

DIVISION, CONFINEMENT, AND THE MORAL
STRUCTURE OF
*KING LEAR*¹

by John W. Velz

Since 1904, when A. C. Bradley defined the "horrible world" of *King Lear* as a function of Shakespeare's numerous allusions to repulsive, monstrous, or predatory animals,² criticism has given much attention to the relationship between the language of the play and its themes, tone, and structure. In an essay reprinted in *The Wheel of Fire* (1930), G. Wilson Knight argued that the play is a "comedy of the grotesque," dominated by the language of incongruity.³ Knight offered another interpretation in the same volume, emphasizing the opposed languages of nature and religion, of madness and peace.⁴ In 1935 Caroline Spurgeon fastened on a central pattern of imagery dealing with torment, violent motion, and dislocation which conveys "the atmosphere of buffeting, strain and strife, and, at moments, of bodily tension to the point of agony."⁵

More recently, Moody E. Prior has related the numerous allusions to Nature in the play to imagery of monstrosity, sexuality, animals, and torture.⁶ Robert B. Heilman devotes an entire book to the analysis of "image and structure in *King Lear*"; he isolates recurrent images of eyesight, clothing, Nature, age, "values," madness, justice, and religion and discusses them as indicative of an elaborate complex of themes in the play.⁷ In a review article, W. R. Keast objects "that Professor Heilman has not thought through, or has not given an adequate statement of, the mode of relationship between the patterns of poetic imagery and other elements of the play," and he expresses doubt that a "symbolic" approach to Shakespeare is a valid substitute for a literal reading.⁸ But recent criticism has nevertheless continued to probe the language of *Lear*.⁹ Indeed, Wolfgang Clemen has maintained that "the imagery here seems to be more fully integrated into the structure of the drama and for that reason to play a more meaningful rôle than in other plays." Clemen goes on to

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demonstrate that the number and kinds of images in the dialogue is an important technique of characterization in this play.¹⁰

It can also be shown that the moral structure of *King Lear* proceeds from the imagery of Act I as that imagery is repeated in the developing action. Shakespeare exemplifies two moral truths in this tragedy: first, that evils multiply inexorably when the head of a state makes a significantly wrong decision; second, that the function of evil is to teach—as Aeschylus puts it, *πάθει μάθος*, man learns by suffering.¹¹ The first moral truth, that evil radiates outward from a monarch's public violation of prudence, is a tenet central to English renaissance political tragedy. King Gorboduc, for example, abdicates his royal responsibilities as Lear does, and the evils which follow are exactly the evils in *King Lear*: fratricide and civil disruption. Richard II's weakness in giving up his crown to Bolingbroke precipitates the series of public calamities which the Bishop of Carlisle so vividly foresees in *Richard II* IV. i. 136-149 and which Shakespeare portrays in the other Lancastrian and Yorkist histories. Marlowe explores much the same royal weakness and resulting public evil in *Edward II*. Shakespeare had ample precedent for this part of the moral structure of *Lear*.

The private rôle of evil in the play is more difficult to define. If man learns by suffering, what, one may ask, does he learn? Some interpreters have argued that he learns to endure, as a stoic endures: "Men must endure / Their going hence, even as their coming hither," Edgar tells his father.¹² Others have argued that he learns penitence, as a Christian knows penitence: "I'll kneel down, / And ask of thee forgiveness," Lear tells his daughter (V. iii. 10-11). These two passages are only ten lines apart in Act V; small wonder that criticism has failed to choose convincingly between them. Perhaps it might be argued, without rejecting either of these interpretations, that one lesson man learns by suffering in this play is to enlarge the boundaries of his imagination, to expand the limits of his moral sensibility. If this interpretation is correct, the moral structure of the play can be seen as ironic. At the same time that evil fans outward through family, state, and even cosmos from Lear's imprudent act in the first scene of the play, Lear himself is learning to open outward, to enlarge the limits of his moral vision. There is, then, an ironic parallel between the gradually widening circles of public evil and the gradually widening moral horizons of the protagonist.

Shakespeare conveys his conceptions of public and private evil in *King Lear* by means of two distinct, but related groups of images.¹³ The first group, associated with division, conveys the public evil of the play; the second, associated with confinement, conveys the private lesson which evil teaches. Though the imagery of confinement is as closely linked to

the imagery of division as the internal action is to the external, it will be convenient to consider the two patterns separately.

Kent and Gloucester begin the play by discussing the impending division of the kingdom, and their conversation provides a basis for our later awareness of Lear's moral errors in making the division. Kent says, "I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall." We will later learn that Albany is far the better of Lear's two sons-in-law, but Gloucester replies that though Lear has always seemed to prefer Albany until now, "in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the Dukes he values most. . . ." ¹⁴ Lear, who now divides his affections equally between the better son and the evil one, will proceed to an entirely erroneous distinction between his good and his evil daughters. A moment later (1. 33), the King himself enters and immediately calls for a map, announcing his "darker purpose": "Know that we have divided / In three our kingdom." Goneril, first of the daughters to essay the love-test, protests that her father is to her "Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty" (1. 56). There is irony here, of course, because it is space, a share of the divided kingdom, which Goneril wants. Her juxtaposition of eyesight and space is an ironic counterpart to Lear's announcement that the division of the kingdom is a "darker purpose." Regan, not to be outdone, follows her sister's lead in spatial language: she professes herself "an enemy to all other joys / Which the most precious square of sense possesses" (11. 73-74). Whether Regan is thinking of the carpenter's square which divides spaces, ¹⁵ or of a square on a chess board, or merely of geometrical squares in general, she certainly is thinking in spatial terms. Lear rewards Regan's love with

this ample third of our fair kingdom,
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Goneril
(11. 80-82)

When Cordelia follows her sisters' spatial language with "Nothing" and with an allusion to the "bond" of love and duty which unites her to her father, Lear rejects her in terms of division:

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.
(11. 113-116)

He goes on to say that morally and physically remote Scythians and cannibals will "Be as well neighbour'd" to his bosom as Cordelia. Kent tries to prevent this division between Lear and his youngest daughter, and, like Cordelia, is banished, separated from his homeland; he calls attention to

the paradox implicit in the separation: "Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here" (1. 181). France echoes Kent's thought as he tells Cordelia "Thou lovest here, a better where to find" (1. 261).

Act I, Scene i is, therefore, a scene of partition: Lear separates himself in a sequence of gestures from his crown, from his power, from one of his daughters, and from his most loyal retainer.¹⁶ In dividing the kingdom, Lear has initiated a process of division which no earthly power will be able to prevent from running its evil course in the succeeding action. An ironic commentary on this nascent evil is provided by Goneril and Regan who end the scene by forming an alliance: "Pray you, let us hit together" (11. 303-304); but the alliance is itself calculated to divide the daughters from their father, and the daughters will soon be divided from each other by their rivalry for Edmund's love.

The second scene of the play repeats the language and the action of the first; this analogical structure begins the inexorable movement of evil outward from Lear's initial error. Edmund, like Goneril and Regan, is in rivalry to obtain an inheritance—"Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land"—and he, like them, poses as a loving child in order to obtain that patrimony. Edmund sets out to divide Edgar from his father's affections, and his instrument, the forged letter, rises to a climax in which Edgar is portrayed as offering to divide Gloucester's "revenue" with Edmund. Playing the loyal brother, Edmund cautions Gloucester against precipitous action: "mistaking his [Edgar's] purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience" (11. 85-87). The irony of Edmund's metaphorical comment on his brother's fragile obedience becomes apparent in Acts IV and V, where five separate times Edgar speaks of broken or cracked hearts (three times of his own, once of Gloucester's, and once of Kent's).¹⁷ Lear and Gloucester in Act II, Lear in Act III, and Kent in Act V also speak of their hearts as capable of shattering—ironic reverberations of the imagery of fragmentation in Act I.¹⁸ Gloucester's shocked response to Edmund's accusation is to enumerate for us the widening circles of divisive evil which Act I has set in motion:

Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond crack'd 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the King falls from bias of nature; there's father against child.

(I. ii. 110-117)

That there may be no mistake about the relationship between Scenes i and ii, Gloucester ends his catalogue with "Kent banish'd!" A moment later, Edmund cynically imitates his father's catalogue for Edgar's benefit; he has been reading, he says, of

unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state; menaces and maledictions against King and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

(11. 151-156)

Goneril first shows her hostility to her father in Act I, Scene iii by complaining that he is dividing her household: "every hour / He flashes into one gross crime or other, / That sets us all at odds" (11. 4-6). Her response to this divisive influence is to counter it with a breach between Lear and the servants in her house. She instructs Oswald to "Put on what weary negligence you please, / You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question" (11. 13-14). Her own breach with Lear in I. iv is also over a matter of division; she divides in half his retinue of one hundred knights, and later Regan joins her in a savage parody of the divisions of Act I, Scene i, when the two daughters conspire to divide their father's remaining fifty knights in half and then the surviving twenty-five in fifths (II. iv. 239-265).

Meanwhile, the Fool's conundrums also parody the theme and language with which the play began:

Nuncle, give me an egg, and I'll give thee two crowns . . . after I have cut the egg i' th' middle and eat up the meat, [I'll give thee] the two crowns of the egg.
(I. iv. 162-166)

I would not be thee, Nuncle; thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing i' th' middle.

(I. iv. 193-195)

This image of Lear's fragmented wit foreshadows the King's insanity, which in Act IV, Scene vii Cordelia calls a "great breach in his abused nature" (1. 15). Again the Fool asks:

Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' th' middle on's face? . . . Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose. . . .

(I. v. 19-22)

Divisive evil continues to dominate the action and the language of the play. Curan begins Act II by asking Edmund whether he has heard of "likely wars toward, 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany" (11. 11-12), and Kent begins Act III by informing a Gentleman that "There is division, / Although as yet the face of it is cover'd / With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall" (11. 19-21). Civil war as such never materializes, prevented, of course, by the sudden death of Cornwall, but the open rift between Goneril and Regan is a microcosm of the civil division that might have been. Albany's antipathy for his evil wife parallels the malicious division between the sisters; the Duke resists the temptation of an appropriate punishment for Goneril: "to dislocate and tear / Thy

flesh and bones."¹⁹ If civil war never comes openly, international war does come, and it is ironically fitting that this war occasioned by division should culminate in two cases of fratricide. At the end of the climactic battle, Goneril poisons her sister and Edgar kills his half brother.

The evil of division, then, has moved outward from the King's initial public error, through families, and the state, and into the international community. Shakespeare does not halt the inexorable progress of divisive evil here, however; he extends it even into the macrocosm. Gloucester's "late eclipses in the sun and moon" are an early indication that the disorder of divisive evil will be cosmic; Gloucester associates the eclipses, significantly, with the catalogue of divisions in the family and state quoted earlier. In the storm scenes the elements are in disorder, and specifically in divisive disorder—the wind and rain are "to-and-fro-conflicting," "contentious" (III. i. 11; III. iv. 6), divided against themselves. Lear, his mind fragmenting, "Strives in his little world of man to out-storm" those divided elements²⁰; he commands the winds to "crack your cheeks" and the thunder to "crack Nature's moulds." It seems fitting that the "division . . . 'twixt Albany and Cornwall" should be discussed in the midst of this self-divided storm. But perhaps the most moving image of a divided cosmos in the play is not in Act III, but in Act V, where twice in the final scene suffering men wish to split the arch of heaven. Edgar tells us that when Kent discovered him mourning the dead Gloucester, "He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out / As he'd burst heaven" (V. iii. 212-213). And moments later (1. 257) Lear enters with the dead Cordelia in his arms: "O! you are men of stones: / Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so / That heaven's vault should crack." The incredible public evil of the play has come to its fulfillment in the death of Cordelia and in this final image of cosmic division.

Lear makes his tragic mistakes in Act I, Scene i because he has a constricted imagination.²¹ His moral sensibilities are identified with tangible, closed-in spaces. He defines his daughters' loves within the space of his island kingdom, held symbolically in his hands as a map. The first award goes to Goneril:

Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady.

(I. i. 63-66)

Lear thinks that he is conferring largesse on Goneril, but in reality he is rigidly circumscribing her—within "these bounds, even from this line to this." Like Regan and Cornwall, Goneril will soon attempt to burst the confining boundaries which Lear has imposed on her, and strife will follow.

When Cordelia and Kent fail Lear's limiting love and loyalty tests they escape into freedom: Kent tells Lear that "Freedom lives hence" (1. 181), and Cordelia departs across the sea, freeing herself from the boundaries of spatial love which her father would have assigned to her.

As Edmund and Gloucester repeat the language of division which is initiated in Scene i, they also repeat the language of confinement. Edmund tells us that he is "bound" to the law of the goddess Nature (I. ii. 1-2) and in describing himself he chooses terms like "dimensions" and "shape" (11. 7-8). His forged letter makes an unintentionally ironic comment on the confinements of the preceding scene: "I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny" (11. 49-51). Gloucester's opening words in this scene are also ironic, as they reveal that Lear, who sought to bind others, is himself bound: "the King gone to-night! prescrib'd his power! / Confin'd to exhibition!" (11. 24-25). But Gloucester does not see the irony in his observations; he is himself "confin'd." As Lear fallaciously equated his daughters' loves with the lines on a map, Gloucester will fallaciously equate his sons' loves with the words in a letter. Gloucester's reaction to Edgar's supposed treachery is to make a sealed fortress of Britain: "All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape" (II. i. 80). It is ironic that Gloucester should himself later be made a prisoner, bound to a chair in his own castle. As he puts it: "I am tied to th' stake, and I must stand the course" (III. vii. 53). But though he is bound physically in Act III, Scene vii, he has by this time begun to emerge from his moral fetters; Cornwall and Regan bind and torture him for his act of solicitude for the helpless Lear, and Gloucester's new freedom is reflected in his defense of the solicitude: "If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that dearn time, / Thou should'st have said 'Good Porter, turn the key'."²² Perhaps Gloucester's new freedom is also symbolized in Regan's command after the mutilation: "Go thrust him out at gates" (1. 92).

The gates and bonds which dominate Gloucester's moral life are a reinforcing parallel to the more important gates and bonds which close in the moral life of Lear. When Goneril reveals her vicious nature, Lear sees for the first time that his moral life is walled about:

O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in,
And thy dear judgment out!

(I. iv. 279-281)

Ironically, Goneril at this moment is anxious lest Lear's retinue of Knights make *her* a prisoner: "He may enguard his dotage with their powers, / And hold our lives in mercy" (11. 336-337). It is perhaps at this point in the action that we begin to appreciate the incongruity of the expansive, cosmic

oath which this King of limited horizons uttered in Act I. He rejected Cordelia, swearing

. . . by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate and the night,
By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist and cease to be.
(I. i. 109-112)

This mighty oath is evoked by the King's limited understanding of his daughter's love. The irony is much like the irony implicit in the contrast between Gloucester's expansive, astrological consciousness and his hedged-in moral perceptions.

Walls and gates need not, of course, make prisons—moral or physical. Their proper function is to provide shelter, not confinement. The Fool reminds us of this fact in his cross-examination of Lear in Act I, Scene v:

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put's head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

(11. 25-32)

But the Fool's perception goes unheeded; it is prisons which dominate the action. Kent, the voice of moral conscience in Act I, is imprisoned in the stocks in Act II, and Lear journeys between the dungeon-like castles in which his evil daughters reside. That he has not yet cast off his moral shackles is plain from his anger that Goneril should "oppose the bolt / Against my coming in" (II. iv. 178-179). But when he learns that evil resides in both of these castles, as it has resided within the walls of his own constricted moral world, he says that he will "abjure all roofs" (I. 210), and at the end of Act II Regan and Cornwall make the same symbolic gesture toward Lear that Regan later makes toward Gloucester—they "shut up [Gloucester's] doors" (II. iv. 306, 310), leaving Lear out in the storm, but also out in a freer moral world.

Lear rages in the storm against the enemies of the gods:—"close pent-up guilts," which lurk behind "concealing continents" (III. ii. 57-58). He sees now that evil is a prison. Kent tries to persuade the King to return to "this hard house,— / More harder than the stones whereof 'tis rais'd" (11. 63-64), but Lear prefers the tempest which distracts him from the evil within that "hard house." He even refuses the shelter of the hovel on the heath until compassion for the Fool causes him to enter: "In, boy; go

first. You houseless poverty,— / Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep" (III. iv. 26-27). The prayer he speaks is for "Poor naked wretches" with "houseless heads" and "loop'd and window'd raggedness." In his sympathy for suffering, unprotected mankind, Lear has begun to emerge from the prison which had previously shut in his moral awareness. When he enters the hovel he finds shelter, not confinement.

But Lear becomes delirious shortly after his horizons begin to expand, and in his ravings he once again rejects shelter. He manifests compassion for naked Edgar by tearing off his clothing: "Off, off, you lendings! Come; unbutton here" (III. iv. 111-112). Later, in Act IV, Scene vi, Lear's raving again associates the protection of adequate clothing with evil:

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.

(11. 166-169)

And immediately he commands someone to "Pull off my boots; harder, harder; so."²³ When, in this same scene, Cordelia's retainers attempt to help him, Lear assumes that he is to be imprisoned:

No rescue? What! a prisoner? I am even
The natural fool of Fortune. Use me well;
You shall have ransom.

(11. 192-194)

And even when Cordelia awakens him from sleep into sanity, Lear thinks of himself as a prisoner in hell: "Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound / Upon a wheel of fire. . . ."

However, the very image of confinement which the King chooses here indicates that he is no longer a moral prisoner. His horizons have expanded; they now embrace the whole moral order from heaven to hell, and permit him to see Cordelia's virtue and his own past error.²⁴ It is therefore ironic that this free man and his free daughter should be imprisoned after the battle of Act V. Lear underlines the irony when he urges Cordelia:

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.

(V. iii. 8-11)

But the evils which Lear set in motion in Act I will not permit blessing and forgiveness to live, even in prison. Cordelia is hanged, and Lear, too, is suffocated by this final evil:

Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never!
Pray you, undo this button: thank you, Sir.
(11. 307-309)

The button which has confined him is loosened, and Lear is freed at last, in death, from the straitening evils which have compassed his life. Kent sadly makes a summation of those evils in a final metaphor of confinement and torture:

O! let him pass, he hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

(V. iii. 313-315)

As a public figure Lear made a drastic mistake which resulted inexorably in wave after wave of divisive evil. As a private man, Lear learned (ironically enough from those same waves of divisive evil) to expand his moral perceptions beyond the confines in which they had originally been bound. Lear learned much—but too late.

NOTES

1. In a slightly different form this paper was read as part of a symposium on *King Lear* at a meeting of the Conference of College Teachers of English of Texas in San Antonio, April 4, 1964.
2. "Lecture VII: *King Lear*," *Shakespearean Tragedy*, as reprinted by Meridian Books (New York, 1955), pp. 197-223.
3. "Lear and the Comedy of the Grotesque," *The Wheel of Fire: Essays in Interpretation of Shakespeare's Sombre Tragedies* (Oxford, 1930), Ch. IX, pp. 175-193.
4. "The Lear Universe," *ibid.*, Ch. X, pp. 194-226. In yet another reading—*The Shakespearean Tempest* (Oxford, 1932), pp. 194-201, *passim*—he argued that the first three acts of *Lear* are dominated by imagery of storms (associated with the sea, fierce animals, and monsters), while the last two acts contain the opposed imagery of music (associated with love, sanity, and peace).
5. *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us*, as reprinted by Beacon Press (Boston, 1961), pp. 338-343.
6. "The Elizabethan Tradition," *The Language of Tragedy* (New York, 1947), pp. 16-153. (See especially pp. 80-91.)
7. *This Great Stage: Image and Structure in "King Lear"* (Baton Rouge, 1948).
8. "Imagery and Meaning in the Interpretation of *King Lear*," *Modern Philology*, XLVII (1949), 45-64 (quotation from p. 53).
9. George W. Williams (*Shakespeare Quarterly*, II [1951], 57-71) discusses "The Poetry of the Storm in *King Lear*" from a linguistic as well as a literary point of view. L. C. Knights analyzes the language of justice in the play—see "King Lear as Metaphor," *Myth and Symbol: Critical Approaches and Applications*, ed. Bernice Slote (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1962), pp. 21-38. In a major study Russell A. Fraser defends the symbolic approach to Shakespeare's language with reference to the iconographical tradition in renaissance art: *Shakespeare's Poetics: In Relation to "King Lear"* (London, 1962).

10. "King Lear," *The Development of Shakespeare's Imagery* (Cambridge, Mass., 1951), Ch. 14, pp. 133-153.
11. *Agamemnon*, 177.
12. V. ii. 9-10. Kenneth Muir's Arden Edition (Cambridge, Mass., 1952/1959) is the authority for all citations to the text.
13. It should not, of course, be inferred that the interpretation proposed here is offered as an exclusive key to the meaning of the play; the images isolated here might best be regarded as a complement to the skeins of imagery which others have discussed.
14. G. R. Elliott curiously argues ("The Initial Contrast in *Lear*," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, LVIII [1959], 251-263) that Lear's equal treatment of his two sons-in-law is indicative of his political acumen at this first stage of the action; but we should recall that Gorboduc is condemned first for dividing his kingdom at all (see the Act I dumbshow), and second for dividing it equally, thus ignoring completely the laws of primogeniture (see Porrex's explanation after he has killed Ferrex:

. . . my brother's heart . . . repined
 With swollen disdain against mine egal rule,
 Seeing that realm which by descent should grow
 Wholly to him allotted half to me!

[IV ii 85-88—Baskervill, Heltzel,
 Nethercot text].

15. Muir prefers this interpretation of the word (see Arden Edition).
16. In *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto, 1962), pp. 11-13, Marshall McLuhan points to this theme of partition or fragmentation in Scene i. He notes that the situation calls for "specialists in filial piety" who are set apart from one another by their competition for Lear's love—and his land. But McLuhan does not go on to apply the theme to the remainder of the play.
17. IV. vi. 85, 143; V. iii. 182, 196-199, 216-217.
18. II. i. 90; II. iv. 287-288; III. iv. 4; V. iii. 312.
19. IV. ii. 65-66. Cf. Lear's crazed vision of a divided female anatomy at IV. vi. 126-129:

Down from the waist they are Centaurs:
 Though women all above:
 But to the girdle do the Gods inherit,
 Beneath is all the fiend's.

20. III. i. 10. William Empson has observed the paradox that "the storm in Nature is no doubt partly the image of Lear's mind, but it is also an attack upon him. . . ." See *The Structure of Complex Words* (Norfolk, Conn., 1951), p. 134.
21. As Clemen observes (*op. cit.*, p. 134), "More and more Lear loses contact with the outside world; words become for him less a means of communication with others than a means of expressing what goes on within himself."
22. Lines 62-63. Gloucester's protest against excluding Lear from shelter is echoed in Cordelia's later lines:

Mine enemy's dog,
 Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
 Against my fire.

(IV. vii. 36-38)

23. For a valuable discussion of clothing as an ambivalent moral symbol in *Lear*, see Thelma N. Greenfield, "The Clothing Motif in *King Lear*," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, V (1954), 281-286.
24. I am indebted for this interpretation of IV. vii. 46-47 to a suggestion made by my colleague, Professor Alan Grob.