out with her husband.

(4,3,31-33)

The analogy underscores the relationship between disorder in the state and unchastity which, again, is a figure for the degeneration of a line. To the servants in Antium both war and peace destroy kind, and peace is a getter of more bastard children than war is a destroyer of men. (4,5,230-1) Similarly, Marcius enters Antium recalling the many widows he has made, the many heirs killed. (4,4,1-4) For this is the world upside down, where sworn friends become bitter foes, and foes fast friends, over a farthing. (4,4,12-22)

My birth-place hate I, and my love's upon
This enemy town.

(4,4,22-24)

The reversal is sudden and dramatic. We see Marcius calm amidst the crying, cursing women (4.1); we see him next and he has fastened on revenge. The tribunes had hoped that as Marcius' unnatural hatred caused rebellion in Rome, so his exile would cause peace. (4,6,1-9) But exile breaks the bonds and turns the defender into the ravager as it promotes savage appetite--the survival of the strongest. Here as before, only Nature can cure the unnatural.

By breaking the bonds the tribunes preclude invoking the bonds, as Cominius points out (4,6,109-15); and one unnatural act gives rise to another till

You have help to ravish your own daughters and
 To melt the city leads upon your pates,
 To see your wives dishonoured to your noses--
 (4,6,81-83)

Likewise, scene seven shows appetite and strength ruling in Marcius' relationship with Aufidius (11.24-5, 54-7) and so looks forward to his death. The act clearly shows the rapid proliferations of unnaturalness that let Time and appetite bring the state to chaos and man to death. And here is no plodding pace. In embodying the thought, the scenes are swift and sure and dramatic.

Act Five sets forth the unavoidable outcome of this upside down world. Marcius is utterly unnatural in expelling remorse and mercy and in revenging himself on his country, and scene three shows him running fatally against his bonds as son and husband and father, and thus embodies his dilemma by showing unnaturalness in the republic, which itself grows out of the disordered succession in the hereditary aristocracy, working in turn the ruin of the family. Again, the familial bonds themselves are upside down, and this is clear in scene two where Menenius passes himself off as Marcius' "father" and "liar":

I watch. Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say...
 (1.31)

Marcius has no escape, and his unnatural capitulation to the bonds which Volumnia has twisted and finally denied, leads to death. The basic pattern of scene three is clear. Marcius begins by asserting a supernatural one-ness. He is the Volscian's god, made by some other deity than Nature (4,6,61-2); and he will burn his country, rejecting instinct and standing

As if a man were author of himself
 And knew no other kin.
 (11.36-37)

He recognizes his bonds as father, husband, and son, however, and they point the impossibility of this stance. For he calls his wife "best of my flesh", and he would show his mother more than a common son's duty, and he wishes a noble future for his boy. (11.42-75) But to revenge himself on Rome is to tread on Volumnia's and Virgilia's wombs, and to make his son revolt and fight against him. (11.122-8) Marcius will not give in to Nature, and so Volumnia twists the bonds:

Thou has never in thy life
 Showed thy dear mother any courtesy,
 When she, poor hen, fond of no second brood,
 Has clucked thee to the wars, and safely home
 (11.160-63)

and finally denies them:

This fellow had a Volscian to his mother;...
 (1.178)

Marcius reacts here just as he has reacted in Act Three, scene two, where he gave in at the same moment. And so his capitulation, after his long and mounting silence (11.131-182), comes like the inevitable clap of a wave. Irony lies in his seeking an immortal constancy at war with others which precludes a like constancy in bond with others.¹ This irony appears in his knowing no kin, and grows sharp in the image of him treading on the wombs of wife and mother. Likewise, war will give the boy the stamp in Time of a self-destroying father; the son will become equally unnatural, opposing successiveness by fighting his parent. (11.126-8) With similar irony, again, Volumnia can force Marcius to proper duty only by denying her own succession. And human mercy ironically opens the way to death. (11.200-1) The tragedy here is complete, for loss is utter when successiveness fails. The scene is one of Shakespeare's best.

¹ In the three women--Volumnia, Virgilia, and Valeria--Marcius opposes the three forms of chastity--chaste widowhood, married chastity, and virginity. (11.64-7) And the opposition ceases only when the bonds that bind him to fruitful chastity are denied. (11.178-80)

Although the two plays have much in common, Coriolanus, as we would expect, is the more coherent and logical and dramatic. This is not entirely because Marcius is a more violent, dramatic character, for just as Shakespeare let Richard's weakness make several scenes weak, he could have let the scenes of Marcius' violence degenerate to mere ranting. Writing Coriolanus, Shakespeare simply has more control. Though deceit and duplicity are important in Coriolanus, the scenes where they appear--one, one and Three, two--never grow indefinite and obscure as do similar scenes in Richard II. Shakespeare highlights the falseness in Coriolanus--Menenius' duplicity, Volumnia's hypocrisy--better than he does in Richard. Then too, although Shakespeare in Richard occasionally weaves choric material into the action of a scene, as when Gaunt celebrates England (2,1) or when Carlisle prophesies its degeneration (4,1), just as often he stops the action to give us this material in a still, emblem scene, and the whole movement of the play goes slack. In Coriolanus Shakespeare either weaves this choric material into the action, as he weaves Menenius' parable into the action of the first scene, or he embodies the material in lively dialogue which clearly looks ahead, much as the dialogue on pride and self-knowledge (2,1) focuses our attention in what is to come. The narrative is never static. Moreover, Shakespeare does not seem to have enough material in Richard II; he seems at times to pad out a scene with drab dull material like York's concern for his boots (4,1,74-87), or with weak speeches such as Richard and the groom speak on Richard's horse. (5,5,72-94) Of course it is part of his intent to make Richard long-winded. But that the play should leave the impression of being padded out--for instance, again, where most of Four, one, seems to repeat Three, three, without adding much that is new--shows that authority wanes. Even the lords

in throwing down their gages seem to over-extend themselves. Marcius on the other hand is tense and hard and explosive, and even in an outburst he seems to hold back much more. And consider how in Three, two, and Five, three, his silence gives the impression of restrained emotion and welling passion. Shakespeare makes Richard forever excessive, and in going beyond the mark Richard sates and even at times bores us. Marcius too is excessive, but he always builds towards something; and even though we may be finally exhausted, he always mightily compels our attention. Authority depends in part on anticipation, on expectation, and any time a character or a scene sates or bores us, authority wanes. This does not mean that only those plays that have a highly active plot compel attention. It means that no matter what kind of plot a play has, the plot must make us eager to see what comes next. If the plot develops as a pattern, the pattern must expand and not merely reiterate. The scenes in Coriolanus too to a certain extent develop by pattern, but the scenes always heighten our expectation. A hand for writing a strong narrative line into the scenes and for using restraint which builds our anticipation, together with logic and coherence and clearness in the structure, makes Shakespeare's authority in Coriolanus complete.

CHAPTER II

JULIUS CAESAR

In Julius Caesar, which was written in 1599, the tragedy again follows a violation of the natural order. The world of Caesar like the world of Coriolanus is a republic, and the natural order depends on the accord of the senate or nobility and the voting commonalty.¹ Caesar however longs to be a king. This is clear in Casca's description of the offering of the crown (1,2,217-74) and in Decius' seduction of Caesar, where he gets Caesar to go to the Capitol by telling him that the senators mean to give him a crown (2,2,94), even though Casca and Decius are prejudiced against Caesar. Indeed it is implicit the first time we see Caesar--in his attitude and in the attitude of those around him:

Antony. When Caesar says, "Do this," it is perform'd.

Caesar. Set on, and leave no ceremony out.

(1,2,10-11)

as well as in his image of himself as the northern star, with no fellow in the firmament. (3,1,60) In a republic, as I have said, there is no idea of the divinity of a king, and so even though he be benign, a king is unnatural for he takes upon himself more than is meet for a man,² and he violates the republican principle of common election in seating himself above the reach of other men.

¹ See Coriolanus above. See also Shakespeare's Plutarch, pp. 95-6. References are to the Arden Edition of Julius Caesar, edited by T. S. Dorsch (London, 1955).

² Shakespeare's Plutarch, p. 92.

Brutus on the other hand is the republican man.¹ He is of the nobility, and the full significance of this lies in that he descends from Junius Brutus who drove the Tarquins from Rome and so helped establish the government of the "senate and people".² In this way Cassius seduces Brutus to join the conspiracy by stressing the unnaturalness of a man's being a king:

I had as lief not be as live to be
In awe of such a thing as I myself.
I was born free as Caesar; so were you; (1,2,94-96)

...And this man
Is now become a god, and Cassius is
A wretched creature, (1,2,114-16)

by stressing the idea that a ruler should be chosen by vote--by reasonable choice:

Brutus and Caesar: what should be in that "Caesar"?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?...
(1,2,140-41)

and by stressing the responsibility of the nobility, and particularly of Brutus' noble blood:

Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods! (1,2,144)

There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd
Th' eternal devil to keep his state in Rome
As easily as a king. (1,2,156-59)

With Brutus as its head, the conspiracy in other words is supposed to check Caesar's unnatural ambition³ and to make the republic orderly. By Caesar's death the people will receive a place, or voice, in the commonwealth. (3,2,44-5)

¹ cf. H. Brown, "Enter the Shakespearean Tragic Hero", Essays in Criticism III (July, 1953) pp. 285-302; J. Palmer, Political Characters of Shakespeare (London, 1945) pp. 1-5.

² Shakespeare's Plutarch, pp. 95-6 and 105.

³ Compare D. A. Traversi, Shakespeare: The Roman Plays, p. 33, and F. O'Connor, The Road to Stratford, (London, 1948) pp. 74-5. Understanding Brutus as the republican man and then seeing Cassius' seduction in these terms, clears up much of the confusion that critics make here. Compare Traversi, p. 33; R. Smith, "Brutus: Will and Virtue", S.Q. X pp. 367-79; and S. T. Coleridge, Shakespearean Criticism, (London, 1930) I, pp. 13-8.

But the play is not so simple as this. In Shakespeare Caesar never becomes king as he does in Plutarch.¹ True, Caesar acts as if he were a monarch, in the festival and in the senate:

I could be well mov'd, if I were as you;
 If I could pray to move, prayers would move me;
 But I am constant as the northern star,
 Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality
 There is no fellow in the firmament.

(3,1,58-62)

And perhaps the senators do mean to make him king. (1,3,85-6) But the people, though they laud and magnify him, reject him as a king three times:

When he perceiv'd the common herd was glad he refus'd the
 crown, he pluck'd me ope his doublet, and offer'd them
 his throat to cut.

(1,2,260-63)

In other words through the republican idea of vote or common choice, there is perhaps a way to check Caesar's unnatural ambition and to keep the state in order and accord. Then too Caesar is Brutus' friend. Brutus "loves him well" (1,2,81), and within this bond of friendship lies another possible way to check Caesar's aspiration and turn it towards the "general good". But Brutus and the conspirators fail to see that within the republican system and within the bonds of friendship there are "natural" ways of curbing unnatural-ambition and of turning it to good. They fail to use Nature to convert the unnatural, and so they form the conspiracy which like Caesar's ambition is linked with the cataclysms in Nature, the monstrous events in the tempest (1,3,72-9; 128-30), and one unnatural act gives rise to another. Thus Caesar's ambition leads to the conspiracy, which leads to Antony's loosing the appetite in the mob, which leads to civil war, which leads to suicide and death. Again tragedy is the eschewing of Nature, where evil proliferates in the world.

¹Shakespeare's Plutarch, p. 92.

Indeed the whole play is set against the background of disorder in the republic--the civil war where Caesar triumphs over "Pompey's blood", and the discord between the people and those in power. Thus in the first scene the tribunes who are elected officials are at odds with the people;¹ and in scene two Brutus distrusts the citizens when in fact they are opposing Caesar as king, and the servile Casca who is of the nobility despises the rabble, the rag-tag people, the common herd, again ironically when they are keeping Caesar from being a king. Thus in scene three Cassius says he knows that Caesar would not be a tyrant but that he sees the people sheep, would not be a lion but that he finds the Roman hinds. (1,3,103-8) Similarly the seduction of Brutus, the forming of the conspiracy, is set against the disorder in his state of man:

...poor Brutus, with himself at war,
Forgets the shows of love to other men. (1,2,45-56)

...and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection. (2,1,67-69)

The republic and the state of man are each in part upside down, and this correspondence is particularly clear when Portia urges Brutus to know himself and cure his sickness through Nature:

It [his impatience] will not let you eat, nor talk, nor sleep;
and could it work so much upon your shape
As it hath much prevail'd on your condition,
I should not know you Brutus....
(2,1,251-55)

You have some sick offence within your mind,
Which, by the right and virtue of my place,
I ought to know of; and, upon my knees,
I charm you, by my once commended beauty,

¹In Plutarch the incident reflects republican ideals. When Marullus and Flavius pull the diadems off Caesar's statues, the people "called them Brutes, because of Brutus, who had in old times driven the kings out of Rome, and that brought the kingdom of one person unto the government of the Senate and people". pp. 95-6.

By all your vows of love, and that great vow
 Which did incorporate and make us one,
 That you unfold to me, your self, your half,
 Why you are heavy, and what men to-night
 Have had resort to you; for here have been
 Some six or seven, who did hide their faces
 Even from darkness.

(2,1,268-78)

His impatience--his sickness--and the conspiracy come together; and as in Pericles, she invokes Nature--the patient telling of grief and the one-ness of marriage--to cure him and implicitly to cure Rome.

Shakespeare however does not much develop the possibility of things moving through Nature--through voting in the republic, through the bonds of friendship, or through self-knowledge and marriage--towards harmony in the state and in man. The possibility always exists, but as in Richard II Shakespeare focuses primarily on one broken bond's causing another to break. Recollect the idea as it appears in Boethius:

what may a man don to folk, that folk ne may don hym
 the same? ...Wenestow thanne that he be myghty that
 hath no power to doon a thyng that othere ne mai doon in
 hym that he doth in othere?

(II,pr.6, 64-76)

Just as Richard's incorrigibility seems to leave Bolingbroke as a seeker of justice no alternative but usurpation, so Caesar's unbending tyranny where he "disjoins remorse from power", seems to leave Brutus as a republican man no alternative but murder. Caesar says,

If I could pray to move, prayers would move me; (3,1,59)

Still, the conspiracy is wrong--it is against Nature--and this is clear from the beginning. It is clear by implication in Brutus' being at war with himself--in his not wanting Caesar king and yet remaining Caesar's friend.

(2,1,10-2) Implicitly Brutus should not abandon friendship, which he must

do if he joins the plot, but use friendship to ensure the general good. Similarly though Cassius appeals to Brutus on the basis of republican virtues he is clearly appetitive (1,2,189-92), and too, he urges his plot athwart the bonds of friendship, and the unnaturalness is clear:¹

...who so firm that cannot be seduc'd?
Caesar doth bear me hard; but he loves Brutus.
If I were Brutus now, and he were Cassius,
He should not humour me.

(1,2,309-12)

It is also clear, as I have said, in the scornfulness of Casca's description of the offering of the crown, where the people, though they love Caesar, clearly keep him from accepting the crown, according to natural order in the republic. The nobleman who should exercise father-like care, is scornful of the people chiefly for their smell, when they in fact oppose Caesar in a more reasonable and manly way than he himself does; he is clearly unnatural. The unnaturalness is also clear in the dialogue of the third scene, where both the kingship and the conspiracy are likened to the unnatural events of the tempest:

And the complexion of the element
In favour's like the work we have in hand,
Most bloody, fiery, and most terrible.

(1,3,128-30)

It is clear in Brutus' description of the conspirators:

Sham'st thou to show thy dangerous brow by night,
When evils are most free? O, then by day
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
To mask thy monstrous visage? Seek none, conspiracy;
Hide it in smiles and affability:

(2,1,78-82)

Conspiracy is a monster; it is linked with darkness and illusion, opposed to light and truth.² And again, the unnaturalness is clear through what Portia

¹ Compare with his supposed idealism: (1,2,91)

² Brutus himself is to put the face of virtue on the otherwise offensive act: (1,3,157-60)

says. But in each instance the alternative, or natural way, exists mainly by implication; Shakespeare does not develop the natural way as a real possibility. Thus he focuses on the rapid multiplication of unnatural acts, and in doing so he gives his tragedy a strong sense of fatality.

Tragedy in Julius Caesar springs from Brutus' trying to reach a natural order in the republic by unnatural means, from his letting pity drive out pity for instance, rather than making it enforce pity:

And pity to the general wrong of Rome--
As fire drives out fire, so pity pity--
Hath done this deed on Caesar.

(3,1,170-72)

The radical disparity of his natural ideals and unnatural means appears as he imagines the conspirators:

...waving our red weapons o'er our heads,
Let's all cry, "Peace, freedom, and liberty!"

(3,1,109-10)

This disparity has appeared earlier, for as he tries to right the republic he encourages dissimulation and falseness (2,1,82 and 225) and even lets Decius urge Caesar towards the crown. (2,1,202-11) And this disparity hopelessly weakens Brutus, for though he tries to make the conspiracy necessary and natural (2,1,177-80) he in fact underwrites the law of survival of the strongest and looses appetite and Fortune in the republic. Antony emphasizes the supremacy in the world, of Fortune and the appetitive hunt after the murder:

Mark Antony shall not love Caesar dead
So well as Brutus living; but will follow
The fortunes and affairs of noble Brutus
Thorough the hazards of this untrod state,

(3,1,133-36)

Pardon me, Julius! Here wast thou bay'd, brave hart;
Here didst thou fall; and here thy hunters stand,
Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe.

O world, thou wast the forest to this hart;
 And this indeed, O world, the heart of thee.
 (3,1,204-08)

The hunt Antony talks about here is like the hunt in the earlier literature--Sir Gawain, The Book of the Duchess--and like the hunt in other of Shakespeare's plays--As You Like It, The Tempest. Athwart Nature, it embodies the law of survival of the strongest. But Brutus is too noble and kind to follow that law savagely to the end. If he would, like Cassius he would kill Antony, or at least not let him speak in the market-place. But to Brutus Antony's death would be butchery,¹ and his speaking in the funeral is what becomes a friend. Thus Brutus loses control over Fortune and appetite in the republic as he loses control over the Fortune-hunting appetitive Antony who means to stir up a universal chaos in revenge:

A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;
 Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
 Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;
 Blood and destruction shall be so in use,
 And dreadful objects so familiar,
 That mothers shall but smile when they behold
 Their infants quartered with the hands of war,
 All pity chok'd with custom of fell deeds;
 (3,1,262-69)

The illusoriness of the Fortune-hunter as a friend is clear in Antony's irony throughout Act Three, scene one. (11.188,202,219) In loosing Fortune Brutus promotes illusion in the world. He is divided from himself, blinded by this illusion, hopelessly weak.

Antony is unscrupulous, and Nature and Fortune in him are upside down, for he continually uses Nature to ensure his revenge and his rise on Fortune's wheel. Revenge here as before is an unnatural act, and Shakespeare makes this clear in Antony's soliloquy, where Antony describes his revenge in various images of unnaturalness--civil war, mothers smiling at their child-

¹ See B. Stirling, Unity in Shakespearian Tragedy, (New York, 1956), pp. 141ff., on Brutus' making the murder a ritual.

ren's slaughter, and so forth. (3,1,254-75) Clearly Antony loves Caesar, but in the market-place he uses Nature to ensure revenge in as far as he uses the show of this love and the funeral itself (see Pericles above), to stir up appetite in the mob and chaos in the world:

Now let it work. Mischief, thou art afoot,
Take thou what course thou wilt....
(3,2,262-63)

Fortune is merry,
And in this mood will give us any thing.
(3,2,268-69)

Similarly he is willing to cut off some of Caesar's legacy and kill his own sister's son (at the suggestion of Lepidus whom he thinks no more than an ass) to ensure his rise on Fortune's wheel. (4,1,1-9) In other words he is willing to follow the law of survival of the strongest to the end, while Brutus is not. And though (looking forward to Antony and Cleopatra) the possibility of further division appears, with Antony and Octavius Caesar preying on each other (4,1,13-8; 5,1,20), Antony is temporarily strong in this savageness while Brutus who has put himself into a savage world and yet who is too noble and kind to act accordingly, is weak. Brutus is divided against himself, He needs gold to pay his troops, but he cannot stoop to wring drachmas out of the peasants. (4,3,69-75) The division and self-delusion appear in that he will have Cassius wring the money for him and yet will chastise Cassius for supporting bribes. (4,3,1-28) In his delusion he becomes smug and self-righteous:¹

Do what you will, dishonour shall be humour.
O Cassius, you are yoked with a lamb
That carries anger as the flint bears fire, ...
(4,3,108-10)

¹ Thus pretentious he becomes unbearable. See Traversi, op.cit., pp. 61-5; H. G. Barker, Prefaces to Shakespeare, (London, 1947) II, p. 365; Palmer, op.cit., pp. 50-6; and the Arden introduction, p. xli.

The weakness and disintegration of his world appear in his petty bickering with friend Cassius, in Portia's suicide, and in the appearance of the ghost, his evil spirit. In promoting conspiracy Brutus promotes appetite and Fortune in the world, and in the ensuing civil war the Fortune-hunting Antony rises on the wheel while the deluded idealist falls.

The play is about the disintegration of Brutus' world, and Shakespeare stresses this for instance in Act Four when he throws Brutus and Cassius together in fast friendship in order to underscore the division and dissolution in their bickering and strife. In Act One Brutus holds Cassius at a distance--a friend but not an intimate friend:

But let not therefore my good friends be griev'd
 (Among which number, Cassius, be you one)
 (1,2,42-43)

And there is a sneer in Cassius' soliloquy that precludes real friendship. (1,2,305-9) In Act Four they are hot friends, good brothers, lovers (4,3,19, 95, 236), and Shakespeare makes the change, which is not simply a matter of psychological consistency--a matter of their huddling together in a cold brutal world¹--in order to emphasize the disintegration and fragmentation of Brutus when in the quarrel scene he is torn apart by self-deception and when generally he starts a chain of unnatural acts and loses control over the proliferation of evil. Similarly as Portia tries to cure the disordering "sickness" in him, to bring him back to the harmony of marriage where they are "incorporate and one", so her suicide in Act Four suggests the impossibility of this one-ness and suggests again the fragmentation and disintegration of his world. This is tragedy, where in the man and in the state things do

¹ Compare Barker, op.cit., pp. 360-5.

not move into one-ness and accord but instead fall prey to discord and multiplicity. Bear in mind the idea as it appears in Boethius:

Thanne mustow granten ...by semblable resoun that oon and good be o same thing; ...Ryght as in beestis ...whanne the body and the soule ben conjoynd in oon and dwellen togidre, it es cleped a beeste; and whanne her unyete is destroyed be the disseveraunce the toon fro the tothir, thanne scheweth it wel that it is a deed thing, and that it nys no longer no beeste....And whoso wolde renne in the same manere be alle thinges, he scholde seen that withouten doute every thing is in his substaunce as longe as it is oon; and whanne it forletith to been oon, it dyeth and peryssheth. (III, pr. 11, 44-73)

He who perceives or partakes of one-ness perceives the simplicity of the divine thought, where the "many maner gises" of things atone; but he who does not partake of one-ness dies out because he perceives only "thinges that moeveth and disponyth" and so because like Troilus he subjects himself to Mutability and multiplicity and decay.¹ Nature and generation is the way to "longe durablete" and perdurable existence, the way towards the One; and the eschewing of Nature is death. (Boece, III, pr.11) Thus when Brutus does not follow Nature and when he looses Fortune and appetite, he subjects himself to illusion, to the illusoriness of such things as glory and dignity (5,5,36) which as in Boethius come and go (III, pr.4 and met.4); and instead of bringing the republic and himself into harmony and one-ness, he leaves things divided and chaotic and discordant. Suicide epitomizes this, for it is unnatural. In Portia its cause is sickness--impatience and madness and despair. (4,3,151-5) In Cassius its cause is impatience and error, which breeds illusion and which like an unkind child kills its parent:

O hateful Error, Melancholy's child,
Why dost thou show to the apt thoughts of men
The things that are not? O Error, soon conceiv'd,
Thou never com'st unto a happy birth,
But kill'st the mother that engender'd thee. (5,3,67-71)

¹ See Boece, IV pr.6, and III pr.11.

Patience in Cassius would have let illusory Infortune--Titinius' supposed capture--come full-circle into substantial good Fortune--the wreath of Brutus' victory. (5,3,82) Patience would have let things which are multiple and discordant come into the singleness of accord. Impatience lets Infortune triumph in Cassius so that Time conquers him:

This day I breathed first. Time is come round,
And where I did begin, there shall I end.
(5,3,23-24)

The circularness emphasizes not continuance but simply change. And too, his impatience helps Infortune triumph over Brutus. (5,3,101-10) Similarly Brutus' suicide marks his defeat of himself:

For Brutus only overcame himself,... (5,5,56)

Strato would have us think there is much honor in this, but Strato is not entirely right. Antony and Octavius (who is after all another Caesar and a dictator) are ruthless unscrupulous characters, and thus the tragedy is the disintegration of the republic and of Brutus' self, where things do not move through change into accord but instead fall prey to multiplicity and appetite and Time.

Consider now the structure. Much of the play's best lies in the clarity and coherence of its structure. The three scenes of the first act for instance develop both by pattern-antithesis and by plot-conflict. Thus the first scene provides a backdrop of general disorder in the republic, and the second and third set forth the pattern of Cassius' seduction. They set it forth first in the concrete terms of Brutus' war within himself between his republican values and his friendship with Caesar, which war blinds him in part to Cassius' envy and appetite and to the proper remedy within the bonds of friendship and the republic; and second they set forth the seduction

in the metaphorical terms of the storm. The scenes also develop by plot and conflict, and thus in the first scene we see the conflict between the elected tribunes and the fickle citizens whom the tribunes fear mean to crown Caesar, and after the soothsayer's ominous warning we see the rapid growth of conspiracy as Cassius seduces Brutus and Casca. There is too a general movement from the light of day into darkness and night. The act is compelling and clear and strong.

In the first scene the disorder in the republic appears in the note of civil war (1.51) where the tribunes are of Pompey's party and the citizens of Caesar's. It appears in Caesar's longing to be king:

These growing feathers pluck'd from Caesar's wing
Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,
Who else would soar above the view of men
And keep us all in servile fearfulness.

(1,1,72-75)

and also in the general possibility that the careless fickle crowd will grant him the crown. When Caesar enters in scene two we see specifically his imperiousness (11.11; 24) and the ready servility of those around him who, like Antony and Casca, attend his every word. And Shakespeare is careful to introduce into this brief episode the note of the unnatural, in Calphurnia's barrenness, her sterile curse (1.9); and in doing so he sets the kingly aim which would make a man a god, against the frame of human frailty. In the ensuing seduction this is Cassius' technique as well. He appeals to Brutus the republican man by stressing how intolerable it is for a man to be a king (11.94-6), by setting Caesar's godlike bearing against his frailty--his weakness in swimming the Tiber, his shaking with fever, his crying out like a sick girl. (11.99-130) He also appeals to Brutus whose noble descent calls on him to oppose tyranny (11.157-9), by stressing the responsibility of the nobility and the right for election:

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
 Like a Colossus, and we petty men
 Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
 To find ourselves dishonourable graves.
 (11.133-6)

Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
 (1.141)

Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
 (1.149)

What Brutus does not see is that Cassius in his concern for Caesar's frailty and for the rights and duties of the nobility, despite the republican idealism, is basically envious:

Ye gods, it doth amaze me
 A man of such a feeble temper should
 So get the start of the majestic world,
 And bear the palm alone.
 (11.127-30)

And Brutus does not see this because the seduction begins with the idea of Brutus' war with himself (1.45)--he is caught between loving Caesar as a friend and hating him as a king or tyrant. (1.81) The seduction is set against the shouts of the festival crowd; and Brutus' war with himself, together with the general mistrust between the rulers and the people which appears in scene one, makes him misinterpret those shouts, so that he thinks the people are giving Caesar a crown when in fact they are keeping him from accepting it.

Thus the act develops the seduction against the background of disorder in the state and in man, and this development is also clear when the rout returns following Caesar. First we see through Caesar's description the disorder in Cassius which, in the sense of Cassius' being at odds with himself, parallels the disorder in Brutus. Cassius in Caesar's words is appetitive:

...Cassius has a lean and hungry look; (1.191)

...he hears no music.
 Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort
 As if he mock'd himself, and scorn'd his spirit
 That could be mov'd to smile at any thing.
 (11.201-04)

Music of course suggests harmony as in the eighth sonnet where music and marriage come together as metaphors for the Many atoning in the One. Cassius hears no music; the disorder in the man is clear. Second we see disorder in the state--in the relationship between the citizens and the nobility--when Casca scorns the crowd who, though they love Caesar (1.269), oppose his kingship where Casca himself was obsequious and cowardly. (1,2,2; 14) Implicit in this picture is the way to right the republic--through a reasonable subject-ruler relationship. Just as in Cassius' final words,

Caesar doth bear me hard; but he loves Brutus.
If I were Brutus now, and he were Cassius,
He should not humour me.

(11.310-12)

it is perhaps implied that the bond of friendship is another way to right the republic. But Brutus does not recognize either way, and thus as he welcomes Cassius to his home (1.303) the action moves quickly towards conspiracy and plot.

The third scene develops these ideas metaphorically, and thus it lights up the seduction of Brutus by coming together with the earlier scenes in the manner of a pattern-antithesis, while at the same time it drives forward the plot. The scene is set in darkness, with the thunder and lightning of a "tempest dropping fire". (1,3,10) The whole "sway of earth" shakes like a thing unfirm (1.3), and as Casca says,

Either there is a civil strife in heaven,
Or else the world, too saucy with the gods,
Incenses them to send destruction.

(11.10-13)

These cataclysms in Nature at different times reflect different things (11.34-5), and at first Cassius likens the storm to Caesar's unnatural position in the world, as he seduces Casca:

...Why all these things change from their ordinance,
 Their natures, and pre-formed faculties,
 To monstrous quality, why, you shall find
 That heaven hath infus'd them with these spirits
 To make them instruments of fear and warning
 Unto some monstrous state.
 Now could I, Casca, name to thee a man
 Most like this dreadful night,...

(11.66-73)

The storm also reflects the upside down subject-ruler relationship,¹ for as Cassius says, Caesar would not be a tyrant if the Romans were not weak and servile. (11.103-8) Caesar as Cassius describes him follows the law of appetite which makes the lion devour the hind. And Cassius seduces Casca to follow this same law. As Casca says,

Be factious for redress of all these griefs,
 And I will set this foot of mine as far
 As who goes furthest.

(11.118-20)

One broken bond causes another to break, and so by acting unnaturally in response to Caesar's unnatural ambition, the conspiracy too is like the storm. (11.128-30) In the pattern-structure of this act we see seduction in a different key. Brutus' nobleness stands apart from Casca's slavish cowering cynicism, but in the parallel development of this act we also see that Brutus and Casca and Cassius qualify each other in coming together in the plot. And particularly as the focus of the play is on Brutus, Casca and Cassius compromise the upright nobility of his republicanism when that nobility underwrites conspiracy. Brutus will elevate the conspiracy, but he will also be degraded by it, and this is clear in the pattern-antithesis of the structure. The act ends with a quickening, mounting sense as the last thirty lines catch up the proliferation of Cassius' seductions and planning:

¹ The storm also perhaps brings out disorder in Cassius. The reasonable Cicero says the night is too wild to walk in (1.40), but Cassius "bares his bosom" to the lightning. Then too, if we may accept Casca's judgment, in doing so Cassius does not show proper reverence to the gods. (11.53-6)

...Repair to Pompey's porch, where you shall find us.
 Is Decius Brutus and Tribonius there?
 Cin. All but Metellus Cimber, and he's gone
 To seek you at your house....

(11.147-50)

The pattern-structure lights up the thought in this act well, and the act moves without hesitation. Authority is strong.

The second act also develops by antithesis and by conflict, and these two sides to the development give us at once the sense of the act's fullness and the rising expectation which compels our attention. In the first scene Brutus welcomes the conspirators to his home. His wife tries to cure his "sickness" and implicitly the sickness in the Roman republic through the bond of marriage, and likewise Calphurnia in the next scene tries to make Caesar respect the portents and heed the priests' wisdom in reading the unnatural signs. Neither listens to wisdom and Nature however, and so we see the conspirators and Caesar unnaturally encouraging each other and mutually loosing the appetite of rebellion in the state as Decius gets Caesar to go to the Capitol by saying that the senators mean to give him a crown. Thus through the pattern of the conspirators' and Caesar's unnaturalness the act moves swiftly towards a head. Shakespeare infuses the pattern-structure with a strong sense of anticipation.

In the first scene Brutus' confused thinking, his war within himself, calls up the conspirators who are likened to a monster. Brutus knows that Caesar has always been guided by reason rather than by sensuality (1.20), and he knows too that the danger of kingship is that habitually it disjoins mercy from power. (11.21-7) His thinking is confused first because he sets friendship and the general good at odds when he should make them reinforce each other:

It must be by his death: and for my part,
 I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
 But for the general. He would be crown'd:
 (2,1,9-11)

Then too this thinking depends on vague conjecture and even on illusion, and this clouds the simple clearness of much of what he says:

So Caesar may;
 Then lest he may, prevent. And since the quarrel
 Will bear no colour for the thing he is,
 Fashion it thus: that what he is, augmented,
 Would run to these and these extremities;
 (11.27-31)

Like Rome his state of man is upside down, suffering an insurrection (11.63-9), and the unnaturalness of this in a sense allows the "monstrous" conspiracy to enter his home and even indeed to exist. Now Brutus tries to put the face of virtue on the otherwise offensive act. (1,3,158) He makes the murder a ritual, a killing of the spirit of Caesar and of tyranny, and in part he does raise the crudeness of the others to the level of his own nobility:

...do not stain
 The even virtue of our enterprise...
 (2,1,132-33)

But he makes it sound as if an oath would stain something that has indigenous virtue, when it is just as true that his noble republicanism gives the appearance of virtue to something that is basically tainted. This is clear when we remember his description of conspiracy, which in its "native semblance" is monstrous like evil and hell (11.77-85), and clear when we hear the smug self-delusion in his tone as he talks about Antony:¹

Alas, good Cassius, do not think of him!... (1.185)

His mistake is also clear when we hear Portia invoke the one-ness of marriage and patience in telling grief, in order to cure his sickness which she links

¹ See the Arden note on line 173, where Mr. Dorsch suggests that the word carve in "Let's carve him as a dish..." implies the cutting up of the deer. This would then imply perhaps the appetitive hunt and, again, Brutus' mistake.

with the conspiracy. (11.268-78) But Brutus thinks he will cure the sickness in himself and in Rome by inducing sickness in others (11.327-9)--he underwrites the appetitive law of thriving by another's fall. And the scene moves strongly towards a head. Portia is a potent character here. She is in a sense like the "wise women" in the comedies, and as I have said (see above), when she makes Brutus promise to tell her all, she makes us expect and indeed hope for some further scene between them. Shakespeare does not give us the scene, and in this we see perhaps that he means to emphasize the conflict, the rapid and unavoidable unfolding of events, rather than the possible pattern-antithesis of things moving into accord. But we expect something to come because of her strength, for she is as strong a force here as Cassius is in Act One, scene two, and she is stronger than any of the conspirators including Cassius in Act Two, scene one. There is in this a certain disproportion, which may heighten our sense of Brutus' loss in Act Four, but which here in part confuses and misleads us.

As Portia tries to cure Brutus' sickness, so Calphurnia in scene two urges Caesar to head the unnatural portents. As I tried to make clear in my chapter on Coriolanus, women are integral to tragedy in as far as tragedy in the disintegration of Nature's marriages, the breakdown of one-ness into multiplicity and decay. Thus Volumnia ironically promotes disintegration, and so she becomes in part like Lady Macbeth and Goneril and Regan (see below), who follow the appetitive Nature. Contrarily, like Cordelia and Desdemona and even Ophelia and Lady Percy, Portia and Calphurnia promote the divine Nature. Neither Brutus nor Caesar listen to wisdom and Nature however, and this is the tragedy. The parallel pattern here develops partly in terms of metaphor, and again we hear a catalogue of the cataclysms in Nature--the yawning graves, the ghosts, the

blood drizzling from the sky (2,2,13-26)--that relate to the conspiracy as well as to Caesar:

...these predictions
Are to the world in general as to Caesar. (11.28-9)

The priests too urge Caesar to remain at home, but like Brutus his wisdom is "consumed in confidence". (1.49) Caesar is wrong in ignoring the prodigies because he ignores them for the wrong reason: he is consumed in confidence, consumed by the idea that he must appear brave, seem self-assured; and his several vacillations in this scene make this clear. The general parallel between him and Brutus develops further when Decius appears. Brutus lets Decius flatter and deceive Caesar in order to ensure his going to the Capitol (2,1,202-13), and thus we see in the pattern of this act the evil of conspiracy complimenting the evil of kingly ambition in the republic, as Decius seduces Caesar by urging him towards the crown:

from you [Caesar] great Rome shall suck
Reviving blood, and ...great men shall press
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance...
(11.87-89)

The Senate have concluded
To give this day a crown to mighty Caesar.
If you shall send them word you will not come,
Their minds may change.

(11.93-96)

Nature's way would convert Caesar's kingly ambition and turn it towards the general good in the republic, but the conspiracy encourages Caesar's wrong as one broken bond causes another to break. There is no sense of Decius' testing Caesar here, as Brutus does in the next act. Thus Caesar's ambition promotes conspiracy, which in turn promotes ambition in order to justify itself when Caesar yields to the idea of being a king. (11.105-7) Brutus encourages dissimulation (2,1,224-6) just as he encourages this proliferation of evil, and thus in a sense, though he regrets it, he promotes illusion in the world:

That every like is not the same, O Caesar!
The heart of Brutus earns to think upon.
(11.128-29)

Already the tone is of regret, and there is the hint that things are out of his control. The parallel development in this act reflects the idea that one violation of Nature causes another. In the ensuing emblem scene (scene four) we see the weakness of Nature and truth in the play--Portia and the soothsayer. Portia is faint; the soothsayer is crowded nearly to death. (2,4,34-43) And as the structure mirrors the thought clearly and compellingly, the play moves at a quickening pace towards the climax of assassination.

Act Three follows up this theme of one violation's causing another, and through a series of vacillations, each of which reflects at root a broken bond, we see power change hands and evil proliferate till Rome is in chaos and civil war. The movement in this sense resembles the movement in a vortex, and things fly apart. Thus in the first scene Metellus Cimber's excessive servility urges Caesar to be pompous, which in turn precipitates his assassination. Similarly the murder urges Antony's revenge, and in the second scene we see a more radical vacillation as first Brutus and then Antony win over the mob. Brutus in the murder loses appetite, and this is clear first when Antony who is a Fortune-hunger appears, and second when Antony at the leave of Brutus stirs the mob to revenge. And just as in the second act Shakespeare anticipates the movement in the third where one violation will cause another, so in the third act he anticipates the weakening division between Brutus and Cassius in the fourth when they are on Fortune's wheel. The structure here mirrors the thought well. The action logically and coherently follows what has come before, and yet always we are expectant. Authority is strong.

Scene one begins with an instance of the mutual responsibility for disorder in the state--Caesar would not be a wolf if Romans were not sheep--as one broken bond causes another to break. Thus Metellus Cimber's unnatural obsequiousness:

Most high, most mighty, and most puissant Caesar,
Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat
An humble heart,--

(3,1,33-35)

∞ In part causes Caesar's unnatural sternness and pomposity:

If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,
I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.
Know, Caesar doth not wrong,...

(11.45-57)

Again Brutus is a cut above the rest, and he petitions Caesar reasonably.

(11.52-4) But the others including Cassius grovel, which Caesar reacts to by likening himself to the pole star with no fellow in its constancy. Brutus may petition in order to see whether Caesar has disjoined remorse from power, but the others do so merely to justify the murder, and this is clear in their unnatural servility which they use, as earlier Decius uses the temptation of the crown, to provoke Caesar's unnatural ambition. As they set the tone of the petition, the action is out of Brutus' control. And Brutus compromises his idealism in the murder. Though he intends to restore natural order to the republic, he uses the unnatural law of survival; and instead of halting the proliferation of evil, he encourages it by stirring Caesar's friends to an "act of rage". (2,1,176) But again, he is too kind to follow that law to the end. The paradox appears in the middle of this scene where he imagines the conspirators with bloody knives crying, peace and liberty (11.105-10); for Brutus has set loose an appetitive hung^t (11.204-9), but as his natural idealism will not let him follow the law of survival, he is divided from himself, and this division precipitates his fall. He loses illusion in the world, but his nobility will not let him recognize or deal with it as illusion. Antony is the Fortune-hunter who will follow the "fortunes and affairs" of Brutus, and the illusoriness of the Fortune-hunger as a friend is clear throughout in his irony. For instance in this:

Had I as many eyes as thou hast wounds,
Weeping as fast as they stream forth thy blood,
It would become me better than to close
In terms of friendship with thine enemies.
Pardon me, Julius!

(11.200-04)

or in his calling Casca, "my valiant Casca" (1.188), or in his saying to Cassius that he means to join with him:

Therefore I took your hands, but was indeed
Sway'd from the point by looking down on Caesar.
(11.218-19)

Then too the Fortune-hunger uses Nature to secure his rise on the wheel, and thus Antony plays on Brutus' kindness when he says,

I do beseech ye, if you bear me hard,
Now, whilst your purpled hands do reek and smoke,
Fulfil your pleasure....
(11.157-59)

or when he invokes friendship to speak at the funeral:

And am moreover suitor that I may
Produce his body to the market-place,
And in the pulpit, as becomes a friend,
Speak in the order of his funeral.
(11.227-30)

Antony uses Nature to get revenge, which will infect Italy with the custom of unnatural deeds, civil war, the proliferations of evil. Thus the structure of the scene reflects the idea of one broken bond's causing another to break, and too the idea of one man's rising by another's fall. For there is the hint of division and weakness between Brutus and Cassius when Brutus does not see the illusoriness of Antony as a friend:

It shall advantage more than do us wrong.
Cassius. I know not what may fall; I like it not.
(11.242-43)

while on the other side Antony is strong in the vividness of his soliloquy and in the growth of his plot as he concludes this scene. The structure

mirrors the thought, and the hint of weakness on one side and of strength on the other urges us to look forward to what is coming.

Scene two carries these ideas towards a head, and thus the scene begins with the suggestion of Brutus' and Cassius' division as they part the mob. (3,2,3) The mob scene is a perfect correlative for the proliferation of broken bonds. The people, like the citizens in Coriolanus, react to their rulers in kind--if the rulers follow Nature so do the people. And so here when Brutus looses appetite in the state, the mob too sticks to that law; and like the mob in Coriolanus it follows those it thinks its friends, the appetitive Antony, and enacts his will, his revenge. Brutus' confusion where he looses appetite is clear, for he sees no correction for disorder other than murder or suicide:

as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the
same dagger for myself, when it shall please my coun-
try to need my death.

All. Live, Brutus! live! live!...
Let him be Caesar ...Caesar's better parts
Shall be crown'd in Brutus.

(11.46-53)

The mob vacillates in its unrestraint from demanding satisfaction to crowning him, where earlier when they were governed perhaps more reasonably they kept Caesar from the crown. It remains for the appetitive Antony to turn this unrestrained mob to hating Brutus, as the vacillations follow one another. No doubt Antony loves Caesar, but he subverts Nature to Fortune in as far as he uses the show of that love (1.108) and the will (11.146-7) and friendship (1.221) and the whole funeral to promote his revenge and his rise on the wheel. Note the charge he brings against Brutus.

For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel.
Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar lov'd him.
This was the most unkindest cut of all;

For when the noble Caesar saw him stab,
 Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
 Quite vanquish'd him: then burst his mighty heart;
 (11.183-88)

He uses the bonds, and he is unscrupulous in this, reducing the republican ideals to nothing. (1.214) In this way in the scene's structure we see the proliferations of evil, in the vacillations of the mob the widening vortex of civil war and chaos, as one broken bond lets another break. The third scene shows us in epitome the unrestrained appetite in the mob devouring even Caesar's friends. (1.22)

I am Cinna the poet, I am Cinna the poet.
 4 Pleb. Tear him for his bad verses, tear him for his
 bad verses.
 (11.129-31)

The act is a strong one. Shakespeare makes events move rapidly, makes them follow with savage logic and unavoidableness, and thus he writes into the movement of the play a strong fatality.

Fortune largely rules the world of the play now, and the movement of Act Four reflects the movement of the wheel. Far from ridding the world of tyranny, Brutus' plot brings forth another Caesar, another dictator. Thus Antony and Octavius who are united and strong in their ruthlessness rise to power, while Brutus and Cassius fall through doubt and division and delusion. Their division marks the disintegration and fragmentation of Brutus' world, and in this way the act reflects the Boethian idea that when a thing ceases to be one, when it ceases to be in the harmony and accord of Nature which is the way things on earth approach simplicity or One-ness or Truth, it subjects itself to Mutability and multiplicity on earth, and it dies. Bradley thought the quarrel scene dramatically superfluous,¹ but clearly Shakespeare makes it mirror these ideas. The scene gives depth--a bottom--to the tragedy, and I think it the best in the play.

¹ Shakespearean Tragedy, (London, 1905), p.60.

The first scene is a foil for the next two, and Antony and Octavius are strong in following the law of appetite. Again, they ruthlessly subvert Nature to their ends as they damn Antony's nephew and Lepidus' brother and cut off some of Caesar's legacies. Antony and Octavius are united, and yet this is not the one-ness of Nature but the union of two savage Fortune-hunters, each of whom uses the union to his own advantage in a world ruled by the hunt:

we are at the stake,
And bay'd about with many enemies;
(4,1,48-49)

Division always underlies their temporary union, looking forward to Antony and Cleopatra, and this division is clear in their treatment of Lepidus the third triumvir, whom they use as a property (1.40), an ass to bear the load of "divers slanders" (1.20), and whom they will soon dismiss. In following the law of survival of the strongest, in thriving by another's fall, they temporarily rise on the wheel.

Correspondingly, the next two scenes witness not strength but weakness and division. Scene two begins with the note of Brutus' vague doubt and regret. Cassius, he says,

Hath given me some worthy cause to wish
Things done undone;
(4,2,8-9)

Again, Shakespeare throws them together in "hot friendship" to underscore the dissolution and disintegration in their bickering. Thus public matters become personal as the men withdraw from the watching crowd into the tent. The damning of bribes, the republican concern for justice (4,3,1-28), becomes a personal affront. (1.28) This falls into a childish exchange:

Cassius. I am a soldier, I,
Older in practice, abler than yourself
To make conditions.

Brutus. Go to! you are not, Cassius.
 Cassius. I am.
 Brutus. I say you are not.

(4,3,30-34)

and this to name-calling: "Away, slight man!" (1.37) Brutus' weakness lies more explicitly in his pretension--his delusion and his division from his former nobility as the republican man. He condemns Cassius for having an itching palm and for supporting bribes, but his armour of righteousness--his "large honours" and his "I am arm'd so strong in honesty" (11.25-67)--become hollow when we see that he sent to Cassius for gold that he himself would not stoop to raise. Here is the idealist disdaining to be practical, and the hollowness lies in that he would have others be practical that he might save face. Deluded by the illusion of his own honesty, he is smug. (1.105)

When you are over-earnest with your Brutus,
 He'll think your mother chides, and leave you so.

(11.121-22)

They make up their differences, but when they talk strategy Brutus overrules Cassius, and there is an ominous note in the reasoning:

The people 'twixt Philippi and this ground
 Do stand but in a forc'd affection;
 For they have grudg'd us contribution.
 The enemy, marching along by them,
 By them shall make a fuller number up,
 Come on refresh'd, new-added, and encourag'd;

(11.203-08)

They are trying to ride the flood-tide (11.213-23), but as darkness creeps in upon their talks (1.225) their future is nothing bright. Moreover, throughout, Shakespeare punctuates the movement of scene three with images that suggest the disintegration of Brutus' world. Portia's death from impatience and from grief at the strength of Antony is an example. So is the death of Cicero, who earlier mirrored Brutus' republican virtues. (1,2,183-6; 276-80) The second report of Portia's death may be Shakespeare's undeleted first draft,

but then it fits into the pattern of Brutus' self-delusion and smugness, and marks in part his degeneration.¹ Then too, though Brutus generally gets on well with his servants, there is a note of discord here as well (ll.251-4), just as there is in the broken music,

The strings, my lord, are false. (l.290)

and in the ghost, who calls himself Brutus' evil spirit. Authority here is strong, for the movement shows us the characters riding the tides of Fortune, and as one side rises, the other through doubt and division and delusion falls prey to multiplicity and decay.

Thus far the movement of the play is coherent and clear and strong. The fifth act however marks a falling off, and much of its material is simply undigested Plutarch. This is especially true of the first scene, the meeting before the battle. The exchange of taunts, the talk of words and deeds, illusion and truth (5,1,27-47), is static and wooden, as is Cassius' prophetic tale of the eagles and the carrion birds. (ll.77-92) The discussion between Brutus and Cassius on suicide is confused. Brutus professes the philosophy of patience (ll.101-8) and then seems smugly to reject it:

No, Cassius, no: think not, thou noble Roman,
That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome;
He bears too great a mind.

(ll.111-13)

Can Brutus fail to see this contradiction? We wonder; can he really be so blind? If Shakespeare means to show him profoundly inconsistent, he does so lamely, for we simply do not believe. Clearly something must happen between the quarrel in Act Four and Cassius' suicide, but scene one as it stands is undigested material which merely takes up space.

¹Compare Barker, whom J. D. Wilson quotes in his note on lines 4,3,179-93, in the New Shakespeare edition of the play.

Scene three on the other hand is a perfect correlative for the idea that impatience--disorder in the man--defeats itself by letting Time and Infortune triumph in the man and in the world. In the beginning of the scene Cassius is his own enemy:

Myself have to mine own turn'd enemy:
This ensign here of mine was turning back;
I slew the coward,...

(5,3,2-4)

Again, he sees illusory Infortune when he sees what he thinks is Titinius' capture. (11.28-35) And in his impatience he capitulates to Infortune and Time, while the structure of the scene clearly shows that patience--order in the man--would let Infortune reveal itself an illusion and come round into substantial good Fortune in Brutus' victory. As Titinius says,

Did I not meet thy friends, and did not they
Put on my brows this wreath of victory,
And bid me give it thee? Didst thou not hear their shouts?
Alas, thou hast misconstrued every thing.

(11.81-84)

Disorder in the man lets Time triumph. (11.23-5; 63) We also see in the scene how disorder in Cassius lets Mutability and multiplicity triumph over Brutus--how Cassius in a sense qualifies and even defeats the high ideal of Brutus' republicanism. Brutus wins his battle with Octavius Caesar, but Cassius' loss to Antony makes Brutus fight again (1.110), and this finally defeats him. But while this scene epitomizes in part the whole play, the following two scenes again are lame and confused. The proclaiming of names about the field (5,4) bears some connection to the theme of the disintegration and fragmentation of Brutus' world--but connection undeveloped, repetitious, and superficial. And in scene five we are at a loss to know how to take Brutus.¹ Does Shakes-

¹Barker, *op.cit.*, II, pp. 358-60. J. F. Danby, Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature, pp. 142-6.

peare mean to show him dignified and honorable and noble, or deluded and pretentious?

I shall have glory by this losing day
More than Octavius and Mark Antony
By this vile conquest shall attain unto.

(5,5,36-38)

What is this glory, we wonder, when two tyrants have defeated the republic? Brutus asks Strato to hold the sword, mentioning the "smatch of honour" as if it were a qualification, and his pretence seems undiminished. Strato's judgment that only Brutus has honor by his death, rings hollow. Something is missing--some insight by Brutus into himself, some clearer delineation of his character--that would make Antony's words (11.68-75), which cannot possibly be ironic, a more convincing summary.

But Julius Caesar is a good play, because apart from Act Five, Shakespeare finds the right correlative for the action and the thought and because he infuses the movement of the play with a strong sense of logic and unavoidableness which quickens our expectation. Consider how well he pares down and focuses his material for instance in acts three and four to make the structure of the scenes, the action, mirror the rapid proliferation of unnatural acts and the disintegration of Brutus' world as he subjects himself to Mutability, so that we see the one-ness in himself and in the republic fall into multiplicity and discord. Then too, as I have said, even in Act Five Shakespeare finds in part the right correlative for the thought when he shows disorder in Cassius' state of man letting Infortune and multiplicity triumph. The action of the play is simple and direct, because even where Shakespeare develops a scene in a pattern-antithesis, he prunes and shapes his material to give it embodiment and energy and life. Authority depends in other words not only on

all the material's having significance, but on its having the right form, the right shape, the right force. In a sentence all the words must be the right words with the right significance, but for the sentence to have authority they must also have the right order. As an obvious example take the first sentence in Conrad's The Nigger of the 'Narcissus':

Mr. Baker, chief mate of the ship 'Narcissus,' stepped
in one stride out of his lighted cabin into the darkness
of the quarter-deck.

If you reshape that sentence, though all its significant parts remain, it will lose authority. In both Richard II and Julius Caesar Shakespeare writes partly about undramatic characters. Richard is weak and self-pitying; Brutus is earnest, pensive, even phlegmatic. But where Shakespeare lets Richard's weakness eat away at the movement of the play so that, although the material has significance, we are bogged down at times and bored; in Julius Caesar he never lets Brutus' pensiveness do the same. Thus he caps Brutus' soliloquy with a metaphor which catches us up and drives us forward in its decisiveness:

And therefore think him as a serpent's egg,
Which, hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,
And kill him in the shell.

(2,1,32-34)

Thus he pours into the quiet of Brutus' private life at the end of Act Four a sense of evil and foreboding in the broken music and in the ghost. This is Shakespeare shaping and pointing his material to make the movement of his scenes compelling, and to give his play authority.

CHAPTER III

KING LEAR

Many of Shakespeare's tragedies focus on the decay of an old order, the growth of a new. The old order is often rooted in the bonds of kind, Nature, but often it has grown corrupt so that it opens the way for the new order which is more rationalistic, more cunning, more appetitive. Richard II and Julius Caesar, Hamlet and Macbeth, all in some degree focus on this change. In Richard II we see the decline of an old medieval monarchy and the growth of a new monarchy based on cunning and strength, in Julius Caesar the decline of a republic, the growth of dictatorship. The comedies and romances too are about this change, and thus in As You Like It and The Tempest the old natural order at first falls to the appetitive new and at last re-establishes itself by purging its weakness, as Duke Senior purges himself of corruption and falsehood in the forest, and also in part by using strength to defeat strength, as Prospero puts his foot on Antonio's neck. The comedies and romances in this way focus on the decline and regeneration of the old order; the tragedies focus more simply on the old order's fall, for even though many of the tragedies end with the old order's reasserting itself, in each case the hero, the character of primary interest, dies. King Lear in this sense is the tragedy of the old order.¹

Again as Danby says, the basic antithesis in Lear (1605) is between the natural and the unnatural, the divine Nature of Cordelia and the appetitive

¹ R. B. Heilman, This Great Stage (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1948) p. 279. References are to the Arden Lear, edited by K. Muir (London, 1955)

Nature of Edmund--the play is fully in the medieval tradition. Lear himself represents the old order which is based on the bonds of heredity or of kind, and in the first scene he means to invoke those bonds, that he may make

Nature and Fortune "atone" in the kingdom:

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

(1,1,51-53)

In this same way, Gloucester wants his children to observe the bonds that tie son to father, that the family may endure. But Lear is a rash proud tyrannical old man who has little self-knowledge, Gloucester a self-indulgent old lecher--both qualify and corrupt the divine Nature in themselves--the one in the division of the kingdom, the other in adultery--and both nurture the appetitive Nature who will work their deaths. Thus although Lear seeks the bonds of love, that he may make Fortune follow Nature, he does so in such a way that in fact he makes Nature follow Fortune. This is particularly clear when he puts the question to Cordelia:

what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters?

(1,1,85-86)

He wants love and kindness, for he means to "set my rest on her kind nursery". Her "nursery" means her caring, but more important, her children¹--his kingly line through her. Through her he seeks the continuance in generation that will make his line endure. But pride and rashness will not let him distinguish the unnatural from the natural, the false from the true, and as Gloucester accepts the appetitive Edmund and rejects the kind Edgar, Lear accepts Goneril and Regan who use Nature--the illusion of love--to get Fortune, and rejects Cordelia whose love is real.

¹The OED cites this line in Lear for the primary meaning of nursery--fosterage or breeding. The secondary meaning, a place given up to infants and their nurse, occurs as early as 1499, and with this meaning Shakespeare was familiar as well. The OED cites Cymbeline, 1,1,59.

In this and in the banishing of the good counsellor Kent, Lear supports evil and undermines Nature and truth, and like the Gloucester household, the kingdom becomes a world upside down. The rapaciousness of the unnatural forces is notable, and as soon as this force is loosed it divides and preys on itself--the rumored war between Albany and Cornwall (2,1,11)--much as appetite in Edmund and the sisters causes them to deceive and murder one another. (5,1,55-69) As in the Boece when a thing ceases to be one it perishes, and so when Lear divides, and falsely divides, his kingdom and when Gloucester violates his marriage and then prefers the bastard to the kind son, both loose Mutability and multiplicity and appetite in the world, and instead of things on earth atoning together, they fall into discord and division and death.

The play focuses on the disintegration and fragmentation of Lear's world and of himself. In as far as he encourages and does not control the unnatural Fortune-hunters, he lets appetite rule and subjects himself to extreme Infortune--the storm on the barren heath. In this way the first two acts move rapidly towards the storm and the desert world outside the gates of society. Lear loses control over the unnatural when he gives away the reality of power and keeps only the additions, the illusion:

Only we shall retain
The name and all th' addition to a king; the sway,
Revenue, execution of the rest,
Beloved sons, be yours:

(1,1,135-38)

But he still thinks himself a king, still knows himself only as a king; and when Cornwall and Goneril and Regan circumscribe him he perceives the illusoriness of himself as king, the illusoriness of the role he has known himself in, and he feels himself and his world falling apart. Similarly, though

he has cursed the reality of love in Cordelia (1,4,103-20) and rewarded the illusory loves of Goneril and Regan, he still thinks himself a kind father, and when the evil daughters check and confine his "dotage" he perceives the illusoriness of himself here too where he has known himself, and he feels his world falling to pieces:¹

- Lear. Does any here know me? This is not Lear:
Does Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, his discernings
Are lethargied--Ha! waking? 'tis not so.
Who is it that can tell me who I am?
- Fool. Lear's shadow.
- Lear. I would learn that; for by the marks of sovereignty,
knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded
I had daughters.
- Fool. Which they will make an obedient father....
(1,4,234-43)

Shakespeare focuses on this locus of the antithesis of natural and unnatural--self-knowledge. Lear has known himself as a king and as a father, but he falsifies both these roles so that he becomes unnatural in them, and their "truths" in part become illusion. Again Nature is truth, Fortune illusion, and so as Lear subjects himself to extreme Infortune in the first acts of the play he is stripped of the illusion of what he is, and in a sense he sees what he is in truth, in Nature. Recall again the passages in Boethius, where self-knowledge is lost and man becomes a beast when he cleaves to the superfluity of Fortune, and where it is gained and man becomes divine when he understands "proper goodes", the "eende of thynges", and the true government by which the world is governed.²

And certes alle othere thynges been apayed of hir owene
beautes, but ye men that ben semblable to God by your
resonable thought, desiren to apparailen your excellent
kynde of the loweste thynges; ne ye undirstanden nat how

¹ Compare Troilus and Cresside, 5,1,131ff., where Troilus likewise insists that according to reason what is happening cannot be happening, and where he experiences embittering disillusion.

² I, pr. 6; II, pr. 5. See R. K. Presson, "Boethius, King Lear, and 'Maystresse Philosophie'" J.E.G.P. (1965) pp. 406-24. Presson's article has helped me throughout this chapter.

greet a wrong ye don to your creatour....For yif that al the good of every thyng be more precyous than is thilke thyng whos that the good es, syn ye demen that the fowleste thynges ben your goodes, thanne submitten ye and putten yourselven undir the fouleste thynges by your estimacioun; and certes this betydeth nat withouten your desert. For certes swich is the condicioun of all mankynde, that oonly whan it hath knowynge of itself, thanne passeth it in noblesse alle othere thynges; and whan it forletith the knowynge of itself thanne it is brought bynethen alle beestes.

(II,pr.5, 132-54)

Lear after he divides the kingdom and confines his power to exhibition (1,2,25) knows himself by false external things--the hundred knights, the illusory "words of love", the respect and dignity he expects from others.¹ Kent urges Lear to "reserve his state", but even when Lear banishes him, Kent remains the natural friend and subject and continues to recognize Lear's "authority" (1,4,30-2), because for Kent Lear is still the king. To Cornwall, the evil daughters, and Oswald, Lear has no power and therefore no authority, and they systematically strip him of his hundred knights, of respect and dignity in himself and in his servants (2,2,129-47; 2,4,22-4), and of the role of king:

Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away! Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again, and must be us'd
With checks as flatteries, when they are seen abus'd.
(1,3,17-21)

O, Sir! you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine: you should be rul'd and led
By some discretion that discern your state
Better than you yourself.
(2,4,147-51)

Lear roots himself in these unstable external things, and knows himself as a man only in as far as he sees about himself some superfluity:

O! reason not the need; our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's.
(2,4,266-69)

¹On dignity, see Boece, III, pr.4, met.4.

Unadorned Nature he thinks is bestial, appetitive. He is wrong here, even though the wicked daughters in striping him are more wrong than he is. But Infortune by showing him the truth about himself, the truth about his friends,¹ can show him the truth about Nature and lead him upwards into the substantial good Fortune of self-knowledge; and this too is implied in Lear's words:

But for true need,--
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!--
(2,4,272-73)

True need is, imaginatively, patience, and as in Boethius, patience is self-knowledge when man knows the root of his being in the true government by which the world is governed, in the simplicity of the divine thought, in One-ness, in Truth. (I,pr.6; IV,pr.6) But the idea of Lear's coming to self-knowledge in patience exists in Act Two, scene four, primarily as a foil, for when he perceives the illusoriness of those things wherein he has known himself, he rages against the collapse of his world, and in his pride he curses his daughters. And so the scene ends with the sound of the storm--the cataclysm in Nature, the image of Infortune and of impatience and of madness--and with the idea of the disintegration and fragmentation of himself:

I have full cause of weeping, but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws
Or ere I'll weep. O Fool! I shall go mad.
(2,4,286-88)

He does not come to patience and self-knowledge here; he goes mad.

Lear is the king, but he divides the kingdom and gives up the rule, and in the ensuing upside down world he is powerless, substanceless--Lear's shadow. In his false reasoning he mistakes the false for the true, appetite and self-interest for love, and Fortune for Nature, and he knows himself

¹Boece, II, pr.8.

only in hollow mutable earthly things and not in eternal things and in God. Goneril and Regan in their appetitiveness equate love and Fortune--they weigh their love with what Lear is able to give--and in his false reasoning over his hundred knights he too weighs love:

...not being the worst
 Stands in some rank of praise. I'll go with thee [Goneril]:
 Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
 And thou art twice her love.

(2,4,259-62)

This is false reason because it looks not upward to the spiritual or eternal but downward to earthly self-interest--it is kin to sensuality. And just this false reason Lear must lose in order to get self-knowledge and to see Truth. Recall the passage in Montaigne, who wants to trample human pride under foot, "to make them [man] feel the emptiness, vacuity, and no worth of man; and violently to pull out of their hands the silly weapons of their reason".¹ This happens to Lear in the storm, when Infortune strips him of his pride and reason, which have become false guides, useful only in weighing the low things of earth, and gives him a kind of self-knowledge and insight into the world upside down.

Man gains self-knowledge through madness in several other of Shakespeare's plays, in particular The Tempest (above), A Midsummer Night's Dream, Hamlet and Antony and Cleopatra, and it is perhaps worth looking briefly at Antony and Cleopatra where the theme is fully developed. Antony vacillates between Egypt and Rome, and likewise he vacillates between a Roman self in which he

¹Muir quotes from the Apology for Raymond Sebonde in an appendix of his Arden edition. See also Heilman's chapters on reason in madness and madness in reason, op.cit., pp. 173-253. I am generally indebted throughout this chapter to Heilman's and Danby's studies of Lear. For other references to Montaigne see G. C. Taylor's Shakespeare's Debt to Montaigne, (Cambridge, Mass., 1925). See G. W. Knight, The Shakespearian Tempest and The Wheel of Fire; see also the relevant passages on wisdom and folly in Ecclesiastes.

is a soldier - politician, big-minded and frank and bold, and an Egyptian self in which he is the measureless lover:

Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
Of the rang'd empire fall! Here is my space,
Kingdoms are clay:

(1,1,33-35)

But there is a strong line of satire in the play which exposes first the one pose and then the other as unreal. For instance Philo tells us that Antony's Egyptian pose is the "dotage of our general" (1,1,1), and even Cleopatra sees through Antony when he claims to be the careless lover:

Let Rome in Tiber melt....

Cleopatra. Excellent falsehood!

(1,1,33-40)

On the other hand when Antony plays the frank-tongued Roman, Enobarbus mocks him. (1,2,128-75) Neither self is very real. First Antony tries to keep the two poses separate: he makes a politic marriage in Rome but keeps his "pleasure" in the east. (2,3,37-9) Then he tries to unite them at Actium, fighting for the world with Cleopatra at his side. But he loses both selves, first the Roman when he loses the sea-fight (3,11,7-21), and then the Egyptian when he thinks Cleopatra has betrayed him "to the very heart of loss". (4,12,29) And he goes mad:¹

Help me, my women! O, he's more mad
Than Telamon for his shield, the board of Thessaly
Was never so emboss'd.

(4,13,1-3)

Indeed madness dogs him from Actium on. (3,13,30-7; 195-200)

¹ See E. M. Waith, The Herculean Hero (London, 1962) pp. 112-21, and M. Charney, Shakespeare's Roman Plays (Cambridge, Mass., 1961) p. 141. See also, generally, J. F. Danby, "Shakespearean Dialectic", Scrutiny, XVI, pp. 196-213. References are to the Arden Antony and Cleopatra, edited by M. R. Ridley (London, 1954).

Madness for Antony is not the pathological madness of Lady Macbeth but rather the distempered ragings of Hercules, of Ajax Telamon, or of Lear.

As Enobarbus says,

Now he'll outstare the lightning; to be furious
Is to be frighted out of fear, and in that mood
The dove will peck the estridge;
(3,13,195-97)

After Actium he feels that he has "left himself" (3,11,7-20)--that he has violated the integrity of his identity and helped it to disintegrate--and his madness or distemper or raging grows out of this sense of the disintegration of himself. Indeed he even seeks a new identity through his descendency from Hercules furens:

The shirt of Nessus is upon me, teach me,
Alcides, thou mine ancestor, thy rage....
(4,12,43-44)

O that I were
Upon the hill of Basan, to outroar
The horned herd, for I have savage cause,...
(3,13,126-28)

And as in Lear, madness culminates in an elliptical, imaginative recognition of the insubstantialness of all poses, of Antony himself:

...That which is now a horse, even with a thought
The rack dislimns, and makes it indistinct
As water is in water....
My good knave Eros, now thy captain is
Even such a body: here I am Antony,
Yet cannot hold this visible shape,
(4,14,9-14)

This is like Prospero's speech on life the fading pageant, and it marks Antony's gain in self-knowledge--knowledge of the impermanence of earthly things, of earthly poses. Thus it allows for Antony's final apotheosis in Cleopatra's dream, which is, as she says, more real than shadows--more real than insubstantial mutable things. (5,3,96-100)

In Lear, too, madness gives man insight into the illusoriness of low things, leads him to self-knowledge in the recognition of his unregenerate self, and shows him a true picture of society in the world upside down. The development of this theme is imaginative. The storm is a correlative for Infortune which springs from the violations of Nature, and for madness--the kingdoms of the world and of man come together--and so as soon as the storm begins Lear is, imaginatively, in a state of madness, even though his elliptical statements do not begin till he meets Poor Tom. His first insight in the storm is into the illusory value of earthly things:

Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
And can make vile things precious.

(3,2,69-71)

Earlier he based his sense of how important he was, and of how much higher he was than a beast, on the superfluity of Fortune; here he begins to see that this was wrong, that Fortune is illusion. He also sees that a king has much in common with poor naked wretches, and the storm, his madness, gives him insight into his mistake:

Take physic, Pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the Heavens more just.

(3,4,33-36)

Further insight comes when he meets Edgar. Edgar of course is a surrogate, whom Infortune which (here as before) appears as a hunt (2,3,3) has also stripped of his identity in as far as he has based that identity on the gifts of Fortune, and made to shift in a madman's rags in order to "preserve" himself. (2,3,6) Edgar is generally a foil, for he roots his real identity on patience while Lear does not. But in the storm Lear identifies with Edgar disguised as Poor Tom:

Didst thou give all to thy daughters?
And art thou come to this?

(3,4,48-49)

Edgar describes himself as a courtier who under a groomed and pomaded and richly accoutred exterior concealed an appetitive animal heart--"hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey" (3,4,95)--and who now is led by the fiend to lacerate and mortify his flesh. (3,4,50-62) Lear identifies with this picture of falseness and bestiality--again, when man knows himself by Fortune's gifts he becomes lower than a beast¹--and in his madness he has insight into his guilt:

Is it the fashion that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters.

(3,4,72-75)

There is a kind of imaginative self-knowledge in his knowing that he begot the evil daughters--that in his rash ruling and in his dividing the kingdom and in his cursing Cordelia, his own sins against Nature, like Gloucester's, gave rise to the unnatural daughters. And there is a kind of insight into man in Lear's image of the poor bare forked animal, though guilt taints this insight so that he thinks he captures all man in what is truly an image of unregenerate man. The madness carries into the next act, and again Lear gains a kind of self-knowledge:

They flattered me like a dog, and told me I had the white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were there. To say "ay" and "no" to every thing that I said! "Ay" and "no" too was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once and the wind to make me chatter, when the thunder would not peace at my bidding, there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their words; they told me I was every thing: 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof.

(4,6,97-108)

¹See Presson here, *op.cit.*, pp. 415-6, who cites a number of parallels, in particular one from the *Boece*, IV, pr.3, 93-127. Compare generally the whole imaginative basis of Henryson's fables.

Imaginatively, he knows his folly and his common humanity. Similarly he sees a clear picture of the world upside down which adultery and falseness, images of the proliferation of evil, typify. (4,6,111-77)

Look with thine ears: see how yond justice rails upon
yond simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: change places,
and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the
thief?

(4,6,152-56)

In Antony and Cleopatra the madness purifies, and madness in a sense purifies and chastens Lear too, just as blindness leads Gloucester to insight (3,7,90) repentance (4,1,64-71) and even a kind of patience. (4,6,75-9) Infortune here as before gives man knowledge of himself and of his friends, and it can lead him towards the perception of the simplicity of the divine thought. But before we consider this theme of regeneration in Lear, perhaps we should consider the gods of the play and their relationship to man. Albany and Edgar think the gods actively deal out justice in the world (4,2,80; 5,3,170); others like Gloucester when he loses his eyes (4,1,35) think differently, according to their experience. But it is notable that the gods in the play never act independently, never simply reward or punish. For instance they do not cause the storm to punish the bad and reward the good, as Lear at first thinks. (3,2,49-60) Man--in particular Lear, his evil daughters, and Cornwall--causes the storm by turning the world and himself upside down. The gods do not put out Gloucester's eyes (5,3,170), nor do they finally punish Goneril and Regan with death. When Gloucester violates the bonds of Nature he loses appetite, and appetite like the evil sisters eats up all around it and finally devours itself:

Your [Lear's] eldest daughters have fordone themselves,
And desperately are dead.

(5,3,291-92)

But characters keep referring to the gods, which suggest that man does have some relationship to the eternal. Man is the agent, and this is particularly clear in the image of Cordelia's shaking the "holy water from her heavenly eyes" (4,3,31), and in Lear's telling kings to give the superflux to the poor, for in doing so they will show the heavens more just. When the king is just he helps infuse the world with that quality, just as the knight infuses the world of the Franklin's Tale with truth; when the king is unjust the world becomes diabolical. Perhaps it is easier to see what Shakespeare has in mind if we think of the gods not in terms of something like the Greek pantheon but in terms of Boethius. When the many diverse things on earth atone in Nature's "marriages" then these things approach or perceive or partake of one-ness and of what Lady Philosophy calls the simplicity of the divine thought, and man moves according to Nature's marriages into the final harmony of comedy. But when these many things do not hold together in marriage, then they divide and multiply, and for man there is no one-ness but only diversity and discord and death, which conclude tragedy.

The action of the play reflects these ideas. There is no deus ex machina, nothing gratuitous, and to think that Cordelia's death is gratuitous is to bring to the play an idea of the gods that is not the play's own. To say that her death is unjust is likewise inadequate. Shakespeare shows us several times that the idea of the heavens as independent justicers is wrong. Consider the way irony kicks the props out from under Albany's reflections on Cornwall's death, and at the same time out from under his idea of the gods as independent justicers:

This shows you are above,
 You justicers, that these our nether crimes
 So speedily can venge! But, O poor Gloucester!
 Lost he his other eye?

Messenger. Both, both, my Lord. (4,2,78-81)

and short--and the appetite her father and Gloucester let loose does not burn itself out without violently pursuing its own interest long enough to burn up much of what stands in its way as well. (5,1,68-9) Thus the Nature of Edmund is diabolical, and it makes him and Goneril and Regan beasts (5,1,57), just as when Lear sees this Nature dominant he sees all men as beasts; and so it brings the world to naught. Contrarily the Nature of Cordelia is god-like--Lear sees her as a soul in bliss--because through this Nature lies regeneration and one-ness and Truth. As in The Tempest man must control appetite and evil for things on earth to endure in harmony and accord.

Edgar and Cordelia are kind children,¹ and through them there is an upward movement towards regeneration which catches up Lear's progress towards self-knowledge in madness, and Gloucester's towards insight in blindness. Edgar leads his father on a kind of pilgrimage towards patience, Truth. (5,3,196) Gloucester has fallen into despair--he thinks of man as a fly in the hand of a wanton boy--and he wants to kill himself. Suicide, again, capitulates to Time and Infortune, where patience lets them come full-circle into continuance in change. Edgar tries to convince Gloucester that his life is a "miracle", that despair is the devil's work, that patience is all (4,6,55-80); and in part he succeeds:

henceforth I'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself
"Enough, enough," and die. That thing you speak of
I took it for a man; often 'twould say
"The Fiend, the Fiend": he led me to that place.

(4,6,75-79)

¹This interpretation of the play generally focuses sharply on Lear. I see Lear as the focus, and all other characters seem to me to reflect, to highlight, to support, aspects of him in his dilemma. Perhaps this approach neglects the other characters somewhat; Lear is the part in which we can see the whole. But more important, like Prospero, Lear seems to me the whole, of which the various parts are extensions.

Edgar's life itself is a pilgrimage of regeneration and patience towards Truth. Thus he moves from Poor Tom to the peasant (4,6), to the gentleman (5,1), to the champion, and finally to himself again where he helps purge evil and bring order to the land.¹ Thus he moves from Infortune to the harmony of Nature as he fulfils Nature's ideal of continuance in change and as he grounds himself in patience, in eternal things, in Truth. Similarly Cordelia as the kind daughter takes her father "out of the grave" (4,7,45), and he enjoys rebirth and the harmony of music, and comes to a kind of patience, which is clear in his words on the way to prison, where he and she will²

...take upon's the mystery of things,
As if we were Gods' spies: and we'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones
That ebb and flow by th' moon.

(5,3,16-19)

Despite this upward movement, neither Gloucester nor Lear entirely comes to patience. Shakespeare inherits from the tale of the Paphlagonian King in Sidney's Arcadia a juxtaposed patience and despair, where the son Leonatus urges patience but where despair and guilt finally kill the old king. Gloucester when he has reached a kind of patience, immediately meets Lear, the "ruined piece of Nature"; and Gloucester's perception that the world like Lear will "wear out to naught" (4,6,137) makes him beg death of the gods and then of Oswald, and makes him wish he were mad, that he might lose the knowledge of himself. (4,6,128; 232; 283) Later the lost battle again makes him despair;

¹Danby, Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature, p. 190. The pilgrim as champion is a familiar medieval concept. See above. Generally, see D. M. Bevington, From Mankind to Marlowe (Cambridge, Mass., 1962) pp. 152-5, on the two plots; And I. Ribner, Patterns in Shakespearean Tragedy, (London, 1960) pp. 131-5, on Gloucester's guilt.

²Muir's "Gods' spies" is doubtful. There is no apostrophe in Folio or Quarto editions of the play.

No further, sir; a man may rot even here. (5,2,8)

And even after Edgar reveals himself, he dies between grief and joy--his heart "bursts smilingly". The oxymoron indicates that in death Gloucester is not entirely reconciled. Likewise Lear comes only to a patience grounded on Cordelia, and when she dies he rages against the heavens and against life:

Howl, howl, howl! O! you are men of stones:
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever.
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She's dead as earth.

(5,3,257-61)

In her death he sees the end of the world and of all life--the horror of the "promised end" where all things fall and cease--just as in her life he sees the redemption from all sorrow. (5,3,263-7) And this is right if what I have said about the relationship of man to the gods, of time to the eternal, is true:

Thanne ryght swich comparysoun as is of...thing that ys
engendrid to thing that is, and of tyme to eternite,
and of the cercle to the centre; ryght so is the ordre of
moevable destyne to the stable symplite of purveaunce.
(Boece, IV,pr.6, 139-45)

For alive, she represents for him continuance in change, his movement in harmony and accord; and conversely her death means to him that he is going to fall to Time and multiplicity and decay in life, and to chaos or hell in death. Five times he vacillates in thinking her alive and dead, but she is dead and in the end he dies too--his heart bursts--and if he thinks she lives at that moment it is only one more cruel irony. In The Tragedy of King Lear, though the world is generally freed from evil, things end in a general woe when father and child die.

The play generally breaks down into three movements, and the first encompasses the first two acts where Lear turns the kingdom and the family upside

down, and where the appetitive creatures over whom he loses control systematically strip him of respect and dignity and all those things where he has known himself, and expose him to Infortune in the storm. Thus the first scene shows him banishing truth and cleaving to illusion, cursing the natural and rewarding the unnatural, and the following scenes show his rapid descent to the bottom of the wheel. The movement develops in a pattern - antithesis as well as in a plot - conflict however, and in this way the Gloucester plot is a chorus in which Edmund's words on Nature and on determinism, the "foppery of the world", give us insight into those themes in the play by developing a pattern; and his plot catches up imaginatively the action of the evil daughters, so that he helps turn the wheel on which Edgar and Lear are falling. The movement is compelling and complete. Shakespeare finds the right situations to mirror his ideas, and he develops those situations fully. Authority is strong.

The first scene begins with a note of the violations of Nature--Lear's division of the kingdom, Gloucester's adultery (1.1.1-25)--and in what follows, as I have said, we see Lear turning the world upside down. Again, he asks for love, kindness, but he asks in such a way that he puts Nature under Fortune (1.1.85-6), and while Goneril and Regan respond by giving him the illusion of love (1.1.55-76), Cordelia cannot respond--cannot profess her love simply to gain the opulent third, because that would subordinate her love to Fortune, equate it with the illusory loves of her sisters--for her love is natural and true. (1.1.96-104) Nature and Fortune, truth and illusion, are upside down in Lear, and his rewarding Goneril and Regan and cursing Cordelia clearly reflects this upside down order in the kingdom and in man:

Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
 Propinquity and property of blood,
 And as a stranger to my heart and me
 Hold thee from this for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
 Or he that makes his generation messes

To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
 Be as well neighbor'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
 As thou my sometime daughter.

(11.113-20)

Lear confuses the natural and the unnatural as his words here on the "barbarous Scythian" indicate. Likewise Lear banishes Kent and dismisses France without a blessing, both of whom recognize truth and Nature, and cleaves to Burgundy whose love is appetitive (11.248-65) The scene clearly reflects Lear's turning the world upside down, his violating the "marriages" as King and father that keep the world in order, and simultaneously his losing control over the forces of unnaturalness; for he gives the reality of power to the false characters and keeps only the illusion of power for himself:

I do invest you jointly with my power,
 Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
 That troop with majesty. Ourself, by monthly course,
 With reservation of an hundred knights
 By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
 Make with you by due turn. Only we shall retain
 The name and all th' addition to a king:...

(11.130-36)

Kent captures in an epitome the self-destroying chaos Lear is letting loose:

Kill thy physician, and thy fee bestow
 Upon the foul disease.

(11.163-64)

For the scene closes with Goneril and Regan already plotting against their father--"we must do something, and i' th' heat." (1.308)

In the world upside down appetite and self-interest emerge, and this is clear in the transition from scene one to scene two where Edmund catches up the spirit of Goneril and Regan as he drives forward his plot against father and brother. Edmund is a bold, shrewd, even attractive figure beside his father who is something of an old fool here, and this shift in point of view too reflects the turning of the world upside down through the old order's slackness. The movement develops by pattern as well as by simple straight-

forward plot. Edmund's invocation of the appetitive Nature elaborates on what we have seen of the spirit of the evil sisters, particularly by emphasizing the heavy sexuality of the unnatural,

...Who in the lusty stealth of nature take
 More composition and fierce quality
 Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
 Go to th' creating a whole tribe of fops,
 Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well then,
 Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
 (1,2,11-16)

just as his speech on self-determinism develops the idea of the correspondence between man and the gods.

When man turns the world upside down, unless he rules ruthlessly he exposes himself to the appetite of Infortune, strips himself of Fortune's gifts; and the action of the play shows just this happening to Lear. As I have said, Lear knows himself only in the illusory things of Fortune, and the rest of this movement shows him at once losing the things he has identified himself with, and sensing himself and his world falling to pieces. Kent is a foil. Infortune takes from him his outward marks of identity, his beard; but his real self is secure in patience and in Nature, and he remains the loyal servant. (1,4,4-7) Similarly, as Kent is the natural man, Lear's knowledge of himself as king, in as far as that knowledge depends on respect from others, is secure in Kent--Kent recognizes his "authority". (1,4,29-32) But Lear has given up the power of the kingship to appetitive figures, and in the world upside down his knowledge of himself through the respect of others is not secure--to Goneril he is an "idle old man", and to Oswald he is merely "my Lady's father". (1,4,84) The Fool catches up the identity theme in his choric words on wisdom and folly in the world upside down:

Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care
for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure. I
am better than thou art now; I am a Fool, thou art no-
thing.

(1,4,199-202)

Identity in the disordered world is based on Fortune. Infortune strips away the illusions of Fortune: when Lear had wealth Goneril pretended to love him but when he is poor she shows him the illusoriness of her love which can focus only on riches (1,4,227), and the illusoriness of himself as a king. (11.214-22) But he has known himself only in these roles of father and king (11.214-22), and here they begin to prove hollow, "nothing", together with the authority and dignity that he had in his hundred knights, whom Goneril calls a disordered debauched rabble. (11,233-65) He gives her his curse, further undermining himself as a kind father, and she dismisses half his knights, which, as he sees it, cuts away part of himself:

...I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever.

(1,4,318-19)

He rushes off to Regan, thinking he is secure in her, but through the Fool (1,5,14-8) we look forward only to more loss and the disintegration of himself.

Punctuating this movement which reflects the idea of the rise of Infortune in the disordered world and the corresponding stripping of Lear's knowledge of himself in external things, is the disorder in the Gloucester household and the stripping of Edgar who loses even his name. (2,3,21) Edgar takes the outward form of man brought near to beast, to preserve "himself" from the hunt, and this looks forward to Lear in the storm. Lear descends farther on the wheel as Regan takes away more of his accoutrements wherein he knew and valued himself, and so the movement continues to reflect the idea that in the disordered world, where a man does not know himself in

Nature and patience, his world disintegrates and he falls to Infortune and madness. (Madness is in a sense the fragmentation of the self, where the self loses its stability in the one-ness of patience or self-knowledge.) Particularly the movement develops the theme of servant-master relationships, for as Act Two, scene two, shows, the servant in part defines the master; and as Lear knows himself by the respect and dignity others show him both in himself and in his servants, when his servant is abused he feels himself abused and his world falling apart. Kent illustrates how the servant defines the master. In Act One he tries to act as Lear's counsellor, and contrarily, here he describes how Oswald defines his master:

Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain
Which are too intrinse t'unloose; smooth every passion
That in the natures of their lords rebel;
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;

(2,2,74-78)

But in the world upside down the unnatural servant is rewarded, the natural punished--Infortune visits Nature--and the stocking of the servant Kent further strips respect from the master Lear. As Lear says,

...'tis worse than murther,
To do upon respect such violent outrage.

(2,4,23-24)

Respect is a gift of Fortune,¹ and Lear has known himself in the respect others show him; and so again he feels himself falling apart and at the same time his madness, hysterica passio, growing upon him. (2,4,55-8) He tries to excuse Regan's slights to himself as a king (2,4,101-15) and he tries to cleave to his picture of himself as an honored father (2,4,154-7), for he thinks that his self as he knows it through his "pleasures", "additions", and "train", is secure with Regan. (2,4,172-80) When he perceives that she is

¹ Boece, III, pr.4, met.4.

like Goneril and when the two of them strip him of his hundred knights down to the last one, the only vestige he has left wherein he knows himself is his pride, his manhood, his anger in revenge. (2,4,274-86) But in revenge he is powerless, and as he is on the verge of tears his pride too in a sense is pulled away, and he feels himself cracking to pieces:

You think I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep: [Storm and Tempest]
I have full cause of weeping, but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws
Or ere I'll weep. O Fool! I shall go mad.

(2,4,284-88)

He runs out into the storm and the heath. The movement clearly develops the idea that violations of Nature turn the world upside down, that subsequent Infortune strips man to what he is in Nature,¹ and that as far as he knows himself in the low external things of earth and not in Nature and in truth he underwrites mutability, and his world and himself disintegrate and fragment. The movement is fully developed, and yet the action is powerful and rapid, and always we are expectant. Lear's passion mightily compels our attention; his energy and vitality catch us up and sweep us along.

The third act which makes up the next movement grows necessarily and naturally out of what has come before, for as in As You Like It and The Tempest, when the world is upside down man must leave the court and retreat to Nature in desert places.² This second movement reflects this idea by showing us Lear on the heath. Again the development is by pattern and by straight forward plot, and the second, fourth, and sixth scenes develop elliptically and

¹That is, as in Boethius, whether the divine Nature controls the appetitive, or whether the hierarchy in him is the other way round.

²And the same two possibilities in Nature (see previous note) exist for Prospero on the island and for the lovers in the forest of Arden.

poetically, while the third, fifth, and seventh mark in compressed prose Gloucester's quickdescent. But where in the first movement the pattern in Edmund and the Fool and Edgar merely points and embellishes the dominant progress of the plot-conflict around Lear, here in the second the choric pattern of Lear's meeting and trying to understand Nature dominates, and the plot of Edmund against his father simply punctuates Lear's long struggle, with another downward plunge. The first two acts of the play are a long descending movement; the third act presents three violent chaotic pictures of Lear at the bottom of the wheel, and points these pictures with Gloucester's rapid fall.

The second movement begins with the hope of righting the world--the division of Albany and Cornwall, the force of Cordelia and France, the kindness of Kent (3,1,19-49)--but the storm and the mad Lear immediately swallow this up, and we are swept along by his meeting and trying to understand this cataclysm in Nature. He meets the storm in all his pride, and he thinks it an instrument of divine justice. Thus at first he bids the storm to correct and punish evil, and in his pride he tries to "out-storm" the wind and rain:

Contending with the fretful elements;
 Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
 Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,
 That things might change or cease;...
 Strives in his little world of man to out-storm
 The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.

(3,1,4-11)

He invokes the storm to destroy the moulds and seeds of Nature that make ingrateful man (3,2,1-9), but gradually he begins to think that the storm and the elements are not just but unjust:

But yet I call you servile ministers,
 That will with two pernicious daughters join
 Your high-engender'd battles 'gainst a head
 So old and white as this. O, ho! 'tis foul.

(3,2,21-24)

Still he insists that the storm should reveal inequity and that he is a man comparatively innocent:

Let the great Gods,
That keep this dreadful pudder o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now....

(3,2,49-51)

I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

(3,2,59-60)

The Fool and Kent accompany Lear, and they bring to Lear's invocation of the storm more or less antithetical attitudes. The Fool urges Lear to cope with the storm of Infortune by the practical wisdom of self-interest:

O Nuncle, court holy-water in a dry house is better
than this rain-water out o'door. Good Nuncle, in,
ask thy daughters blessing;

(3,2,10-12)

Kent urges Lear to cope with Infortune by invoking the natural bonds (3,2,63-7); and Kent himself illustrates this, for his kindness in part saves Lear from the "tyranny of the open night". This antithesis reflects Lear's growing perception that Nature in the storm is simply savage and appetitive like a bear (3,4,9) (what is the storm but a cataclysm following the violations of Nature!) and his perception that man, and particularly himself as the king, is the worker of justice and injustice in the world. (3,4,25-37)

...O! I have ta'en
Too little care of this. Take physic, Pomp ...
And show the Heavens more just!

(3,4,32-36)

As his perception of his guilt grows upon him, he identifies himself with Poor Tom, who has just described himself in images of falseness and animality, the unregenerate serving man (3,4,48-95); and this guilt and this terrible picture of himself poison his vision of humanity:

Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on's are sophisticated; thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal....

(3,4,105-10)

He sees all men in what is really only a picture of unregenerate man, who has known himself only in the gifts of Fortune, who has violated Nature, and so who has become lower than the beasts.¹ And like Tom he comes near to suicide. (11.50-7; 111; 132-7) The world grows more vicious--his daughters seek his death (1.167)--and in the sixth scene we see Lear weaving and twisting together the knowledge he has gained of their evil and of his own responsibility in the world, into a wild combination of justice and revenge. Thus at one moment he is summoning the daughters to appear before his court or is anatomizing Regan to see what breeds about her heart, and at another he is imagining a vicious revenge with hissing burning spits.

As I have said, a pattern of hope and regeneration runs through this second movement, and this hope comes partly from Lear's insight into his responsibility and the nature of justice in the world, and partly from the kindness of Kent and Gloucester. Thus Kent brings Lear to the hovel (3,2,60-7), and Gloucester who identifies himself with Lear in his misfortune (3,4,170), does not obey the daughter's unnatural commands and let the storm take hold upon Lear, but brings him where there is food and comfort (3,4,152-7) and later hurries him off to Dover when the daughters plot his death. (3,6,91-100) Thus the Fool's choric prophecy includes pictures both of the world unregenerate where priests and nobles are corrupt, and of the world regenerate where "bawds

¹ Kent for instance is not a beast at heart, as are the evil sisters. See Presson, op.cit., p. 415, who quotes from the Boece, IV, pr.3, 93-127. Compare Taylor's book on Montaigne, op.cit., p. 9.

and whores do churches build"; although the Fool's mixing of the parts¹ here and mixing of time may imply that at all times all possibilities exist:

...Then shall the realm of Albion
 Come to great confusion:
 Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
 That going shall be us'd with feet.
 This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time.
 (3,3,91-96)

Lear's sleep epitomizes this idea of regeneration--"Oppressed nature sleeps".
 (3,6,100) But as the short prose scenes show us, the world grows more vicious. The daughters forbid Gloucester to help Lear; there is further division between Albany and Cornwall; Edmund plots his father's fall. (3,3) Cornwall plans revenge on Gloucester (3,5); the daughter's seek Lear's death. These machinations thwart the hope of Lear's regeneration here through sleep. (3,6,89-104)

This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews
 Which, if convenience will not allow,
 Stand in hard cure.

(3,6,101-03)

Just as the next scene, in which justice turns upside down when men grow vicious and unnatural (3,7,24-7), renders Edgar's hope of redemption when he can "reveal himself",

Mark the high noises, and thyself bewray
 When false opinion, whose wrong thoughts defile thee,
 In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee.

(3,6,114-16)

futile and empty, even though some vestige of hope remains in the naturalness of the three servants (3,7,71-106) and in Gloucester's insight. (3,7,90)
 The structure of this movement clearly develops the idea that when the world is upside down men must retreat to Nature, and the idea that in Nature lie two distinct possibilities--one of hope through the bonds of kind, the other of

¹See Muir's note on 3,2,80. On the last line of the prophecy, see Presson, *op.cit.*, pp. 411-2, where he refers to Boece, IV, pr.2, 101-10.

dissolution and death through vicious appetite. The antithetical development where the quick prose scenes of Gloucester's fall divide and punctuate Lear's poetic scenes in the storm, sweeps us along. We are caught up; authority is strong.

This idea that the growing unnaturalness in the world cuts off hope and regeneration epitomizes the third movement, the last two acts of the play. For as I have said, although Cordelia and Edgar catch up the theme of spiritual regeneration and try to bring their parents to patience and "ripeness", viciousness and torment in the world finally frustrate these efforts until the play ends in Lear's outrage and death and in the general woe. Again the two plots intermingle. Both Gloucester and Lear begin this movement at the bottom of the wheel, but Gloucester's rise to a kind of patience and Lear's spiritual rebirth serve at last to increase their torment, in as far as patience becomes one more thing that the upside down world can strip from them. The world becomes a rack that breaks the strings of life, and this disordered world does not perish without taking with it most of what is good.

We see an epitome of this for instance in the beginning of Act Four, Edgar at the bottom of the wheel rises to patience:

Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
 Than, still contemn'd and flatter'd, to be worst.
 The lowest and most dejected thing of Fortune,
 Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
 The lamentable change is from the best,
 The worst returns to laughter.

(4,1,1-6)

Immediately he sees his father and his bleeding eyes, and the sight renders his patience hollow, and he is ready to "yield to age", to fall to despair:

World, world, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

(4,1,10-12)

Likewise the whole structure of this movement is pyramidal, and there is a strong rise towards patience before the final fall. Gloucester is already partly regenerate in as far as he knows his guilt as the "superfluous and lust-dieted man" and tries to "undo excess" (4,1,64-70); and though he despairs here, Edgar means to lead him upwards to patience. Then too Albany adds to this general rise by becoming a force for goodness and Nature who stands up to Goneril and lives to avenge Gloucester's eyes. (4,2,96) In the next two scenes Kent and Cordelia and the doctor all look forward to Lear's recovery of his "bereaved sense", the kingdom's recovery of order; and particularly the Christian image of Cordelia shaking holy water from her heavenly eyes (4,3,31) and the biblical recollection as she goes about "her father's business" (4,4,24)¹ make her a strong agent of Truth. In the sixth scene Gloucester, imaginatively, falls and rises up.² He is convinced that his life is a miracle and prepared to bear afflictions, and too Lear in the seventh scene rises out of the grave into the harmony of music (see above) as he and Cordelia are reconciled. He has always sought to revenge unkindness, but here, like Prospero, he learns perhaps that one unnatural act should not cause another and that the property of Nature is forgiveness:

¹Luke, ii,49. There is of course a mingling of Christian and Pagan imagery throughout. Much of the Christian imagery in this generally pagan world, as here, centers on Cordelia. Another instance comes when Lear feels himself upon a wheel of fire and sees Cordelia as a soul in bliss (4,7,45-7), though Presson notes that the image of the wheel may refer to Ixion, as in Boece (III,met.12, 36-8), op.cit., p. 416. Edgar's pilgrimage too is a Christian concept. For general discussion of the Christian and Pagan ideas, see the relevant passages in Heilmann's and Danby's books on the play.

²See H. Levin's essay "The Heights and the Depths" in More Talking about Shakespeare, ed. by J. Garrett, (London, 1959).

If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
 I know you donnot love me; for your sisters
 Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
 You have some cause, they have not.

Cordelia. No cause, no cause.

(4,7,72-75)

Lear comes to a kind of self-knowledge--"I am a very foolish fond old man" (1.60)--and in the next act he comes to a kind of patience as he and Cordelia go off to prison. Where in the third act he perceives the appetitive Nature which makes the world chaotic, here he perceives the divine Nature of harmony and one-ness. This caps the rising movement towards the regeneration of man's spirit, just as Edgar's pilgrimage which ends when he, the champion of Nature, defeats and even converts Edmund (5,3,199-244), caps the rising movement towards the regeneration of the world. Similarly, encouraging this rise towards one-ness is the division and degeneration of evil. Cornwall dies, and appetite makes Goneril and Regan suspect and plot against each other and against Albany (5,1,55-69), which Edgar discovers in killing Oswald, and turns to his own good use.

This upward movement however at nearly every peak turns down again as the forces of unnaturalness in the upside down world "come to deadly use". Thus, just when Gloucester has come to patience in Act Four, scene six, he meets Lear the "side-piercing sight", and the meeting drives Gloucester to beg the Gods for death after Lear unwittingly and ironically lacerates him for his sins:

Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard son
 Was kinder to his father than my daughters
 Got 'tween the lawful sheets.

(4,6,117-19)

and after Lear paints a crushing picture of the world upside down:

...The usurer hangs the cozener.
 Thorough tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
 Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,

And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;
 Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.
 None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able em
 (11.165-70)

Gloucester. You ever-gentle Gods, take my breath from me:
 (1.218)

The structure reflects patience turning downward to despair, for we see Gloucester meet Lear, and the calamity of Lear and of the world undermines Gloucester's new-found resolve to bear affliction patiently. We see the same thing happen in epitome in the battle. Gloucester prays that the good may thrive, and when he learns that the good does not thrive he wants to die, to rot. (5,2,8) His response to Edgar's idea of "ripeness" is notably weak-- "And that's true too". Finally his heart "bursts smilingly", between the conflicting passions of joy at being reconciled with his son, and grief which Kent represents here, whose "grief grows puissant" and whose strings of life begin to crack as he bellows out the piteous tale of Lear, "as he'd burst heaven". (5,3,213) Similarly Lear's patience contains the seed of pride:

...Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
 The Gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
 He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven,
 And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes;
 The good years shall devour them, flesh and fell,
 Ere they shall make us weep: we'll see 'em starv'd first.
 (5,3,20-25)

He¹ bases patience on Cordelia, and her death is insupportable, and as he rages against the heavens (11.257-9) we see the old pride welling up:

I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging thee.
 ...Did I not, fellow?
 I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion
 I would have made them skip:
 (11.274-77)

¹ Compare Judges 15,3,7, where Samson torments the Philistines by firing the tails of foxes. Here again is a Christian note, associated with regeneration. Similarly in the idea of patience there is a Christian note, though patience is also an idea in pagan stoicism.

For Lear Cordelia's life redeems all sorrow, just as for Kent Lear's acknowledgment repays all hardship and grief (4,7,4); but Cordelia is dead as earth, and Lear curses Kent,

Edgar. "Tis noble Kent, your friend.
Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!
(11.268-69)

and finally even his recognition is imperfect (11.278-87), so that for Kent all is "cheerless, dark, and deadly". Things that people build their hopes on systematically prove inadequate, and twice (see above) the facts of the play by juxtaposition render Albany's pious reflections on the world, hollow and false:

All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings. O! see, see!
Lear. Any my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life!
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!
(11.302-08)

Even Edgar's optimism, urging life's worth, can hardly stand up beside Kent's image of the torment and futility of life:

Edgar. Look up, my Lord.
Kent. Vex not his ghost: O! let him pass; he hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.
(11,312-15)

Juxtaposition in this movement clearly brings out the pyramidal structure, where on the one hand man rises to patience, but where on the other, the brutality that has been loosed in the world becomes intolerable so that, like a fire-ship, it does not go down without bringing all down with it. The tragedy is complete as Lear and his three daughters die.

* * *

Clearly the tragedy in Lear makes use of the same themes that we have seen in comedy. Even the overall structure is similar, and as in As You Like

It and The Tempest, in Lear we see man retreat from the upside down world to Nature in desert places. Nature is both savage and kind, and like Duke Senior and Orlando and Prospero, Kent and Edgar and Cordelia try to make the divine Nature dominate, so that by making desert places orderly they may make society right-side up. But while comedy comes to the harmony or oneness of marriage where man makes Time defeat itself through continuance in change, tragedy ends in dissolution and death in the world, as evil proliferates and as Time defeats generation.

In Lear as in Coriolanus Shakespeare makes the action of the play, the sequence of events, develop these themes clearly, that they may have embodiment and energy and life. When writing Lear and Coriolanus, in large part Shakespeare is simply a better playwright who no longer makes the mistakes he made in the first and fourth acts of Richard II or in the fifth act of Julius Caesar. Then too, Richard II and Caesar tend to make a simple conflict out of what is an antithesis in the later plays, and thus they focus on the unavoidable unfolding of events after Richard's unnaturalness and after Brutus' joining the conspiracy. Neither much develops the possibility of things moving through the natural bonds to accord, and in a sense both are over-simple, where Coriolanus and Lear which develop this possibility are not. In Lear for instance the possibility of final harmony through the bonds of kind remains real nearly to the end, just as in The Tempest the possibility of discord through rage and revenge is strong right into the last act.

Again like The Tempest, Lear develops more imaginatively than most of the tragedies. Richard II and Caesar and Coriolanus develop the conflict or antithesis of the two Natures primarily in the large events of the world-- the deposition, the assassination and public funeral and battle, the rebellion

and election and war--and only secondarily in the correlative world of man. But Lear focuses for instance on the very central idea of self-knowledge in the world of man, which in a real sense causes all order or disorder in the larger world, and examines this idea fully, so that in Lear we have the sense of going right to the heart of what the play, and too of what man and life, is all about. Lear is also more imaginative because it has more kinds of voices--the Fool, Poor Tom, Lear himself in the storm. Coriolanus and Caesar for instance appeal to us throughout at more or less the same level of understanding, so that we take in the words and actions and images in a generally straightforward and clear way. Even the meaning of things like the storm in Caesar becomes generally explicit. Lear is different, for we must make imaginative leaps--between Poor Tom and Lear, between the storm and Edmund and Cornwall--and the play often calls on us to understand things elliptically as well as plainly, and often at the same time. We understand Lear in the storm only by making the imaginative leap that he makes between himself and Tom; we understand his state of mind by understanding Tom's, for instance about suicide. (3,4,50-7) And consider the way the Fool's gnomic words punctuate the dialogue:

Lear. How now, daughter! What makes that frontlet on?
You are too much of late i' th' frown.

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care
of her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure.
I am better than thou art now; I am a Fool; thou art no-
thing....That's a sheal'd peascod....

(1,4,197-208)

Goneril. ...you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,...

(11.216-18)

Fool. For you know, Nuncle,
The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it's had it head bit off by it young,
So out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Goneril. I would you would make use of your good wisdom,

- Whereof I know you are fraught; and put away
 These dispositions which of late transport you
 From what you rightly are.
- Fool. May not the ass know when a cart draws the horse?
 Whoop, Jug! I love thee.
- Lear. Does any here know me? This is not Lear:
 Does Lear walk thus? speak thus?...
 Who is it that can tell me who I am?
- Fool. Lear's shadow.
- Lear. I would learn that....

(1,4,223-39)

This is a passionate intense scene; Lear's violence and the Fool's gnomic words in part throw us off-balance, but the imaginativeness compels us. We are never allowed to sit back and observe and simply understand. The play keeps us turning, keeps us off stride, so that we feel ourselves seized by something bigger and more powerful than we are. A. J. Liebling in a humorous essay called "Boxing with the Naked Eye", speaks of his preferring to see the fights in person rather than on television, and he makes his point by analogy:¹

...Mr. Matthews who was the editor of Time, said that the most important thing in journalism is not reporting but communication. "What are you going to communicate?" I asked him. "The most important thing," he said, "is the man on the other end of the circuit saying 'My God, I'm alive! You're alive!'" and the fellow on the other end receiving his message, saying 'My God, you're right! We're both alive!'"

Lear's violent energy and the imaginativeness of the play where we are always slightly off-balance, slightly unawares and struggling to keep up, give us this same sense--the sense of life and of vitality. Art that is too symmetrical and too confined and that has nothing of dissonance, loses this vitality that throws the thing into motion, makes it palpable and alive. This sense of motion, of energy and of life, is the heart of authority, and indeed of the experience of art--"My God, you're right! We're both alive!" In King Lear Shakespeare's authority is full.

¹From The Sweet Science (London, 1956) p. 21.

CONCLUSION

The antithesis of generation and decay is basic to many medieval thinkers, for instance the Chartres Platonists. I quote from the conclusion of De Mundi Universitate by Bernardus Sylvestris, where Bernardus speaks of the male sexual organs. As John MacQueen says, "He describes their function under a double metaphor; they rebuild Nature, and they are the weapons in the fight against chaos and death".¹

Saecula ne pereant decisaque cesset origo
Et repetat primum massa soluta chaos;
Cum morte invicti pugnant genialibus armis,
Naturam reparant perpetuantque genus.

This generation is the work of Nature, and it leads towards "perdurable existence", the "long durability of mortal things", which in Boethius lets man approach or partake of one-ness and the simplicity of the divine thought.

thilke thing that desireth to be and to duelle perdurably,
he desireth to ben oon. (III, pr. 11, 193-95)

Again, as in Spenser's Mutability Cantos, the work of Nature allows Time as a teleological process to bring man towards perfection. Thus the antithesis of generation and decay, of Nature and Fortune, forms the basis for the metaphors of "marriage" and "the pilgrimage of the life of man", which, as I have tried to show, describe man's movement through Time towards one-ness and Truth. And in turn, as we would expect, these metaphors--poetic

¹ Robert Henryson (Oxford, 1967) p. 74. Compare Plato's Timaeus translated by B. Jowett, (Oxford, 1871) Vol. 2, p. 523. "That which is apprehended by intelligence and reason is always in the same state; but that which is conceived by opinion with the help of sensation and without reason, is always in a process of becoming and perishing and never really is." (27-8)

forms of philosophical ideas--dominate not only the poetry of the Middle Ages, but the poetry and plays of the following ages as well. For early English humanism and the renaissance do not displace the thinking of the Middle Ages, but rather they build upon it. As Professor Weiss says, "in England we find neo-classicism absorbed into the sphere of scholasticism and used for the furtherance of scholastic ends. Moreover, in Italy humanism had been considered as a new intellectual system displacing or revising all the conceptions of the Middle Ages; but in England humanism was conceived not as a new cultural manifestation or a refinement in taste, but rather as a means of improving some aspects of scholasticism".¹ The opposition of generation and decay, of Nature and Fortune, and the related opposition of simplicity and multiplicity which is so fundamental to the Middle Ages, form the rhetorical basis on which Shakespeare builds his plays.

In my chapters on Shakespearian comedy and tragedy I try to show that it is reasonable and natural to talk about Shakespeare's plays in terms of these medieval metaphors and antitheses, and that when we do so we can then go on to make some small assessment of how Shakespeare grows and excels as a playwright. I deal primarily with seven plays, some of which like King Lear and The Tempest are thought of as "important" plays, and some of which like Julius Caesar and Pericles are not. But I could easily talk about other of the plays in these same terms. For instance, I have said that Shakespearian comedy generally brings us to the fullness of marriage and the pilgrimage, where man enjoys a final one-ness by making Infortune come

¹ R. Weiss, Humanism in England during the Fifteenth Century, (2nd edition, Oxford, 1957) p. 179. See also MacQueen, Robert Henryson, pp. 22-3.

full-circle into good Fortune, and clearly Twelfth Night follows this pattern. At the start Viola is cast down by Fortune - metaphorically, the ship-wrecking sea.¹ Indeed the whole action takes place near the sea coast--man is subjected to Fortune in the world of the play--and here as before, man enjoys final good fortune by cleaving to Nature, particularly as she is manifest in music and in patience. For instance, the confused loves in the play are a knot that only Time can untangle, Viola says (2,2,33-42), and she imagines herself as "Patience on a monument / Smiling at grief". (2,4,114-5) Grief capitulates to Infortune and confusion, much as Olivia's grief at the death of her father and brother will lead her towards the barren virginity of a "cloistress" (1,1,27) which would let her father's line wither in Time; contrarily Viola's patience and her music make Time untangle the confused loves, make illusory Infortune come round into real good Fortune, and so make Time defeat itself through continuance. Viola as Patience is an agent of fruitful marriage, of continuance in change. The repetition of "chance" in these early lines emphasizes that the play is about Fortune or chance of Time,

Viola. My brother he is in Elysium.
 Perchance he is not drowned; what think you, sailors?
 Captain. It is perchance that you yourself were saved.
 Viola. O my poor brother! and so perchance may he be.
 Captain. True, madam, and to comfort you with chance
 Assure yourself, after our ship did split,...(1,2,4-9)

¹References are to the New Shakespeare edition, ed. by J. D. Wilson (Cambridge, 1949).

--about the possibility of grief and uncontrolled appetite,¹ because they aid Time, bringing the world of the play towards decay and death; and about the antithetical possibility of patience and Nature using Time and Infortune and Chance to make them defeat themselves, and so as in As You Like It, bringing the characters to the final marriage and song. It is perhaps worth noting that Feste's last song, like the Fool's snatch of it in the third act of King Lear, is about Time and about Infortune--the rain that raineth every day --and about man's learning to cope with them.

Similarly, I have said that Shakespearian tragedy focuses on the conflict of an old and a new order, where Time and evil at least in part triumph. The new order is generally based on self-interest and appetite, the old on the bonds of kin; and even though the new order may finally by its own ruthlessness defeat itself, it destroys the "marriage" of the old order and works the death of that order's hero. Hamlet follows this pattern just as clearly as does Lear or the tragedies from English and Roman history. Tragedy follows a breaking of the natural bonds, as one unnatural act precipitates another and evil proliferates. Thus in Hamlet when Claudius cuckolds and murders the king his brother, he breaks several marriage which bind the world together, and Hamlet the son is tempted to act unnaturally in turn.² In the first place, Claudius taints Hamlet's vision of his mother and of his world in general, and Hamlet is tempted to kill himself--an

¹ See the Duke's two descriptions of his love, where he likens it to the hunt and to the sea, images of Fortune and appetite. (1,1,20-2; 2,4,97-101.)

² References are to the New Shakespeare edition, ed. by Wilson (Cambridge, 1954).

unnatural act which would allow Infortune to defeat Nature:

O, that this too too sullied flesh would melt,
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter. (1,2,129-32)

In the second, Hamlet is tempted by the ghost to revenge, and here as before, revenge too is unnatural. To come to order and harmony man must break the cycle of one broken bond's causing another to break, and cleave to Nature and patience and mercy. Tragedy follows Hamlet's fastening on revenge (just as The Tempest would end in tragedy were Prospero to exact his full revenge), and this is clear in two ways. First, when Hamlet wipes everything from his memory except revenge (1,5,97-102), one thing that he pushes out of his mind is Ophelia, and later in his insisting upon virginity and the nunnery for her, he says,

we will have no mo marriage -- (3,1,151)

In revenge and in his blackened vision of sexuality, he renounces the possibility of fruitful marriage for himself and Ophelia, and this denies Nature her proper activity in them. Second, when Hamlet tries to enact his revenge he murders Polonius, and this drives Ophelia to her death and lets Laertes respond with his own vengeance, which works the death of Hamlet and the King and Queen. Thus we see mirrored in the action of the play the idea of the unnaturalness of revenge, for Time and Infortune triumph

when children and parents die.¹

This account of Twelfth Night and Hamlet is too brief, and yet it is pointless to go on.

verum animo satis haec vestigia parva sagaci
sunt, per quae possis cognoscere cetera tute
(De Rerum Natura, I, 402-03)

But Shakespeare is not alone among the Elizabethan dramatists in building his plays on this foundation of thought. Perhaps it would be worthwhile looking at Christopher Marlowe's handling of the basic ideas and metaphors. Consider for instance Tamburlaine.²

Marlowe develops Part One as a conflict of old and new orders. Mycetes and Bajazeth and the Soldan are in part rightful kings, and Tamburlaine is an ambitious and ruthless shepherd who overthrows them. But Mycetes and Bajazeth mark the degeneration of the old order, and although Tamburlaine

¹The metaphor of the pilgrimage appears in Twelfth Night in as far as men there are seafarers. In Hamlet the metaphor is linked with the idea of repentance and regeneration. In Ophelia's song Hamlet, the "true love", appears in pilgrim's weeds, and this perhaps stands in antithesis to his role as avenger:

How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon. (4,5,23-27)

For this is followed by her song about Polonius' death--"He is dead and gone, lady". I must add however that there is some confusion about who the "true love" is, and that perhaps old Hamlet or even Claudius is the pilgrim. See Hamlet generally for the idea of acquiring patience through madness, for Hamlet eventually comes to a philosophy much like Edgar's--"the readiness is all". (5,2,220.) Compare Lear, 5,2,8.

²References are to Una Ellis-Fermor's edition of the two parts, Tamburlaine the Great (London, 1930).

is low born, he is in part God's minister who aspires to the infinite, the One. Indeed Marlowe captures the paradox of Tamburlaine's being both diabolical and godlike, in his epithet -- the Scourge of God.¹

We see for instance the degeneration of the old order in Mycetes' weakness,

Brother Cosroe, I find myself agriev'd;
Yet insufficient to express the same,
For it requires a great and thundering speech:
Good brother, tell the cause unto my lords;
I know you have a better wit than I. (1,1, 1-5)

and in the division in the Persian kingdom. (1,1,103-6) Weakness and division are forms of multiplicity, and Tamburlaine uses this multiplicity when he uses the Persian general Theridamas and even Cosroe (2,5) to conquer Persia. Thus he holds

the Fates bound fast in iron chains,
And with my hand turn Fortune's wheel about, (1,2,173-74)

and in a sense he subjects Fortune and change to his divine, or at least his kingly, aspirations.² Like Mycetes, Bajazeth is a degenerate form of the older order, and his unnaturalness is clear in the details about him:

Morocco. The spring is hindered by your smothering host;
For neither rain can fall upon the earth,
Nor sun reflex his virtuous beams thereon,
The ground is mantled with such multitudes.
Bajazeth. All this is true as holy Mahomet;
And all the trees are blasted with our breaths. (3,1,50-55)

Tamburlaine cites as a precedent for his conquering Mycetes and Bajazeth,

¹ Compare my chapter on Coriolanus above. Marcius, too, paradoxically encourages Mutability and aspires to a perfect one-ness.

² The two are more or less conflated. See 2,5,50-64, and below.

the myth of Jove:

The thirst of reign and sweetness of a crown,
That caused the eldest son of heavenly Ops
To thrust his doting father from his chair,
And place himself in the imperial heaven,
Mov'd me to manage arms against thy state.
What better precedent than mighty Jove? (2,7,12-17)

The myth perfectly embodies the paradox of Tamburlaine. For superficially he is unnatural in overthrowing the "father", the old order; but it is necessary to remember that Jove's father is Saturn or Kronos, interpreted as Chronos or Time, who devours his sons.¹ Similarly Jove's mother is Ops or Rhea, the goddess of earth's abundance, and in calling her "heavenly" Tamburlaine in part identifies himself with her purpose. Like Jove, Tamburlaine seeks to conquer Time, to promote fruitfulness and constancy, and to aspire towards what is infinite and One.

Nature, that fram'd us of four elements
Warring within our breasts for regiment,
Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds:
Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
The wondrous architecture of the world,
And measure every wandering planet's course,
Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
And always moving as the restless spheres,
Wills us to wear ourselves and never rest,
Until we reach the ripest fruit of all,
That perfect bliss and sole felicity,
The sweet fruition of an earthly crown. (2,7,18-29)

He means to use what is finite--to "wear ourselves"--in order to reach what is infinite. He is more or less in accord with Nature (depending on how much stress we put on "warring"), and when we remember the correspondence between a god in heaven and a king on earth, we see that he seeks on earth

¹"Doting" in the Middle Ages connotes old age. See Robert Henryson's use of this myth in my pages on The Testament of Cresseid above. See also MacQueen, Robert Henryson, pp. 71-6.

what is godlike and perfect.

Still Tamburlaine is partly unnatural. He is not really so different from Bajazeth (3,3,148-50), and in murdering the virgins of Damascus for instance he has no pity for innocence or old age or marriage (5,2,16-20), but rather he feeds his "servant" Death. (5,2,54) In this way he encourages Mutability, as Zenocrate points out:

Ah, Tamburlaine, my love, sweet Tamburlaine,
That fight'st for sceptres and for slippery crowns,
Behold the Turk and his great empress! (5,2,293-95)

The contradiction of his encouraging Mutability and yet aspiring towards the infinite grows to a head when he fights the Soldan, Zenocrate's father. On the one hand he vows not to pity the Soldan (4,2,125), but on the other, Zenocrate's sorrow for her father and her country torments him:

Ah, fair Zenocrate, divine Zenocrate,
Fair is too foul an epithet for thee,
That in thy passion for thy country's love,
And fear to see thy kingly father's harm,...
Rain'st on the earth resolved pearl in showers,
And sprinklest sapphires on thy shining face,
Where Beauty, mother to the Muses, sits,
And comments volumes with her ivory pen,
Taking instruction from thy flowing eyes,...
There angels in their crystal armours fight
A doubtful battle with my tempted thoughts
For Egypt's freedom and the Soldan's life, (5,2,72-90)

He describes her as the paradigm for Beauty, and in this way, like a true Platonist, he identifies her with what is infinite and divine--the One for which his soul longs:

What is beauty, saith my sufferings, then?
If all the pens that all the poets held ...
If all the heavenly quintessence they still
From their immortal flowers of poesy,
Wherein as in a mirror we perceive
The highest reaches of a human wit--

If these had made one poem's period,
 And all combin'd in beauty's worthiness,
 Yet should there hover in their restless heads
 One thought, one grace, one wonder, at the least,
 Which into words no virtue can digest.
 But how unseemly is it for my sex, ...
 To harbour thoughts effeminate and faint!
 Save only that in beauty's just applause,
 With whose instinct the soul of man is touched,
 And every warrior that is rapt with love
 Of fame, of valour, and of victory,
 Must needs have beauty beat on his conceits;
 I thus conceiving, and subduing both,
 That which hath stopt the tempest of the gods, ...
 Shall give the world to note, for all my birth,
 That virtue solely is the sum of glory
 And fashions men with true nobility. (5,2,97-127)

Tamburlaine could ruthlessly kill the Soldan and abuse Egypt, and his doing so would doubtless kill Zenocrate--would separate him from any nearness to his divine ideal. But beauty subdues "the tempest of the gods", and the conceiving of beauty gives men "true nobility". In this way Tamburlaine resolves the contradiction, for although he conquers the Soldan and expands his own kingdom, he takes the Soldan under his care and marries his daughter. (5,2,383-425) Thus Zenocrate as an embodiment of Tamburlaine's ideal, brings peace and order to the world of the play:

But as the gods, to end the Trojan's toil,
 Prevented Turnus of Lavinia,
 And fatally enriched Aeneas' love,
 So, for a final issue to my griefs,
 To pacify my country and my love,
 Must Tamburlaine by their resistless powers
 With virtue of a gentle victory,
 Conclude a league of honour to my hope; (5,2,330-37)

The simile of Lavinia and Turnus and Aeneas emphasizes the overall pattern of continuance and ultimate perfection in change--the movement from the old to the new order. Grief becomes joy, and the structure of the last act mirrors this in a pattern of antitheses, for in Bajazeth's invocation of

darkness and death and in Zenocrate's words on Mutability (5,2,223-309), we are aware of the possibility of Time and Infortune's triumphing. But Tamburlaine cleaves to his ideal and thus he makes things such as war which are discordant and multiple come into a "married" one-ness and accord.

Part One ends in marriage--the last line is significant:

We will our rites of marriage solemnise.

In Part Two we see this pattern of antitheses continue. In the first place, Marlowe emphasizes the multitude of men and countries that make up Tamburlaine's host (1,5&6), and contrarily the division and duplicity of those who oppose him. (2,1&2&3) In this way we see the pattern of Tamburlaine's using kinds of multiplicity in the old order to increase and perfect his single dominion--the pattern of his making the many come together into a kind of one-ness. But more important in Part Two, Marlowe fully develops the pattern of continuance in change in the family. Although Zenocrate is a paradigm for Beauty and although Tamburlaine aspires towards what is infinite, still both are subject to Time and change. For Zenocrate, the flesh is "frail and transitory" (2,4,43), and in her death Tamburlaine at first sees a kind of final triumph of Time over Beauty:

Black is the beauty of the brightest day;
The golden ball of heaven's eternal fire,
That danc'd with glory on the silver waves,
Now wants the fuel that inflamed his beams,
And all with faintness and for foul disgrace,
He binds his temples with a frowning cloud,
Ready to darken earth with endless night.
Zenocrate, that gave him light and life,...
And tempered every soul with lively heat,...
Draws in the comfort of her latest breath, (2,4,1-13)

But eventually he sees the possibility of continuance through their sons, and Marlowe underlines this possibility by juxtaposing Zenocrate's death with Tamburlaine's teaching his boys the rudiments of war, that they may

continue in his tradition:

Celebinus. My mother's death hath mortified my mind,
 And sorrow stops the passage of my speech.
 Tamburlaine. But now, my boys, leave off, and list to me,
 That mean to teach you rudiments of war. (3,2,51-54)

Indeed the funeral itself gives a kind of immortality, here as before.

(3,2,17-42) But paradoxically, the funeral gives Zenocrate immortality by bringing death and famine to a town (3,2,1-18), and there again Marlowe shows us the basic paradox of Tamburlaine. Similarly, as Tamburlaine wants his sons to immortalize his Jove-like spirit through continuance in generation, he kills Calyphas whom he thinks is degenerate, a villain, that only the regenerate sons might live:

Here, Jove, receive his fainting soul again;
 A form not meet to give that subject essence
 Whose matter is the flesh of Tamburlaine,
 Wherein an incorporeal spirit moves,
 Made of the mold whereof thyself consists,
 Which makes me valiant, proud, ambitious,
 Ready to levy power against thy throne,
 That I might move the turning spheres of heaven; (4,1,111-18)

In this too we see the paradox of his seeking immortality and at the same time promoting Mutability, much as Coriolanus seeks an immortal one-ness by being a "harvestman" of death, a widower and a killer of whole tribes, and by "virgining" his wife--opposing generation. And Marlowe maintains this paradox to the end, so that finally two possibilities remain for Tamburlaine--one, immortality through continuance; and two, a decline and degeneration in Time till his spirit dies out. He is subject to Mutability--sickness and death (5,1,221)--but as he is about to die he calls for a map, that his sons may "finish all my wants". (5,3,125) Likewise, the chariot which he leaves his sons becomes a symbol for his fiery rule and spirit,

... scourge and control those slaves,
 Guiding thy chariot with thy father's hand
 For, if thy body thrive not full of thoughts
 As pure and fiery as Phyteus' beams,
 The nature of these proud rebelling jades
 Will take occasion by the slenderest hair,
 And draw thee piecemeal, like Hippolytus,
 Through rocks more steep and sharp than Caspian clifts:
 The nature of thy chariot will not bear
 A guide of baser temper than myself,
 More than heaven's coach the pride of Phaeton. (5,3,228-44)

and if his sons perpetuate this spirit, all will realize the fullness of continuance. But the references to Hippolytus and especially to Phaeton (because Tamburlaine links himself with the sun)¹ emphasizes the alternative possibility--that the sons will not perpetuate his spirit, and that Time and Mutability will bring all to naught.

Clearly it is reasonable and natural to talk about Marlowe's Tamburlaine in terms of these ideas and antitheses. Then too I could go on to discuss other of Marlowe's plays, for instance Doctor Faustus, and indeed the plays of other Elizabethan writers, for instance Volpone, using more or less these same ideas which surround man's concern with generation and decay. But man's concern naturally pervades the literature of other ages and other countries as well, and it is perhaps worthwhile expanding this study now to show how basic these themes are to literature, how basic this concern is to man. For instance the antithesis of Nature and Fortune, of generation and Time, and the related antithesis of natural and unnatural, dominate much of the literature of classical Greece. Consider the plays of Sophocles.²

In Philoctetes Sophocles grounds the action on the antithetical possibilities of, on the one hand, dissolution and death through a chain of unnatural and impious acts, and on the other, regeneration and harmony

¹ See for instance II, 5,3,237 & 251.

² References are to the Penguin edition of Philoctetes and Ajax, translated by E. F. Watling in 1953, and to the Harvest edition of Oedipus Rex and Oedipus at Colonus, translated by Dudley Fitts and Robert Fitzgerald (New York, 1949)

through reverence to the gods and through the bonds of kind. Like many of Sophocles' plays, Philoctetes looks back to an act of impiety--Philoctetes' trespassing on the domain of Chryse--and for this the gods infect his foot, which makes his friends abandon him on the desert island, which makes him want revenge, and so forth. One broken bond causes another to break, and to escape isolation and death and disorder in the world Philoctetes must break this tragic cycle, accept the friendship of Neoptolemus (who is imaginatively his "son"), and go willingly to Troy where Asclepius will heal his wound, that as a champion he may help win the Trojan war. (1420-43)

Friendship--the bonds of kin--will heal his wound and turn war into peace. This is clear in the theophany, where Heracles says,

Son of Achilles, here are words for you:
 You cannot conquer Troy without his help,
 Nor he without you. Guard each other's life,
 Like lions hunting together. Asclepius,
 Whom I shall send to Troy, will be your healer.
 And then, for the second time, as is ordained,
 My arrow bring the city down. Remember,
 In the hour of victory, reverence to the gods. (1433-40)

Up to this point however the alternative possibility of disorder and isolation and death, where Time defeats generation, is dominant through Odysseus' ruthlessness, Neoptolemus' duplicity, and Philoctetes' vengeance. This is clear when we understand the chorus of sailors and the desert island setting of the play iconographically; for as in Pericles men are seafarers driven by chance, and in this way when Odysseus initially abandons Philoctetes he exposes him to Infortune in the sea and on the island, where he must hunt or be hunted:

No fruit of the earth
 For him might grow,
 Such as human toil
 Brings yearly to birth
 For our livelihood
 From the gentle soil;
 His only food
 What fell to his bow. (710-17)

This abandoning denies him the benefit of Nature in the growing cycle, as well as in family and friends. (665-70) Similarly as Heracles' bow in part preserves Philoctetes, so Odysseus' plot to steal the bow and Neoptolemus' duplicity will completely expose him:

I shall be
The prey now, carrion food for those I fed on.
The hunted will come hunting for my carcase. (954-56)

And vengeance will only perpetuate Philoctetes' barren existence. (1308-46)

Then too, as in The Tempest, the world beyond the sea is upside down:

War never picks the worst men for his victims,
But always the best. (436-37)

The generals, the sons of Atreus, are corrupt; and corrupt leaders make the followers corrupt. (382-6) Odysseus epitomizes this, for his experience in the upside down world teaches him duplicity, and he in turn teaches this to Neoptolemus. (70-101) But Neoptolemus who is "new to war" finally cleaves to the bonds of friendship, and so by making the desert island orderly, he helps make the world orderly as well. For he and Philoctetes will protect each other and use Fortune--metaphorically the "fair wind for their adventure" (1451) to make victory and peace take the place of war.

I am not misrepresenting Philoctetes when I stress this pattern of antitheses, for indeed the play turns on first Neoptolemus' and then Philoctetes' conversions from duplicity and revenge which will defeat generation, to the bonds of friendship which will bring peace and accord; and in this way the pattern of antitheses is mirrored in the structure of the play. The structure is simple and clear. The play begins with two characters (Odysseus and Neoptolemus) sided against the third (Philoctetes), and correspondingly begins with the values of duplicity and self-interest which Odysseus upholds, dominant. Philoctetes in the beginning upholds the

antithetical values of friendship which will "give me life" and the hope of seeing family and friends again, and which will bring Time which has been wasting him (667-726) into a pattern of continuance:

But the time is accomplished, a hero of noble birth is
his friend. (726)

At first Neoptolemus deceives Philoctetes, and when he repents, Philoctetes who is dissolutioned and embittered by this initial deceit, seeks revenge; and so for a time the unnatural remains dominant over the natural, which now Neoptolemus upholds. Finally Philoctetes is converted by the theophany, and thus the play ends on the note of regeneration and new life. Odysseus and the possibility of degeneration and death and protracted war, retreat into the background. The realignment of the three characters punctuates the play's basic antithesis, as the structure mirrors the thought. In its pattern and in its theme Philoctetes is very like The Tempest.¹

Philoctetes in this way is not unique among Sophocles' plays. The action of Ajax for instance turns on a similar realignment of characters whereby a tragic situation in which impiety and impatience and suicide are about to defeat generation, comes full-circle into a comic one where grief becomes joy, enemies friends. Ajax too looks back to an impiety where Ajax' pride enraged Athena, and for this she plagues him with madness. (750-80) Two possibilities then exist for Ajax: he can either kill himself in shame, or patiently learn to obey the gods. Correspondingly, Time can be regenerate:

¹The conversion of Prospero (5,1) marks a corresponding shift in the dominant value from revenge to mercy. Then too, Philoctetes' bow which Heracles gives him, is like Prospero's art. Both Philoctetes and Prospero are tempted to use their supernatural instruments unnaturally, and both finally use them to promote regeneration and mercy and peace. Compare generally the iconographic settings of the two plays.

The long measured pulse of time moves everything. (646)

The snowy feet of Winter walk away
 Before ripe Summer; and patrolling Night
 Breaks off her rounds to let the Dawn ride in
 On silver horses lighting up the sky.

... Must not we
 Learn this self-discipline? I think we must.
 I now know this, that while I hate my enemy
 I must remember that the time may come
 When he will be my friend; (673-83)

But it can also be destructive, and thus Ajax' suicide leaves his father and mother to "face old age" without him (508) and subjects his wife and son to his enemies and to slavery (488-501) and makes Teucer his half-brother an outlaw. (1022) Again the setting is by the sea--men are seafarers (4 & 1193)--and the unnaturalness of suicide subjects man to Time and appetite. Bonds continue to break, and after Ajax' suicide Menelaus and Agamemnon try to defile his body by denying it burial. This again is impious, and it makes disorder in the Greek camp,¹ makes the memory of Ajax who was a champion, degenerate to that of a "nobody" (1233), and generally makes everything fragment and disintegrate, till Odysseus finally breaks the tragic cycle. He was Ajax' enemy, but he honors him dead, and in doing so he follows "God's laws". (1344) Likewise he becomes friend and protector to Tecmessa and Eurysaces and Teucer "as truly as I was your enemy". By holding to piety and reverence for the gods, Odysseus allows the burial, saves Teucer and Tecmessa and Eurysaces from Infortune and appetite, and brings grief full-circle into joy. Again the structure reflects the thought, and the realignment of characters points the pattern of antitheses in which things come through the proper use of Time and Infortune, into piety and continuance and Nature.

¹ Compare 159-61 with 1047-1164.

I do not need to recount the sequence of unnatural acts in the Oedipus cycle which bring about Oedipus' fall. The oracle foretold what would happen, and Oedipus and Laios and Iocaste lived in the shadow of that prophecy. But it is worth noting that in his efforts to escape the prophecy, each character commits a new unnatural act--Laios and Iocaste expose their child on the mountain, Oedipus exiles himself from what he thinks is his family and his country--and that the tragedy follows these unnatural responses to the prophecy, and not the prophecy itself. This is clear in two ways: First it is clear in Oedipus at Colonus where Antigone breaks the cycle of unnaturalness for the first time and where peace and harmony follow her cleaving to Nature. Instead of accepting separation from her father, she nurses him till he comes to the sacred grove where the Furies, the Eumenides,

accept with gentleness
The suppliant and his wish. (Scene 2)

Second, it is clear in Antigone's dialogue with her brother Polyneices, whom Oedipus has just prophesied will kill his brother and in turn die at his brother's hand. (Scene 6) Polyneices plans to attack his brother in Thebes, and when Antigone warns him simply not to, he says that that is impossible. He feels doomed by his father's prophecy, and Antigone says to him,

But see how you fulfill his prophecies! (Scene 6)

Again Fate is like Time, and whether man comes to happiness or sorrow depends on how he uses Time, how he responds to Fate. If he responds unnaturally as Polyneices does, Time and Fate and Infortune triumph. Man must respect the oracle as a sign from the gods, and acting unnaturally against it shows disrespect, just as not believing it does. Polyneices

should respect his brother according to Nature, "though his birth was as it was,"¹ for the bond of love "frees us of all the weight and pain of life" (Scene 8), and brings us to harmony and accord.

Tragedy and comedy in the Oedipus cycle come in just these terms.² In Oedipus Rex the broken bonds and the impiety bring disorder and famine to Thebes, and death and sterility to Iocaste and Oedipus and their children. Oedipus imagines himself "the child of chance":

Luck is my mother; the passing months, my brothers,
Have seen me rich and poor. (Scene 3)

And Time in part triumphs here, for as he says to Antigone and Ismene,

Then, whom
Can you ever marry? There are no bridegrooms for you,
And your lives must wither away in sterile dreaming.
(Exodos)

and in gouging out his eyes, he metaphorically castrates himself.³ Tragedy is the disintegration and decay of his world and of himself. Similarly, in Oedipus at Colonus piety and the bonds of kind in Antigone and Ismene regenerate Oedipus (although the play also looks forward to the tragedy of

¹Compare Edmund in King Lear, who also capitulates to the stars of his birth.

²Compare Pericles. The themes of incest, famine, regeneration and decay, are generally alike in Pericles and in the Oedipus cycle. I use the words tragedy and comedy in the medieval sense, as I have tried to explain that sense. The scenes and choral poems are short in the Oedipus plays, and line references for my quotations are not necessary. There are no line references in the Harvest edition.

³Eyes and testicles are the outward signs of his blindness and pollution.

Antigone), and he in turn secures Theseus' care for the girls after his death and pronounces a benediction of peace and success for Theseus and Athens which Time will not erase:

I shall disclose to you, O son of Aegeus,
 What is appointed for you and for your city:
 A thing that age will never wear away (Scene 7)

The chorus presents an antithetical view:

Though he has watched a decent age pass by,
 A man will sometimes still desire the world.
 I swear I see no wisdom in that man.
 The endless hours pile up a drift of pain
 More unrelieved each day; and as for pleasure,
 When he is sunken in excessive age,
 You will not see his pleasure anywhere.
 The last attendant is the same for all,
 Old men and young alike, as in its season
 Man's heritage of underworld appears:
 There being then no epithalamion,
 No music and no dance. Death is the finish.
 (choral poem 3)

But in the end Theseus and Athens, through reverence and friendship, will be "be fortunate in all the time to come" (Scene 7), and Oedipus himself is more or less assumed bodily into the other-world. (Scene 8)

The Oedipus plays are about the search for truth--Oedipus himself seeks to "bring what is dark to light" (prologue)--and besides his passion and rage and grief, it is this search that gives the plays energy and movement and life. For Sophocles embodies the search in the plays' structure. Oedipus is continually discovering what is beneath what seems to be, truth beneath illusion, and in part this is the experience of life--this progress of seeming to know and then discovering. We in the audience are at once aware of his illusion and of the truth, and this double view where we and Oedipus momentarily believe in antithetical truths about a thing and yet where we know that he is deluded, is Sophoclean irony. There

is momentarily a gap between the two views, and the gap creates a tension in our minds; then gradually the gap narrows and disappears in the process of Oedipus' discovery, and this narrowing--this tension of disharmony's gradually coming into harmony--gives the plays motion. They come alive. When Oedipus is firm in his delusion and yet when the truth is very clear, then the tension or movement--the sense of its coming alive--is great. Oedipus Rex develops throughout by this irony and discovery, and the pattern recurs when Oedipus meets Creon, Teiresias, Iocaste, the Messenger, and lastly the Shepherd. Sophocles embodies his basic themes in the structure, and in doing so he gives his plays movement and vitality--authority.

Using these same ideas and antitheses I could discuss other Greek plays such as The Bacchae or The Medea of Euripides or the Oresteian trilogy of Aeschylus, but then I would not need to limit myself to the drama of classical Greece. Recollect for instance Book One of Plato's Republic, where Thrasymachus "like a wild beast" begins the dialogue with the polemical view that justice is "the interest of the stronger", or again, that "the life of the unjust is superior to that of the just". (336-49) But perhaps I would do well to look briefly at another time and another place, and to see how these themes and ideas which dominate the medieval narrative poetry and the drama of the Elizabethans, appear in another genre. Consider finally Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel, The Brothers Karamazov.¹

The basic antithesis in The Brothers Karamazov is simplicity and multiplicity, unity and division; and like Shakespeare, Dostoyevsky develops this antithesis in a pattern of corresponding planes--the world, the family,

¹References are to the Signet Classic edition, translated by Constance Garnett.

and the individual. Pride and unrestrained sensuality bring about division and anarchy in the world, degeneration and death in the family, insanity and suicide in the self; and contrarily love brings about brotherhood and harmony, regeneration, and patience. It is the old medieval antithesis of the reason and the sensuality, where "reason" pertains to the spiritual, "sensuality" to the temporal.¹ When the sensuality dominates, things fragment and disintegrate; but when the "reason" or spirituality dominates, then things which are multiple come into one-ness and accord. The Brothers Karamazov is grounded on these patterns.

The book is about the possibility of continuance in change, and thus the family and the murder of the father provide the basic metaphors. Pride and appetite cause degeneration and division and death in the family; brotherly love allows generation to defeat Mutability and to bring man towards a perfect one-ness. Thus the bastard Smerdyakov is a product of old Fyodor Karamazov's uninhibited sensuality. As Gregory says, he is a "confusion of nature" and a "monster" (III, 1), and he murders his father--again unchastity is a figure for the proliferation of evil, the decay of a line. Thus too Ivan in his intellectual pride sees his brother Dmitri and his father as two "reptiles" whom he would let "devour each other" (III,9), and in fact his leaving home is the sign for Smerdyakov to kill the old man. In a sense Dmitri is capable of the murder as well. Initially he too is a "sensualist", and his lust leads him to wild spending,

¹ Reason in its modern sense of logical thinking is too limited, for Ivan is in this sense reasonable, and clearly Dostoyevsky thinks of him as a "sensualist". See Book Three, "The Sensualist". See also Ivan's encounter with the devil (IX,9) who is after all a manifestation of Ivan himself and who tells Ivan that he of all the brothers is most like the old sensualist Fyodor and that his idea that "all things are lawful" is just this--an excuse for complete indulgence.

and his pressing need for money disorders his mind. Book Eight entitled "Dmitri" describes the disintegration of himself in his pursuit of the rubbles, to the point where he nearly kills the servant Gregory who actually raised him as a child. Only luck keeps him from killing his father. Preventing degeneration and death in the family, preserving continuance and unity, is a matter of controlling the sensuality in oneself and in the family as a whole; and Alyosha's concern for the disorder in his family marks his trying to promote regeneration and one-ness.¹ The idea of his being "his brother's keeper" epitomizes this--brotherly love controls the sensuality and preserves continuance. Contrarily Ivan repeats Cain's question, "Am I my brother's keeper?", and then says that he is not. Smerdyakov in a sense is only an extension of Ivan. He imitates this attitude in Ivan, but with Smerdyakov it is never a question, only a negative assertion. (V, 2&3) Ivan is guilty of the murder in thought, Smerdyakov in deed.

The family provides the basic metaphor, and as we see the antithetical possibilities of continuance and death in the family, so we see them on the corresponding plane of the individual. The book in a sense is about self-knowledge, and self-knowledge leads to patience and one-ness, as against madness and suicide. When sexual passion and pride and lust for money dominate Dmitri, we see him disintegrate until in Book Eight he is nearly a madman. Similarly reason for Ivan is a lower faculty, associated not with the spirituality but with temporal analysis--it is a function of his

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Alyosha also controls the sensuality in himself. He is not a Galahad who is never even tempted, and this is clear first when he talks to Dmitri in "Confessions of a Passionate Heart" (III,4), and second when he goes with Rakitin to Grushenka's. (VII, 2 & 3)

sensuality, (XI,9)--and as analysis implies, Ivan's limited kind of reason fragments him and divides him against himself till at the end he too is nearly a madman, nearly dead. Self-knowledge in Dostoyevsky is not self-analysis--rather it is the discovery of the spiritual ground of one's being, or faith, and this leads to patience and one-ness where the self is integrated and whole. We see this in Zossima, in Alyosha, and finally in Dmitri in prison. When the sensuality dominates the reason, man moves towards madness and suicide; but when the reason or spirituality dominates, man has self-knowledge, patience, one-ness, which allow for continuance in Time.

We see the antithetical possibilities of continuance and degeneration in the world, or Russia, as well, Kolya Krassotkin is metaphorically Alyosha's "son", the new generation in Russia; and in Kolya we see the two possibilities. Initially he imitates Ivan in his pride, and yet Alyosha more or less converts him so that finally Kolya will perpetuate Alyosha's spirit of brotherhood. Alyosha speaks of the value of "good memories":

"And if one has only one good memory left in one's heart, even that may grow sometime to be the means of saving him. Perhaps we may grow wicked later on, may be unable to refrain from evil, may laugh at men's tears and at those people who say as Kolya did just now: 'I want to suffer for all men.' We may even jeer spitefully at such people. But however bad we may become--which God forbid--yet, when we recall how we buried Ilusha, how we loved him in his last days, and how we have been talking like friends together, at this stone, the cruelest and most mocking of us--if we do become so--will not dare to laugh inwardly at having been kind and good at this moment...."

"Hurrah for Karamazov!" Kolya shouted. (Epilogue, 3)

Dostoyevsky epitomizes the contrary tendency in Kolya when Kolya laughs at the "clever peasant" in the market-place. (X,3) This supercilious superiority is not deep-grained in Kolya, but it is the same superiority

that Ivan has and that Smerdyakov apes. Ivan's superiority springs from his belief in the innate corruption and evil in the heart of man, from his belief in a Godless universe, and athwart all this, from his belief in his own virtue. Ivan fosters paradox, and thus his belief in his own virtue stems from his perception and restraint of his own viciousness. This belief in personal virtue on the one hand and, on the other, in the innate evil in the heart of man, gives rise to the Grand Inquisitor. (V,5) The Grand Inquisitor believes in a Godless universe, in the inherent corruptness of man--recollect that the poem begins from the catalogue of atrocities to innocent children (V,4)--and he sets himself above other men who neither perceive nor restrain evil. Thus for him "all things are lawful" because he is a "superior" being, and he is able to commit "sins" for the improvement of mankind. This kind of thinking is common to the Grand Inquisitor, to Ivan, and to Smerdyakov;¹ and it separates men and sets barriers between them, in place of bringing them together. The peasants are animals to be herded by the state-church. Antithetically, the elder Zossima believes in the goodness of the peasant, in the goodness of the heart of man; and so he

¹ Compare Raskolnikov in Crime and Punishment, who will justify his murder by living a virtuous life for "humanity" afterwards. For Ivan, see V,5, and XI, 9, and ^{my}note on page 359, on Ivan's leading a life of complete debauchery. For Smerdyakov see III, 7, where he says that the soldier who dies because of his faith is a fool. The soldier should temporarily renounce his faith in order to escape his oppressor and then lead a virtuous life forever after. Compare also Odysseus in Philoctetes:

Let honesty go hang, only for a day,
I beg you; and then you can live forever after
A paragon of virtue.

(85-87)

says that the masters must serve the servants and indeed must learn from them. (VI,2,f) Thus master and servant are "brothers in spirit". The Roman church bases itself on a belief in the evil in man, Dostoyevsky says, the Russian church on the goodness in man. And Dostoyevsky embodies this conflict in the structure by weighing Ivan's "Grand Inquisitor" with Alyosha's "Russian Monk", and punctuates the point he is making about the inherent goodness in man with the picture of Alyosha reaffirming this belief after he has lost it following the general reaction to his elder's corruption, when he finds a "sister" and not a whore in Grushenka. (VII,3) The story ends with Alyosha's speech to the boys, and in this way The Brothers Karamazov moves towards continuance and one-ness in the individual, in the family, and in society--Russia--for the book is largely about Russia and the possibility in the Russian spirit of the brotherhood of man, the "universal union of mankind".

* * *

Art is largely a reiteration and evocation of these themes and patterns, and like Dostoyevsky, who makes his novel come alive for us and compel our attention by making it highly dramatic, the artist must give his art authority, that it may have embodiment and conviction and life. In this way art tries to evoke the power and presence of life, which power or presence is at the least the reality of the illusion before us. If we are to feel this power and presence, we must understand first the ideas and themes, and then the manner in which they are put together, the pattern in which they emerge. This has been my purpose.

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