

F.D.Hoeniger

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Scholars are far from agreed as to the basic nature of Shakespeare's last plays or Romances. Concentrating mainly on Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale, this thesis seeks to add to our understanding of the Romances by examining their structure and imagery, which contain a number of peculiarities. It is argued that the main function of the structure of the last plays is to give shape to Shakespeare's final vision: a vision as profound as, though different from, that of the Tragedies.

As the Romances are complex poetic dramas, a conception of structure merely in terms of "the arrangement of the incidents would be inadequate. All those elements, as far as they can be traced, which contributed to their design, are relevant. Imagery, in particular, closely interacts with structure, though not equally clearly in all of the Romances. It clarifies their function of structure.

To express his vision clearly, and in effective dramatic form, presented even Shakespeare, the mature dramatist, with unusual difficulties. His first two Romances are interesting experiments rather than successful plays, pericles being written in the manner of a saint-play, Cymbeline in the more complex form of Alexandrian romance. In The Winter's Tale and The Tempest, Shakespeare accomplished his purpose fully, employing basically different

types of structure.

His final vision is at once wider and more optimistic than that of the Tragedies. It comprehends levels of romance as well as of reality. Though the good man encounters evil and is subjected to suffering, even to despair, divine Providence restores him to joy. During his trials, he acquires patience and moral wisdom. Providence acts partly through the younger generation who represent man's hope of renewal in life. This action is mainly inward and requires many years. The findings, however, should be regarded as tentative, since they are based on merely one angle of approach.

ERRATA AND ADDENDA

F.D. Hoewer

- p.29 line 3: for "a structure" read "the structure."
- pp.33,35,156,262: for "The Midsummer Night's Dream" read "A Midsummer Night's Dream".
- p.50 (twice): for "atenkin" read "Ateukin".
- p.56: for "novelle" read "novella".
- p.58 line 14: omit "and".
- p.109 second last line: for "shared" read "shares".
- p.120 line 9: for "is to be killed" read "is supposed to be killed".
- p.129 last line of text: for "sides" read "asides".
- p.191: for "The Rare Triumph of Fortune and Love" read "The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune".
- p.238 fourth line of text: omit "the" before "Time's".
- pp.272,276,283: for "Gonzago" read "Gonzalo".
- p.296: for "novelles" read "novelle".
- p.346 note 9: for "grantedly" read "admittedly".
- pp.360 note 54, 365 note 12, 375: for "Kenmore" read "Kermode".
- p.361 note 12: for "jealously" read "jealousy".
- p.385: add to item under "K. Severs": "24-33".

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Addenda to Book-List

Aristotle: see under S.H. Butcher and under I. Bywater.

S.T. Coleridge: Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism (ed. T.M. Raysor), 1930, 2 vols.

Th. Heywood: The Brazen Age. The first act containing the death of the Centaure Nessus, the second, the Tragedy of Meleager; the third, the Tragedy of Jason and Medea; the fourth, Vulcan's Net. The fifth, the Labours and Death of Hercules, 1613 (B.M.: C. 34 c.41).

Th. Heywood: The Golden Age: or the Lives of Jupiter and Saturne, with the defining of the heathen Gods, 1611 (B.M.: C.12 f.12 (i)).

Th. Heywood: The Silver Age, including: the loue of Jupiter to Alcmena: the birth of Hercules: and the Rape of Proserpine. Concluding with the Arraignement of the Moone, 1613. (B.M.: C.34 c.53).

J. Webster: The Dramatic Works of John Webster, (ed. W. Hazlitt), 1857, 4 vols.



The Function of Structure and Imagery

in Shakespeare's Last Plays

Ph.D. Thesis submitted  
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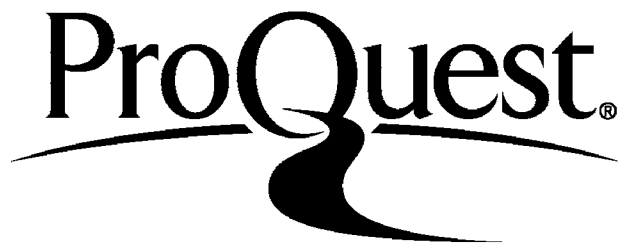
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MOTTO

" Shakespeare has surface beneath surface, to an immeasurable depth . . . . There is no exhausting the various interpretation of his symbol. "

Hawthorne, Our Old Home.

INTRODUCTION

The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the history of the English language, from its origin in the North Sea to its present position as a world language. The second part is devoted to a detailed study of the English language in its present state, with special reference to its structure and to its use in literature and in the spoken language. The third part is devoted to a study of the English language in its present state, with special reference to its structure and to its use in literature and in the spoken language.

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Thomas Heywood or some other hackwriter of the day. If applied to The Winter's Tale, it would be as inappropriate as to Beethoven's last sonatas. The bear in Mucedorus, a play which preceded The Winter's Tale by about ten years, we may well attribute to its author's desire to procure a novel sensational effect on the stage: the bear in The Winter's Tale, no less comic and startling, like everything else in that play, serves as well a wider purpose.

But to think of the last plays as serious works of art with an underlying unity of design is by no means to assert that each is, in every respect and detail, successful. Neither Pericles (where the problem of mixed authorship considerably complicates the issue) nor Cymbeline can be regarded as a completely satisfying piece, but they must rather be seen as highly interesting experiments in a mode of dramatic composition different from any of Shakespeare's earlier works and destined to be partial failures. The task Shakespeare set himself in his final plays was evidently not an easy one<sup>even</sup> for the consummate artist who had written the great tragedies. This task, it seems to me, was to express in dramatic form his final vision of life, a vision of a scope which even Shakespeare had not attempted to express before, and which demanded a still more daring and "freer" use of his medium: of structure, of characterization, of language.

This vision, the general nature of which will be described in this thesis, shows every sign of having grown and matured slowly in Shakespeare's mind. Plays like Macbeth and

Hamlet, however much they reflect Shakespeare's conscious artistic intelligence at work, seem to have been composed under the impact of sudden inspiration. But in the last plays, the dominant tone of the language is less urgent, its general character far more reflective. Yet the experience underlying them is not therefore the less real or valuable. In the last plays are portrayed the fruits of penitence and patience rather than of passion. If this view is sound, Shakespeare would not be the only artist who after many years of impulsive writing, his creative imagination taking ahold of one theme or story after another, in his final works experimented in a form and style, through which he might give expression to his mature and more reflective vision of life's values. It is the vision of a man who is conscious of nearing the end of his artistic career or pattern, who looks back and sees life in the light of time.

By the last plays or Romances, I mean Pericles, Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest. My study concentrates on the first three of these plays, and treats The Tempest only briefly. In this choice, I was guided mainly by two considerations: the fact that on the whole, critics have done far better justice to The Tempest than to the other Romances, and the desirability to limit somewhat further the scope of this thesis. The main part of my study is devoted to analysis of the structure in Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale, and to discussion of what I regard in each case to be its function. Imagery is given a much smaller place, and

considered mainly with a view to gaining further insight into the significance of the structure in these plays, and thus of the general nature of the vision they contain. As we shall find, attention to a play's imagery can sometimes help us not merely to interpret its structure, but also to become aware of its full scope.

What I mean by structure and by function of structure is broadly discussed in my opening chapter. It is argued there that a narrow view of structure, in the sense merely of construction of the action, could hardly do justice to works as intricate and as poetic as the last plays. For it to be at all fruitful, our view of structure must include several basic issues other than mere plot, which Shakespeare may have had in mind while engaged in the shaping of these plays. This chapter includes further a treatment of the relation of imagery to structure. However, it seems advisable to begin with a description of the more obvious features of the construction of the action in these plays, with emphasis on elements peculiar to them among contemporary dramatic works. This is the purpose of Chapter 2. As the structure of these plays must have been determined in part by the nature of the material Shakespeare mainly drew upon, namely romance, I then proceed, in Chapter 3, to a brief consideration of the chief characteristics of this genre. This prepares us for a thorough study of Pericles, Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale in the central chapters. After a cursory treatment of The Tempest in the light of the other Romances, our main findings are summarized

in the final chapter, where the degree of interrelation among the last plays is also assessed. However, some of the detailed evidence underlying part of my argument, especially with reference to Pericles, has been relegated to appendices, since its inclusion in the main body of the thesis might have disturbed the unity of the argument. In the appendices I have listed also some findings or considerations which may add to our knowledge about the final plays, though they are not strictly relevant to this thesis.

The primary aim of this thesis, as already indicated, is to suggest a fruitful and systematic approach to Shakespeare's last plays, and to trace this approach with some thoroughness. But I of course do not claim that this is the only constructive approach that might be followed. Moreover, much of the criticism, analysis, or interpretation in these pages is bound to be relative. The full meaning of imagery in these plays, or for that in any poetic drama, can be measured only in terms of its impact upon imaginative minds. But imaginative minds differ, and thus a particular image or even cluster of images will affect one mind much more keenly than another, as evidenced, for instance, in F. R. Leavis' criticism of Father Stephenson's account of the imagery in Cymbeline (1). The same holds when we consider the function of certain elements of structure in poetic drama. Such criticism is bound to be relative though it need not therefore be, at least to disciples of Coleridge, the less relevant.

In such difficult and often puzzling plays as Cymbeline

and The Winter's Tale, the late works of a dramatist who had mastered the art of structure and boldly experimented with it in a variety of forms, the best of critics can hope for only a degree of insight; and some of his views he may modify or even abandon with further study and experience. All this thesis claims is to provide a number of suggestions in the form of a synthesis, which point to the fundamental unity of the last plays, and strive to do justice to their "standard of poetic achievement"(2). In many of my detailed assumptions, I have only a reasonable degree of certainty or conviction. But whenever an interpretation impressed me as highly speculative or doubtful, I have removed it to the footnotes, for whatever it may be worth. On account of these considerations, and because this thesis is primarily concerned with form, I have usually not gone beyond indicating the nature of the vision of these plays in general terms. At some time I hope to corroborate the findings of this study by a systematic analysis of the verse-form and style in these plays, in the light of a greater knowledge of romance.

In the main body of this thesis, my work is independent of that of any other critic. But I have derived inspiration from the writings on Shakespeare of some of the great critics of the past, especially Dr. Johnson, Coleridge, and Hazlitt. Everyone working on the imagery of Shakespeare's plays is indebted to the recent studies by C. F. E. Spurgeon, W. Clemen, U. M. Ellis-Fermor, and I. Evans in this field. Of general discussions in recent years, I have found E. M. W. Tillyard's

Shakespeare's Last Plays, G. W. Knight's The Crown of Life, C. Still's Shakespeare's Mystery Play, and D. A. Traversi's Approach to Shakespeare helpful, as also the articles published in Scrutiny by F. C. Tinckler, A. A. Stephenson, and D. A. Traversi (3). Of these critics, Traversi seems to have arrived at the view of the last plays closest to my own, but I became aware of his work only when my study was well under way. I am indebted also to J. M. Nosworthy who kindly let me read the introduction to his edition of Cymbeline (4) in proof. On some basic matters regarding that play, our views seem to be startlingly alike, but we arrived at them independently. In order not to overburden the footnotes, indebtedness to these and other critics has been acknowledged only when I was strongly conscious of following in their tracks. I should mention here also my previous publication on "The Meaning of The Winter's Tale" (5) in which I adopt an approach to this play rather different from that in my thesis; but I have necessarily drawn heavily from it.

While working on this thesis, I have benefited from the kind advice and encouragement of Professor Una Ellis-Fermor, to whom I owe a deep gratitude. In my quotations from Shakespeare, I follow the text of the (old) Cambridge edition, though I have checked the Folio and Q1 of Pericles in a number of instances, indicating significant variations in the footnotes.

The above-mentioned... shall describe... and function... describe the... understand...

As to structure... analysis...

CHAPTER 1

The Dramatic Function of  
Structure and Imagery.

Aristotle's... character... affecting... Aristotle...

Chapter 1

The main critical terms that will be employed in this thesis are those contained in its title: structure, imagery, and function. The purpose of this opening chapter is to describe the meaning and implications of these terms as we understand them.

As to structure, we shall benefit from its famous classical definition in Aristotle's Poetics. Any critic who engages in a systematic treatment of dramatic structure must, at an early stage of his discussion, come to terms with or take issue with the Aristotelian view. In our examination of the structure of Shakespeare's romances, Aristotle will be the guide during an important part of our journey. But in order later to gain a more intimate perspective of these plays, we shall have to part company. Even then, we shall do well to recall from time to time his solid counsel.

Aristotle means by dramatic structure the "structure of the plot" or "the arrangement of the incidents" (1), in other words, the construction of an action that is so devised as to hold an audience in suspense. He emphasizes that this action must be complete, and that it should appear "probable" (2). As his account of structure develops, he dwells on the general character of a play's action as well as on certain principles affecting the relation of its various parts.

Either by direct statement or clear implication, Aristotle draws our attention to the following aspects of



dramatic structure: i) the unity or lack of unity of the action; ii) the direction in which the action moves, which means particularly the kind of change of fortune presented; iii) the relative complexity of the plot; whether it is simple or complex, and how, in the latter case, various threads are combined; iv) the general character of the incidents, with a view to the kind of effect, light, serious or mixed, which they are designed to produce; v) the degree of variety and manner of arrangement of the incidents, and the rapidity with which incidents follow upon one another; this last point involves the speed of the action, the relative looseness or tightness of the construction, the amount of contrast employed, and so on; vi and last) the handling of time and place, especially of the former because of structure's temporal dimension in drama.

A discussion of structure along the lines indicated should, so Aristotle states, form the beginning of any systematic critical treatment of a drama. Of the plot he speaks in no lesser terms than "the first principle and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy" (3). The other essential components of drama listed by him, Character, Thought, Diction, Melody and Spectacle, he regards, though in varying degrees, as subordinate to the action.

... most important of all is the structure of the incidents. 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. Now character determines men's qualities, but it is by their actions that they are happy or the reverse.... Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of a tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all. (4)

There are truths in this passage which apply to any form of genuine drama, Greek or Elizabethan or other. The revolt in Shakespearean criticism which we have seen in our century has proved salutary against those "romantic" Shakespeareans who tended to dissociate the characters of his plays from their dramatic context. Yet it has likewise become evident through the centuries that those critics of Shakespeare who follow the views of Aristotle's Poetics all or nearly all the way, show up blatant limitations in their understanding of his plays. Rymer was misled by the apparent insignificance of the incidents in Othello, Dr. Johnson by the improbable or mixed character of the action of some of his plays, which in the case of Cymbeline resulted in unmitigated condemnation. And E. E. Stoll, in his theory the extreme Aristotelian and anti-romantic among twentieth century Shakespeareans, has paid exaggerated attention to certain conventional elements in Shakespeare's plots and characterization (5).

The fundamental mistake of the extreme Aristotelians in Shakespearean criticism is their failure to realize that had the Poetics been written in the era of Elizabeth and James I, it might have been different in some fundamental respects. Recently, H. D. F. Kitto has questioned emphatically and convincingly the contention often heard, that Aristotle's account was devised so as to do justice to the best plays of Greece's three main tragic dramatists (6). He demonstrates that most of Aeschylus and Euripides and even one or two plays by Aristotle's favourite, Sophocles, do not fit his theory.

As to Elizabethan drama, its whole tradition or heritage, and thus its shape, were different. No chorus of the Greek variety was employed so that Melody, in the Aristotelian sense, contributed to dramatic effect either differently, or not at all. And the poetry of Marlowe's and Shakespeare's tragedies, recited as it usually was in a theatre of limited size where the actor stood close to the audience, must have played a different function from the verse in Greek drama, which was declaimed in a vast public arena.

But whatever this difference in function, we can assert with some sureness that poetry in Shakespearean drama, and particularly in his later work, is of supreme importance; that it is in fact part of the end of the whole. In this matter, we can hardly expect much help from Aristotle whose treatment of Diction is almost purely technical, and who designates it together with Song as "the media of imitation" (7). In justice to Aristotelians, we should commit a serious blunder if we were to treat of structure in Shakespeare's last plays and forget that their object is to present "a mode of action". But to see in the "incidents and the plot" alone the end of these plays would be to do them a grave injustice. The kind of experience which The Winter's Tale and The Tempest bestow persuades us to regard their end as more comprehensive than that of "a mode of action" as Aristotle defines it. We owe a debt to some of the "romantic critics", not always acknowledged, who, because of their ear for his poetry and their search for a core of thought lying, not behind (8), but embedded in the greatest of his plays,

brought us closer to Shakespeare.

In this respect of poetry and underlying thought, incidentally, Shakespeare's plays stand far apart from the typical Jacobean tragi-comedies by Beaumont and Fletcher and their imitators. We shall show later how different the arrangement of the incidents and the plot is in them. What concerns us at the moment is that Beaumont and Fletcher designed their plays for stage effect, and for stage effect only. Some incidents in Shakespeare's last plays, such as the entry of a bear in The Winter's Tale or that of Imogen with the headless body of Cloten in Cymbeline, may remind us of the histrionic quality of Fletcher's dramas. But they can be justified in terms of, and they are indeed occasioned by a larger purpose that informs the whole design, and that hardly allows itself to be accounted for under the heading of "effect". On the other hand, such happenings as Evadne's cold rejection of her newly wedded husband in The Maid's Tragedy, in an extended scene as full of surprises for the audience as for the husband, or the King's sudden change of demeanour in A King and No King towards his former enemy Tigranes whom he has tried to interest in his own sister Panthea, because he has suddenly conceived an incestuous passion for her; such happenings could not be fitted into any larger informing view of the play, and the way Fletcher develops them proves that stage-effect was his only purpose. The end of structure in Fletcher's plays is usually histrionic. In Shakespeare's, the mode of action is deeper, and furthermore, as we shall see, other factors are involved in their structure than

"the incidents and the plot". By structure we shall understand all the important elements, as far as we can trace them, that contribute to the design in Shakespeare's last plays.

Goethe once wrote:

Genau aber genommen so ist nichts theatralisch, als was für die Augen zugleich symbolisch ist: eine wichtige Handlung, die auf eine noch wichtigere deutet. (9)

(Speaking exactly, nothing is dramatic which to our eyes is not at the same time symbolic; a significant action which points to one more significant still.)

This matter on which Aristotle is silent profoundly applies to Shakespeare's romances. As will be shown in the following chapters, signs are many that Shakespeare's process of shaping in the last plays was a very deliberate, a considered one, in other words, that the conscious part of his mind had a large share in the imaginative activity behind them. Shakespeare the Renaissance poet and contemporary of Spenser was surely as aware as Goethe of the proneness of dramatic action to call forth analogies, to point to other actions. A hypothesis that will underlie the argument in this thesis is that the end of Shakespeare's plays cannot be adequately understood in terms of surface-action alone; that on the contrary, partly consciously and partly because of the very character of his poetic mind, though not always to the same degree, Shakespeare constructed them in such a way that the whole quality of their action would direct the imaginative spectator or reader to a type of inward action, an action of deeper significance because closer to "Life". A description of the function of structure in the Romances in terms of emotional effect, that is the kinds of

emotions aroused and how they are allayed again or purified, would thus be inadequate. We shall have to take into account the kind of view of life which informs the Romances and which their structure is designed to embody.

But this does not mean that we shall elaborately interpret the "meaning" (full of ambiguities) of the plays under consideration, or contemplate long excursions into the realm of symbolic significances or allegory. Some pointers as to the kind or area of the vision embodied in them will, as was stated in the introduction, fulfil the object we have proposed ourselves. The shape or construction of a play, however many-dimensional it may be, is a very practical matter, more solid and therefore amenable to the critic than the chain of ideas it will set going in the minds of some of its readers, or for that matter, concepts which may have been in Shakespeare's mind. Yet now the emphasis of the ensuing treatment of structure and function of structure has been indicated, let us cheerfully admit the core of interpretation which will be found in our pages. To the wider view, the form and content of a work of art are inseparable. To speak of one without attention to the other is to confine oneself to technicalities, or discuss material, not product. We should misanalyse, sometimes wholly fail to see, certain pivots in the construction of Shakespeare's last plays without some starting notion of what they are fundamentally about. Such a notion which will be in part intuitive, may at times bias us dangerously. All we can do is keep an open mind and not cling to this initial view too

stubbornly. At the other end of our program, as we come to grasp the structure and its underlying purpose or function, we shall be again directed towards interpretation.

So much for structure and function of structure; let us now consider imagery. All studies on Shakespeare's imagery owe much to the recent work of C.F.E. Spurgeon and W. Clemen in this field. But their methods of examination, however thorough and imaginative, prove inadequate to our purpose which is to discover the dramatic function of imagery in the last plays. The main aim of C.F.E. Spurgeon's study was by systematically cataloguing the subjects of the images of Shakespeare's plays to exhibit the wide world of his interests, his views, tastes, likes and dislikes. Hers was primarily a contribution to Shakespeare's mental biography. The second and shorter section of her book, however, proves far more helpful in our specific purpose. There she discusses the intimate relation which often exists between the content of the main image groups in a play and its atmosphere or theme, and expresses some acute observation of individual characteristics in Shakespeare's handling of imagery, which we shall do well to bear in mind (10). W. Clemen, on the other hand, has traced carefully the process of Shakespeare's discovery of ever more ways of heightening the power of suggestion and tension of his images and of exploiting their dramatic possibilities. He has shown us from a new angle the growth of Shakespeare's art.

The methods adopted by these scholars have yielded more rewarding results in the case of some of Shakespeare's plays

than of others. They have, to my mind, revealed little that is new about the last plays. In my chapter on Cymbeline, it will be shown that in Miss Spurgeon's section on this play, for instance, she told us only part of the story. Her desire to be as thorough and objective as possible led her to lay undue stress on mere quantitative preponderance and thus to neglect other images of sufficient power to affect our response to important parts of the play, simply because numerically they do not make an impressive appearance. Moreover, she concentrated her attention exclusively on iterative imagery, and did not give proper consideration to other forms of iterative language which may be equally important (11).

Mr. Clemen's inferences from the study of imagery regarding the art of some of Shakespeare's plays are largely conditioned by his basic assumption that the greater the poetic drama, the more abundant and the more dramatic its imagery. For this reason, he is driven to what I believe to be a mistaken view of Cymbeline. The gist of his conclusions on that play, however much he gropes for ways of qualifying it, is that it represents a temporary "regression" in the development of Shakespeare's art, a turning back to the manner of his earlier plays after the maturity of King Lear and Antony and Cleopatra. One will not have to search far among other Shakespeareans for those who prefer Antony and Cleopatra to Cymbeline. But we should pass judgment on this play only once we have tried to understand its form which to a large extent will dictate the character of the imagery. Since Cymbeline is a different kind



of play altogether from King Lear, the technique of its imagery, and its dramatic function, may also be different. It is well to remember that in certain types of poetic drama, richness of imagery would be incongruous. Everyman with its allegorical characterization, for instance, could never have supported the idiom peculiar to Shakespeare's high tragedies. It demands an idiom altogether different. So may Shakespeare's own romances.

As one reads Cymbeline with special attention to its language, one is struck by the marked iteration of certain words or pairs of words which influence our response, even if only vaguely, to certain parts of the action and some of the characters of the play. Sometimes these expressions occur in the form of imagery, but others are the keywords in descriptive passages, and others again supply the matter for brief witty repartees, as in the gaoler scene. Recent years have seen several studies (12) of such keywords - or "thematic words" as we shall call them - as "nature" and "fool" and "nothing" in King Lear. Though no word in Shakespeare's romances forces itself as strongly on our attention as does "nature" in King Lear, it seems strange that no one has ever looked at the last plays from this angle.

But it is of course for a good reason that C.F.F. Spurgeon, W. Clemen and others pay attention almost exclusively to imagery. The poetic mind will often betray its preoccupations most intimately through imagery. If the imagery of a play repeatedly evokes the same world of ideas or atmosphere in our minds, we are often justified in concluding that at the time of

writing this world was of special importance to the poet. In the last plays, the whole matter is complicated by the fact that it can be demonstrated that Shakespeare for his imagery drew greatly on conventional modes of expression fitted to certain dramatic or narrative forms. But once due consideration is given to this aspect of their imagery, we need not hesitate in drawing some similar conclusions about what lay close to the poet's mind. The degree of tension or impact upon us of the imagery in these plays will convey to us a sense of the depth at which the creative mind was engaged in the subject. When imagery affects us, in Shelley's phrase, with the force of sudden discovery of the until then "unapprehended relation of things", we feel that it springs from the deeper regions of the poet's mind.

The last plays contain a number of images which affect us like a sudden revelation. Our mind seizes them before being really conscious of the treasure it has found: it may never be fully conscious of it all! The majority of images in these plays, however, are unevocative, and especially in Cymbeline, a language of lower tension commands large passages, in which certain keywords or thematic words stand out and appear to be as important as the images themselves. They represent, sometimes, a whole aspect of Shakespeare's vision or way of looking at the world, and are a mark of a kind of writing in which experience does not rush into expression but grows slowly in the poet's mind. The function of these words seems to be so closely related to that of the imagery, that we

shall include them, wherever called for, in our study of the last plays. They, in fact, belong to the borderland of imagery itself, for they occur so intimately intertwined with it, that they often direct us to a similar area of experience.

At the same time, the imagery, in the strict sense of the term, can hardly be said to exercise on its own as important a function in the last plays as it does in Macbeth, where generally speaking it is far more evocative. Its tone in Cymbeline is usually milder, more subdued, than in the middle plays, and it takes on much more of the quality of artifice. While in the symphony of Macbeth or King Lear, imagery performs the part of cellos or woodwinds, in The Tempest it adopts that of the flute. Yet this change in the general quality of the imagery does not make it any less indispensable in the last plays, even though it stirs the imagination more gently. Were the imagery in Cymbeline omitted, the play would lose in integration and suggestive power. What has evidently happened in the last plays is that the imagery has become less independent of other aspects of technique. It is more subtly intermingled with them.

These considerations will serve to remind us how difficult it is to estimate adequately the function of imagery in Shakespeare's romances. The subtlety with which imagery makes its impact renders objective description impossible. For this and other reasons, I shall devote only a relatively small section of this thesis to imagery, and there view it primarily in relation to the more solid aspects of structure.

But I am far from suggesting that imagery will be relegated to an entirely subordinate position in the argument of this thesis. Its connection in the last plays with their structure is too intimate for that. Let us turn back once again to Goethe's remark on the symbolic character of drama. Another way of stating his thought would be to say that drama images a certain conception of life. This "image"-quality of drama is especially conspicuous in certain plays, for instance in The Tempest, with its strange happenings which yet have seemed to many of its readers deeply significant. The action of such plays has sometimes been described, and justly so, as "poetic".

Poetry with its greater imaginative range of expression is a better medium than prose for heightening the image-character of drama. The Elizabethans were not alone in thinking of poetry as a language of more than ordinary imaging power. It exercises this power on account of its form, of its more marked rhythm than usually found in prose, and of its richness of imagery. Poetry, and more particularly imagery, thus helps drama to fulfil its proper purpose. This purpose, according to Granville-Barker, is to direct us to those layers of reality which lie behind appearance, to show us "not what they (the characters) do, but what they are". He continues: "now if drama makes this demand only poetry can fulfil it"; for, as he had argued earlier in the same lecture:

it is the poet who is best equipped for its solving; not by any skill in pattern-making, but in the essentials of his art, by virtue of his power to show us reality behind appearance, or, as Shelley said, to lift the veil from the hidden beauty ... of the world. (13)

True to the spirit of these remarks, we shall consider one of the functions of imagery in Shakespearean drama to be that of extending the structure of its action. Imagery in Shakespeare's plays often will contribute to what G. Wilson Knight has termed their "spacial reality" (14). As we shall see in the course of these pages, the more one examines the last plays, the more the intimate fusion of imagery and action in them becomes apparent. Imagery in them is part of structure. But we shall find, furthermore, as already intimated, that the balance between imagery and imaging structure in these plays is, in Shakespeare's work at least, peculiar to them.

If these conclusions are sound, we shall have to accord to the role of "Diction" in Shakespeare's late plays a much greater place than Aristotle would encourage us to do. In Shakespeare's poetry, it is not only medium but also end. It does not merely supply the dramatist with the tools through which to express the main parts of his action: it coalesces with the action itself. This point is neatly made by a recent critic who, referring to imagery, writes:

This imagery, basically not only knits the play together but emphasizes by iteration - and by iteration whose appeal is always to the emotions - the idea or mood which had guided the poet's choice of theme and shaping of form.  
(15)

One should be aware, however, that in the individual instance, it is often difficult to decide whether the imagery or other parts of the poetry are employed purely as media in the Aristotelian sense, or whether we are fully justified in attributing to them the larger function suggested (16).

A. Features Shared by Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale.

In the previous chapter, a conception of dramatic structure such wider than Aristotle's was advanced. At present, however, I shall consider certain features of the plot structure in Shakespeare's last plays, in the limited Aristotelian sense. For even in this respect, these plays show some marked peculiarities, a number of which moreover are shared by them and can therefore be said to characterize Shakespeare's dramas as a group. This is especially true of the three plays with which this thesis is particularly concerned, Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale.

CHAPTER 2

Some Major Distinct Structural Characteristics in the Final Plays.

In this chapter, the more obvious of the structural characteristics common to these three plays will be outlined. A comparison and contrast of the broad elements of their structure with those of Shakespeare's comedies, on the one hand, and with those of certain tragicomedies of the time, on the other, should help us to perceive some of their prominent peculiarities of design in the light of contemporary dramatic practice. We shall then be ready to proceed with the more detailed examination of each play's individual structure and function of structure.

In each of Pericles, The Winter's Tale, and Cymbeline, the mode of action initiated is preponderantly serious. The fortunes of the protagonists move for more than half the play towards tragedy, involving many incidents of loss, pathetic suffering, and real or assumed death. Near the end, however, they undergo a sudden turn, and the action culminates in a conclusion full of joy. In Pericles and The Winter's Tale,

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the ending takes the traditional form of comedy, where marriages are celebrated. Cymbeline does not conclude in a marriage, but the final note is one of peace and plenty.

In most comedies, of course, and particularly in romantic comedies, at a certain point of the action, the fortunes of the protagonists will take a turn for the worse. But in the common practice of comedy, the antagonists are portrayed in a less evil light than in Shakespeare's romances; less is made, at all events, of the suffering they cause. As You Like It and Twelfth Night are truly joyful comedies. Though evil and suffering exist in their world, the spirit of gaiety dominates the whole, never allowing us to be disturbingly aware of them. This is not true to the same extent of some of Shakespeare's "darker" comedies, such as Much Ado and Measure for Measure, of which a more detailed comparison with the last plays will be presented later. Yet for the moment the assertion will be allowed to stand that hardly any of Shakespeare's earlier plays of happy ending portrays anything like the ill-fortune and suffering to which Pericles and Imogen are subjected. Leontes' jealous obsession in The Winter's Tale, whose violence drives his family into despair and death, has no counterpart in Shakespeare's earlier comedies.

However, though in the Romances evil is given a much greater place than is customary in comedy, the manner of its presentation differs markedly from that in Shakespeare's tragedies. At this point we can permit ourselves only one or two generalizations, for the shape evil assumes differs appreciably among



tragedy, occur in all three of the Romances (1). So much for the treatment of evil and death in Shakespeare's romances. A still more important structural characteristic shared by Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale is their peculiar type of double plot. In each of them two actions are intertwined, the protagonists of which are a king and his daughter or, as in Cymbeline, his several children and son-in-law. While the weight given to these two actions and the emphasis laid on the relative dangers, struggles and misfortunes sustained by their protagonists differ appreciably among the three plays, in each, the fortunes of a king take a sudden happy turn near the end, as a result of some act of the children which brings about, though without their foreknowledge, their recognition and restoration to their father. In none of these plays, therefore, does a love-action, as so often in Shakespeare's earlier comedies, constitute the main issue. They do not present so much the fortunes of individuals, even if these are momentarily stressed in the course of the play, as those of a family, of parents and children, husband and wife. References to family affection are accordingly frequent (2). Each play tells the story of a family whose various members are for many years scattered, in the end to be miraculously reunited. The central figure is usually the king or prince - least clearly so in Cymbeline - who, at any rate by the end of the action, is well on in middle age, and about to become the joyful witness of his daughter's marriage.

However, in none of the three plays does the restitution

of the lost children to their parents constitute the final act of the drama. It is only the prelude for an event which in Pericles and Cymbeline is brought about through the co-operation of divine powers, while in The Winter's Tale it takes the form of a miracle directly enacted upon the stage. In all three plays, supernatural powers take an important share in the action. At an advanced stage in the plot, a sudden shift in perspective is introduced by some miraculous happening or a forecast of divine intervention. In Pericles, Diana and Jupiter step into the action at decisive moments. It is their agent, Cerimon, who restores Thaisa to life. Neptune also seems to play a part, since it is on the day of his festival that Marina and Pericles are reunited. In Cymbeline, the Soothsayer predicts the happy reunion of Britain and Rome, while Jupiter assures the spirits of Posthumus' parents that their son's sufferings are purposeful and will soon find their resolution. Jupiter is clearly the god of Cymbeline. At the end of that play, Cymbeline and Lucius ratify their peace and sacrifice to Jupiter in his temple. The god of The Winter's Tale is Apollo who furnishes the oracle and who in anger at Leontes' disobedience - so Leontes himself interprets when it is too late - kills Mamillius. Paulina, who may be regarded as Apollo's human agent (3), restores by "lawful" magic Hermione's statue to life. Thus in each of Shakespeare's final plays, after the action has run part of its course on a purely human plane, we, the audience, are suddenly removed from it and learn that divine forces participate in human affairs; that there is a guide behind the apparently arbitrary wheel of

fortune, who leads his favourites through suffering and repentance to joyful restoration and a heightened sense of the divine gift. Though part of our evidence must wait until later, it will be clear from these remarks that in Shakespeare's romances divine forces are given an important role, which one would be mistaken to interpret merely in terms of the cheap technical device of "deus ex machina".

As has already been indicated, the double plot in Cymbeline which Jupiter ultimately directs to a happy conclusion, moves on both a private and a political plane. Its action fuses the narrative of the fortunes of Cymbeline's family with that of Britain's conflict, battle, and reunion with Rome. In Pericles, for a similar reason presumably, much stress is laid on the qualities of good kingship and good counsellors. In The Winter's Tale, the political consequences of the private action involving Leontes' royal family and his friendship with Polixines receive less emphasis, but appear clearly enough. In the opening scene, two Lords tell us of the great hope that fills all Sicily in Mamillius, the heir to the throne. As Leontes' obsession grows, he becomes not merely harsh and blind towards Hermione, but also tyrannical towards his people (4). Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale thus all contain a double-threaded plot, in which private and public actions are interlinked, both of which are finally resolved through some act of the royal children guided by divine Providence.

So far in this discussion of these three plays, the term "double-threaded plot" has been used in the sense of two actions,

which involve, for a long time separately, the fortunes of parents and children. However, when Aristotle in the Poetics dwells on a structure of a tragedy of double action, he clearly understands mainly a play's real action and an action causally related to it and preceding it in time which, at some point or other during the action proper, is narrated. Italian literary critics of the Renaissance, several of whom dwell at some length on this problem of the antecedent action, refer to it as the "antefatto" (5). Among the last plays, The Tempest and Cymbeline contain a double action in this particular sense as evidenced in the long accounts of Prospero to Miranda, and of Belarius directly to the audience. That much less is made of reminiscence of an antecedent action in Pericles or The Winter's Tale is not an essential difference. For in them, the first half of the plot corresponds to the "antefatto" of Cymbeline and The Tempest. Instead of extensive passages of reminiscence, we get a marked and dramatic shift in time near the middle of the play. These two methods of construction will naturally have some influence on the general effect of these plays. They constitute but two different solutions for the same problem: how to present in dramatic form an action of considerable length of time - to be more precise, of twelve to twenty years - in the course of which a new generation grows up to marriageable age.

This characteristic of the action of these plays sets them far apart from the Tragedies. Unlike them, they are not confined to one major crisis and its immediate developments. Their large temporal range makes them akin rather to epic. In

the last plays, we witness human actions and their effects in the perspective of a longer stretch of time. Shakespeare thus could treat dramatically in these plays the element in life of new growth and renewal, which constantly modifies the effects of human actions. When estimating the function of structure of these plays in later chapters, we shall do well to bear this characteristic in mind.

The great temporal range of the action furthermore partly accounts for the remarkable freedom of plot construction in Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale, though, as Shakespeare was to show in The Tempest, it is not a necessary consequence. Each of the three plays contains an astonishing number as well as variety of incidents. In the opening scenes of The Winter's Tale, "things happen" with a speed unequalled in any other Shakespearean play, except perhaps King Lear, and Cymbeline and Pericles in this respect are not far behind. Much less room could therefore be allowed for preparation. This may partly explain why, for instance, Shakespeare takes so little care to motivate Leontes' jealousy. He rather presents us at the outset with a case of sudden perversion or mental illness, and thence proceeds to show not merely the immediate tragic consequences, but also how after many years Leontes was cured and his family reunited in joy. In Pericles, dramatic preparation is cut to a minimum.

The frequent changes in place and mood, another aspect of the freedom of construction in these plays, are especially marked in Pericles and Cymbeline. But The Winter's Tale, too,

contains some surprising shifts, as when the swift-moving action of the opening acts is suddenly arrested in the scene where Leontes' messengers report on Apollo's oracle, a scene of sharply different mood. In its fourth act, we are introduced to an entire set of new characters, moving about in new surroundings. Cymbeline contains a similarly effective change, when the action moves to the cave of Belarius and the two royal princes in the Welsh mountains. In Pericles, we seldom remain for more than a single scene in the same surroundings.

A remarkable feature in these plays is also the absence, for long stretches of the action, of some of the leading characters. As a result, we usually find it difficult to identify ourselves with the protagonists for more than sections of the play. Leontes, for instance, does not appear on the stage during Act IV. More striking is the loss from sight of Posthumus, who has played such an important role in the early acts of Cymbeline, during Acts III and IV. Most audiences thus show some surprise, when he does return, in a mood of repentance, at the beginning of Act V. His long absence is shared by the fascinating intriguer-villain of the early part, Iachimo. In Pericles, the title figure, except for a dumb-show, is not seen on the stage during Act IV.

Related to the double-threaded plot involving two generations and the multiplicity and astounding variety of incident is a last structural characteristic of these three plays to be mentioned in this preliminary survey: the elaborate preparation of their resolution scenes, and the spectacular use

Shakespeare's earlier comedies. By comparing and contrasting in the following pages the structure of Shakespeare's earlier comedies with that of the three Romances we shall be able to focus still more sharply the peculiar form of the last plays.

The action in the last plays is romantic in an even more pronounced sense than that of The Two Gentlemen of Verona or Twelfth Night, to select one of the earliest and one of the "mature" comedies. From his earliest comedies on, Shakespeare had shown a predilection for aristocratic and romantic plots. In all of his comedies, the plot is cheerfully unrealistic. But even in the most romantic of the earlier plays, The Midsummer Night's Dream, the incidents are so presented that the spectator easily engages in a "willing suspension of disbelief". The vividness of the characterization and dialogue in these plays makes him accept them as essentially real. Such a romantic play in situation as As You Like It is informed by a realistic, indeed a critical, spirit. In the last plays, on the other hand, the action in at least some of their scenes moves further from reality. No attempt is made to provide a realistic air for certain of the incidents; on the contrary, departure from realism seems sometimes deliberately contrived. Shakespeare's other comedies contain no parallel to such incidents as that of the bear or the revival of Hermione's statue in The Winter's Tale, or Pericles' strange adventure at Antiochus' court, or many a situation in Cymbeline. In the latter play, in fact, as in The Winter's Tale, unreality is sometimes made theatrical.

Yet the action of the last plays is not only more unrealistic but also more pronouncedly serious than that of any of Shakespeare's earlier comedies. True, in most of Shakespeare's romantic and "problem" comedies, the action moves at moments on a serious plane. The elaboration and emphasis of the serious side of the action in some of the earlier comedies is considerable. Especially in The Merchant of Venice, Much Ado, Measure for Measure, and All's Well, an evil figure exercises during part of the action a powerful influence, placing some of the protagonists in acute danger or, if not, at least in a very unhappy situation. Shylock, Don John, Angelo, and Bertram, all dominate the action for a while.

Yet in none of these plays is the serious action maintained to the same extent as in the final plays. In all four - least in All's Well - comic subplots either of intrigue or of purely farcical nature contribute to the total effect. Nothing like the plot of Pompey, which again and again intervenes between the scenes of Angelo, Isabella, and the Duke in Measure for Measure, is found in Pericles, Cymbeline, or the first three acts of The Winter's Tale. None of the earlier comedies contains the death of any character participating in the action, and even if the sufferings and misfortunes of Antonio, Hero, Claudio or Isabella, and Helena reach a certain scope, they never receive anything like the extensive treatment found in the last plays. Compare for instance the misfortunes of Imogen with those of Hero: Imogen's sufferings begin in the opening scene and mount until well into the fourth act. Those of Hero



and her father occupy us only for a few scenes in Acts IV and V of Much Ado. To accomplish his slander, Iachimo requires only short space in Cymbeline; then others take over to make life difficult for Imogen. Don John's plot, on the other hand, matures only by the beginning of Act IV, not because greater obstacles have to be surmounted, but because the action of the earlier part of Much Ado is largely occupied with the relationship of Benedick and Beatrice, a story in a very different mood. That story in fact remains dominant until the very end, for Beatrice and Benedick interest us more than Claudio or Hero ever could. The function of Claudio and Hero, and of their plot, is to set off Benedick and Beatrice, and to a large extent create their plot. The focus during the scene of the interrupted wedding remains on the play's leading characters. Beatrice's demand to Benedick to kill Claudio becomes a more important issue than what may happen to Hero. But even for the crisis of the play's favourites, not enough space is left for lengthy elaboration.

An important difference between these earlier comedies and the last plays is that, with the exception of The Midsummer Night's Dream, their action does not involve the supernatural. As a consequence, the good characters have to work out their salvation entirely on their own. The Merchant of Venice, Much Ado, Measure for Measure, and All's Well all contain intrigues engineered by one protagonist or a group. The Merchant of Venice presents the duping of Shylock by two women, his daughter Jessica and, in the more important action, Portia. In All's

Well, it is almost solely Helena's daring intrigue, aided by Diana, that wins Bertram for her. In Measure for Measure, the Duke is in control all the time, so that our fear is never fully aroused for Claudio or Isabella. He carefully prepares each step for the final scene, in that quality anticipating Prospero, but no figure in Shakespeare's other Romances. In Much Ado, it is the Friar who suggests a way out of Hero's predicament. Interestingly enough, only in the case of Jessica and Shylock does the intrigue closely resemble the standard one of classical new comedy, where a father is outwitted by a pair of young lovers. In All's Well, exactly the reverse situation is employed, to strange effect. For here the older generation co-operates, or at any rate fully sympathizes with, the wishes of the daughter, and the person outwitted is the husband. But what matters for our purpose is that Pericles, The Winter's Tale, and Cymbeline are without comic intrigue of this kind.

The plots of some of Shakespeare's earlier comedies are complex. But with the exception of The Comedy of Errors, to which on that account I shall return later in this chapter, none of them sets forth a double-threaded plot with a story of lost and found children, and protagonists of two generations, which was described earlier as a distinguishing feature of the Romances. In the earlier romantic comedies, the main protagonists are usually young lovers, as in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Twelfth Night, As You Like It, and Much Ado. In harmony with the strong element of intrigue and the pervasive realistic tone of Much Ado and As You Like It, the lovers conduct their wooing

plays. From Claudio's imprisonment on, the tension rises until the scene of Claudio's pleading with Isabella to save his life by sacrificing her honour, which occurs about half way through the play. Then the Duke's counterplot begins, and our expectations are gradually roused to be satisfied only in the long final scene, which includes the recognitions of the Duke and Marina, the repentance of Angelo, and his pardon and participation in the marriage procession of the end. In All's Well, the movement of the action is similar, even if the nature of the plot is quite different. The action rises sharply until the middle of Act II, where the King after being cured of his disease by Helena orders Bertram to assent to her wish and marry her. But Bertram runs away. In the third and fourth acts, the tension is low. Then it rises again up to the climax of the long final scene, where Helena's intrigue is crowned with success. Since in this scene, Helena enters only about thirty lines from the end, unlike the Duke in Measure for Measure who is in charge almost all the time, the tension is maintained even longer on a high level. But what is more relevant to our purpose, the dramatic curve of tension in All's Well and Measure for Measure follows a course similar to that in Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale, its two distinguishing marks being a sudden drop somewhere towards the middle of the play, and the gradual preparation towards a climactic scene or series of scenes near the end. The recognition scenes are of course manipulated in a different manner, for Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale contain no comic intrigue in the main action (7). But the general

sound of Roman and British drums.

This comparison of the structure of Shakespeare's last plays with that of his earlier comedies has shown that, in the general organization of the action towards a climax in a final scene of recognition, the late plays resemble some of Shakespeare's earlier comedies. But though the action of some of these is markedly serious, evil in them is not developed to anything like the extent presented in the last plays. At the same time, the realistic spirit which informs the comedies of Shakespeare's middle period is retained only episodically in the Romances, as in the scenes of Autolycus. The last plays are more romantic in emphasis. They moreover appear to be still more freely constructed. The action in them, especially at the beginning, moves at greater speed, thus necessitating a reduction in space given to preparation. But they are distinguished above all from Shakespeare's comedies by their double action of two generations, and the part played in the action by natural and divine forces.

The question which of Shakespeare's comedies structurally approximates most closely to the three last plays we have been considering is not easily answered. Twelfth Night and As You Like It are clearly not in the running for this particular honour. More likely candidates are Much Ado, Measure for Measure, and All's Well, in all of which the action is markedly serious. The device of Hero's mockdeath in Much Ado reminds one of Cymbeline. The long recognition scenes speak for Measure for Measure and All's Well. In the latter play, furthermore, there

is the odd incident of Helena's curing the King who later encourages her in her own projects, and in the end like a father blesses her marriage. But one cannot speak of a two-generation-plot in All's Well.

Surprisingly enough, what are probably Shakespeare's two earliest comedies, The Two Gentlemen of Verona and The Comedy of Errors, anticipate the last plays more closely in some structural features than does any other Shakespearean comedy. Like The Winter's Tale, The Two Gentlemen of Verona is based on a romance. In it, too, evil is depicted as a sudden and irresistible power which turns Proteus, one of the protagonists, for a while into a scheming villain. Like Posthumus, Proteus repents and is forgiven, though in the earlier play this episode is handled in such a bewildering manner that many critics doubt whether Shakespeare wrote it in the form that has come down to us (8). At the same time, the enterprising and disguised Julia is reduced to greater and greater helplessness as she perceives the development of her faithless lover's plot. The admittedly limited anticipation of the Posthumus-Imogen story is corroborated by some textual parallels (9).

The handling of the main part of The Comedy of Errors is of course far too farcical to invite comparison with any of the last plays. What attracts one's attention in that play is the curious frame-story of Aegeon and the Abbess, who is at the end revealed to be his wife. This is only one of many recognitions, for two of the play's protagonists are discovered to be his lost twin sons. The tale he relates in the opening scene and which

is concluded only near the end involves events over a period of twenty-five years. Some of the incidents and the theme of his story are similar to those of Pericles, as more than one critic has pointed out. It has, in fact, a double action involving two generations. Yet the basic difference remains: the parent action provides only a frame here; in the last plays it was to take over the whole drama (10).

C. Contrast with Beaumont and Fletcher's Tragi-comedies.

It has been clearly established that the shape of the plays of happy ending which Shakespeare wrote near the end of his career differs in essential respects from that of any of his comedies. The structure of the last plays represents, for Shakespeare, a fresh departure. They are often, and with good reason, referred to as tragi-comedies, in the more common sense of the term, for their action is predominantly serious, includes deaths or near-deaths and yet ends happily.

This tragi-comic course of their action, as well as its emphatically romantic character, has led some scholars to advance the hypothesis that Shakespeare in his last plays was under the influence of Beaumont and Fletcher who were then becoming popular. Fifty years ago, A.H. Thorndike went further and in a book (11) which has become a classic supported this view by manifold arguments and a detailed comparison of Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale (12) with six of Beaumont and Fletcher's tragi-comedies (13). Many objections have been voiced to his thesis which few scholars of our day would uphold. One of

its main underlying assumptions, a date for Philaster earlier than that of Cymbeline, has proven unverifiable, and seems to many unlikely (14). On the other hand, many echoes have been pointed out not merely in Fletcher's later plays but also in Philaster from Hamlet, which precedes them by several years. Thus at least as good a case could be made out for Shakespeare's influence on his skilful but inferior competitors. Even supposing it could be shown that the main characteristics of the structure of Beaumont and Fletcher's tragi-comedies were similar to those of Shakespeare's last plays, one would be rash to accept this likeness as an explanation for the peculiar design of the last plays.

But the plays themselves help us to make up our minds about their possible interdependence, for the extent of structural similarity is less than A.H. Thorndike contended. As I am not anxious to add more to the undeservedly widespread publicity which his thesis has received, let me rather than summarize and refute his argument piece by piece present a brief and direct comparison of the structure of some of Beaumont and Fletcher's earliest plays with Shakespeare's romances. The specific plays selected for this purpose are Philaster, The Maid's Tragedy, A King and No King, Bonduca, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale. Pericles will be omitted here, since, to the best of my knowledge, no one has ever proclaimed any influence of Beaumont and Fletcher upon it.

It has already been noted that a number of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, though not Bonduca or The Maid's Tragedy, are

like Shakespeare's last plays romantic tragi-comedies. Their main action is aristocratic and is placed in some remote locality. It moves for a long time towards tragedy but often, as in A King and No King and Philaster, ends happily. Their plots furthermore, like that of Cymbeline, are intricate and are packed with an unusual variety of incidents. They are remarkable, even more so than those of Shakespeare's romances, for their sudden violent contrasts, juxtapositions of comic and tragic, idyllic and burlesque situations. Like those of the Romances, their plots usually start off at great speed. As in The Winter's Tale, expository material is cut down to a minimum, and suspense for a strongly theatrical situation is aroused quickly. Similar in the two groups of plays is also the elaborate preparation for the dénouement, though, as we shall see, the manner of preparation and thus the effect upon the spectators varies considerably between them.

So much for noteworthy similarities in structure between Beaumont and Fletcher's tragi-comedies and Shakespeare's last plays. We shall now turn to some of the more important differences. Attention was drawn already in our first chapter (15) to the highly unnatural quality of some of the incidents in the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, and to their tendency to elaborate upon them at great length and sometimes with consummate skill, so that the audience can expect a series of varied emotional surprises. Scenes of this kind occur in The Maid's Tragedy and A King and No King, never in Shakespeare's romances. If Shakespeare introduces a sudden contrast of mood in the



Romances, he does not make it the beginning of a long chain of startling effects. And as will be demonstrated in my more detailed analysis of his plays, it is possible to account for Shakespeare's use of shifts in mood on a level deeper than that of theatrical opportunism.

Good craftsmen as Beaumont and Fletcher were, and aiming as they did above all at strong theatrical effects, they constructed their plots tightly. The seeming looseness of Shakespeare's romances is not paralleled in them (16). The abrupt and surprising developments we have spoken of occur in their plays usually within the course of a scene, not so much between scenes. While they do not carefully observe the unity of place, in none of Philaster, A King and No King, The Maid's Tragedy, or Bonduca do we encounter such abrupt changes as in Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale. In the latter play, the swift tragic action of the opening acts is suddenly arrested for a moment in the brief oracle scene of entirely different mood. After the trial scene and the exposure of the child, a shift in action occurs that for effectiveness is hardly matched anywhere in drama. Such freedom of construction, it seems, would be contrary to Beaumont and Fletcher's whole purpose, however much they liked contrasting successive scenes of opposed mood. For above all, they had to avoid giving their plays a quality of remoteness. For the same reason, Beaumont and Fletcher do not usually permit any of their major characters - Aspatia in The Maid's Tragedy is an exception - to be absent from the stage for a long part of the play, as are Posthumus and Iachimo.

Especially significant is the less free handling of time in most of those of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays which may have been contemporary with Shakespeare's. On this point it is not possible to arrive at hard and fast generalizations that could apply to all of their drama. Their choice of plots and technique, especially Fletcher's, varied considerably. But it is possible to say that they seldom encourage their audience to see the happenings portrayed in their plays in the wider context of time, as Shakespeare did in the Romances. The great shifts in time at the middle of The Winter's Tale and Pericles have no equivalent in Beaumont and Fletcher. They almost always prefer to concentrate on the dramatic potentialities of an immediate and therefore limited situation. In A King and No King, they portray the dramatic developments of the king's sudden adulterous passion for his sister, and his gradual conquest of it. The surrounding plot merely sets the stage for a strange and histrionic episode, which we watch directly, with all the excitement of its immediacy. We do not see it in the perspective of a wider and longer development. With the exception, in a sense, of Bonduca, Beaumont and Fletcher's earlier plays do not share the epic quality of Shakespeare's romances.

The most important structural distinction between the two groups of plays has yet to be pointed out: though both have complex plots, the kind of action as well as its guiding principle of organization is entirely different. Beaumont and Fletcher often employ comic subplots loosely linked to the main

action, which are introduced for the sake of variety of mood; for instance the plot of Bessus in A King and No King or that of Calianax in The Maid's Tragedy. Cymbeline has no comic subplot, nor has Pericles. Autolycus' thievish exploits and the fortunes of his association with the Shepherd and the Clown might be called the subplot of The Winter's Tale, but its purpose is surely to provide with its racy realism a solid foundation for the pastoral scenes. On the other hand, and this is crucial, Beaumont and Fletcher do not present stories of families, as does Shakespeare in his Romances, where the central figure is a king who is also a father, and whose good fortune is restored largely through an act of his children. Instead, their actions often, though not always, concentrate on an idyllic love-story, as in Philaster. Similar actions occur in Shakespeare's last plays, but they never provide the central interest. Where Beaumont and Fletcher introduce gods in the action, as in Four Plays in One (17), their function is not that of reuniting families.

This notable unlikeness of their actions accounts for a marked difference in the handling of the dénouements. Both Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher make liberal use of the device of recognition in their final scenes. But Beaumont and Fletcher guard against preparing us for the character of their ending. By the time we have reached the beginning of the last act in their plays, we usually are left without a clue as to whether the ending will be tragic or happy. They enjoy packing their final scenes with a multiplicity of incident and surprise

which may deflect the course of the action into a completely unexpected direction. T.M. Parrott's description of them is just:

... the dénouement is brought about by some wholly unexpected turn of events so as to afford the double pleasure of a happy surprise and a happy ending. (18)

The string of discoveries by Gobrias and Arane close to the end of A King and No King could not have been anticipated by the shrewdest member of the audience. In Shakespeare's last plays however, though the final scenes may be complex and bring some surprise, the audience has been carefully prepared for the kind of ending that will come. Suspense is aroused merely for the manner in which the dramatist will resolve an intricate situation, not for the outcome of the action itself. We all know at the beginning of the final scene of Cymbeline that its end will show us the major characters united in joy; for the play's mood calls for that. The manifold revelations contain no surprises for us, for Shakespeare has gone out of his way, through asides and other devices, to keep us informed as to the history of his characters. In The Winter's Tale, the scene of the statue admittedly exemplifies a different technique. But however great the surprise of the miracle effected, the happy ending for Leontes and Perdita at least is a foregone conclusion, for which the rhythm of the play's moods has subtly prepared us(19).

Structurally, Shakespeare's romances thus differ from Beaumont and Fletcher's mainly by reason of the double plot involving a relation between a royal father and his daughter or children, and in their apparently loose structure, with frequent

changes in place and sometimes great shifts in time. In their complex dénouements, surprise is introduced only to fulfil the hopes of the audience beyond what it would have believed possible, thus heightening the sense of joy and of man's meaningful place in a divinely controlled universe. The basic subject matter of these two groups of plays is thus different, and similarities in plot construction, apart from the fact that both Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher wrote romantic tragicomedies, of peripheral importance. The same applies to function of structure, which in Shakespeare's case, as already intimated, is more purposeful than that of the mere creation of a series of clever theatrical effects (20). But the evidence in support of this contention will have to be left for later chapters.

#### D. Comparison and Contrast with Some Other Elizabethan Plays.

A considerable number of other Elizabethan tragicomedies have survived. But most of them differ in their construction from Shakespeare's last plays even more than do the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher. None of Lyly's comedies anticipates them in either form or spirit, though several of them make lavish use of romance. Of Greene's plays, James IV approximates rather more closely to their tragic-comic pattern, but the differences in construction seem to me to equal or outweigh those in Beaumont and Fletcher. In the typical manner of Greene, James IV is fitted with a frame plot whose characters, Oberon and Bohan, a disgruntled Scotsman, function as observers

of the action. Bohan presents it, so that the audience watches it partly through his eyes; but, unlike Gower in Pericles, he narrates no part of the action, which is conveyed in its entirety by direct dramatic means.

The action of James IV is both romantic and serious, like that of the last plays. Briefly to sketch its main happenings: at the very time when James IV, king of Scotland, marries Dorothea, daughter of the king of England, he falls in love with Ida, a virtuous gentlewoman. As he is married, she rejects his suit. Eventually, his evil servant Atenkin persuades him to plot Dorothea's death, so that he may become at least technically acceptable to Ida. Dorothea is warned and escapes, but the murderer pursues her and wounds her gravely. While she is secretly being nursed, news of her death reaches her father, who at once invades Scotland to revenge the injustice. At the crucial moment, battle is averted by Dorothea's sudden reappearance. Her husband repents; and the play ends with the joyful reconciliation of all concerned.

It is easily seen that the play's main action follows a typically tragi-comic course. Evil is for a time triumphant; the heroine suffers innocently, is even severely hurt; but in the end, Atenkin, the wicked intriguer, is punished, James repents his folly and injustice, and Dorothea and her father gladly forgive him. This reconciliation, furthermore, involves not only husband and wife, but also Scotland and England. James, in the early acts is characterized not only as an ingrateful husband, but also as a tyrant who disillusioned his wise

counsellors. A political action, though given subordinate treatment, accompanies the private one, as in Shakespeare's last plays. Yet though both father and daughter participate in the reconciliation, this hardly justifies one in speaking of a double plot involving two generations, in the sense one can in Shakespeare's last plays. At all events, the king of England in James IV is given a very minor part, unlike Pericles or Leontes or even Cymbeline. His actions relate only to his daughter; his character is left undeveloped and his own fortunes do not interest us. Furthermore, the reconciliation is achieved without divine or miraculous intervention. The only miracle which takes place in the course of the action occurs when Oberon saves Slipper from acute danger by snatching him literally off the stage, the effect and purpose of which incident, it need hardly be said, have nothing in common with those of the miracles in Shakespeare's romances. Some of the characters of James IV may be said to resemble those of the last plays more closely: Dorothea is not unlike Imogen, though she does not speak with Imogen's poetry. But structurally, we need not hesitate to conclude that Greene's plays had no influence on Shakespeare's last plays, though one of his own romances was to furnish the source for The Winter's Tale.

Among other Elizabethan plays whose action follows a tragi-comic pattern, I have been able to discover only one which contains a double plot involving two generations similar to that in Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale: the anonymous The Thracian Wonder (21), a free dramatization of

Greene's Menaphon. Though the play has little merit, it has received considerable attention from critics, mainly on account of the wrong association of Webster's name with it (22). If it will now be given the honour of a comparison with Shakespeare's last plays, it is not because its structure shows marks of artistic distinction - it certainly does not - , but because in spite of all its confusion of plot, its structure in a number of ways remarkably resembles that of Shakespeare's last plays. Furthermore, some of its incidents as well as lines closely anticipate scenes in The Winter's Tale, but that is perhaps mainly owing to the similarity of their sources (23).

The action is extremely complex and highly improbable, more so even than that of Cymbeline. Pheander, who is tyrannical at one moment, repentant at another, and repentant only in a hypocritical manner at a third, has, in improbability of characterization, no counterpart in Shakespeare. That the action is serious becomes immediately evident in the opening scene, when king Pheander banishes Radagon, son of his Sicily enemy, for having secretly married his daughter Ariadne and got her with child. The daughter and baby-boy he sets afloat on the sea. The third scene introduces a storm and shipwreck, incidents familiar in Shakespeare's last plays. The gods, however, soon show their displeasure at Pheander's action, and cause a deadly infection in his realm. Pheander sends messengers to the oracle at Delphos. Meanwhile, Ariadne has landed in Arcadia, and there become a shepherd queen. Later the fame of her beauty is to attract, among other wooers, her son and her



father.

This summary of the opening scenes will suffice to indicate that a number of incidents in the action resemble those of The Winter's Tale; but it does not convey an idea of the enormous complexity of what is to follow, which makes The Thracian Wonder a different kind of play altogether. Nevertheless certain features in its general construction arouse our attention. Several times, a sharp contrast is introduced between successive scenes; in II, i, for instance, we hear the groans of the dying in Pheander's infested land: II, ii presents a shepherd festival. Several times, these contrasts are accompanied by a change in place. The action takes us to several countries, and brings in a vast array of characters. But still more relevant to our purpose is the change in time of twenty years, introduced in III, iii, which permits Radagon's son Eusantias to grow up to manhood. Act IV of the play little resembles that of any Shakespearean drama in content or construction. But near the end, a battle is introduced which in its confusion equals that of Cymbeline. The end involves multiple recognition of children and parents: Eusantias is discovered to be Radagon's son, and Ariadne to be his mother. The oracle is confirmed, as the Soothsayer's vision is at the end of Cymbeline. Interestingly enough, moreover, the last scene concludes not only a private but also a public action, in the peace-making between Pheander and Sicily; admittedly, this public action is so confused that the author can hardly have intended an important function for it in the play. The attempt to discover some deeper function

of structure in the play as a whole would in fact be futile: it is dramatically far too weak and muddled for that. Yet its multiple plot involving the separation and eventual reunion of three generations of a royal family, its great shift of time near the middle, and the contribution of divine forces to the action make the play exceedingly interesting to us. The structure of The Thracian Wonder, if one disregards the general lack of artistry exhibited by it, resembles that of Shakespeare's last plays more closely than that of any other Elizabethan drama. Three other plays, the anonymous The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, Chapman's The Gentleman Usher, and especially John Day's Humour out of Breath, possibly exercised some influence on Shakespeare's last plays, structurally and otherwise. Yet in most respects their construction differs so fundamentally from Shakespeare's, that treatment of them at this place would contribute little to our immediate purpose (24).

It has been shown in this chapter that Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale share certain characteristics of structure which, in Elizabethan drama, are almost entirely peculiar to them. Few contemporary plays include, as they do, a double plot of two generations which after long separation are finally reunited; the participation of divine powers at crucial moments in such a plot; and a sudden sharp contrast, involving a great change in surroundings and mood, towards the middle of the play. Though Shakespeare may have benefited from the dramatic experiments of some of his contemporaries, it seems highly probable that his employment of actions of the kind just described

was original with him, at any rate in Elizabethan drama. This strengthens our belief that the last plays present a new departure, not merely outwardly, in terms of construction of action, but also in the kind of vision which this peculiar structure was to embody and to realize. It will be well to keep this thought in mind when considering the last plays individually, and in greater detail. First, however, we must dwell briefly on the nature of the material which Shakespeare used in the last plays, and there subdued to a new purpose.

XX

CHAPTER 3

The Material of the Romances.

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For us to be able to estimate the artistry and purpose of the structure of Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale, some knowledge of the general nature of the material Shakespeare drew upon and transmuted is essential. Many of the more obvious structural features of the last plays may well be directly derived from Shakespeare's sources. This is not the place for a detailed discussion of the vexing problem of the exact identity of all of Shakespeare's sources in these plays. As to the main sources, scholars are almost universally agreed, and we need not quarrel with their judgment (1). Rather, this chapter is concerned with the general characteristics of the genre or genres of literature, of which Shakespeare's main sources can be regarded as examples. To be specific, the genre I shall describe is that of romance. The stories of both Pericles and The Winter's Tale are indubitably derived from romances well-known in Shakespeare's day. As the direct source of Cymbeline is a novelle (2), its link with romance may be less clear, but as will be shown in the chapter dealing with that play, this outline of the form of romance will prove relevant to it as well. It should however be stated here, that my discussion does not claim completeness. It would have been helpful if I could have drawn on some broad study of romance in the Renaissance, but no adequate comprehensive work of this kind exists (3). My own investigation in this vast field, for purposes of this thesis, had necessarily to be somewhat limited. All I shall do here, therefore, is state briefly the general characteristics of certain types of romance, especially

romance in prose, which seem to me relevant to Shakespeare's last plays (4).

A young Elizabethan living near the end of the century could turn to a variety of reading matter to satisfy his craving for romance. Arthurian and other mediaeval romances lay in his reach, in various shapes of prose and verse. The Arthurian romances, however, were superceded by the long prose romances of chivalry whose vogue began in Spain, and which during the sixteenth century spread over the whole continent of Europe. Of these, several appeared in English translations, Anthony Munday being the most productive writer in this field, with his versions of part of the cycles of Amadis de Gaule and Palmerin. Soon Elizabethan imitations by Emanuel Forde, Anthony Munday himself, and others were to appear. But they could also turn to the famous Alexandrian romances by Heliodorus, Longus, and Achilles Tatius, all of which became available in good and acclaimed translations in the 1580's and 90's. These in turn were a strong, perhaps the dominant inspiration for Greene's romances (5). Together with Montemayor's pastoral romance novel, the Diana, they furnished the main models for the greatest of all Elizabethan prose-romances, Sidney's Arcadia.

Another store-house of romance material was the collections of Italian novelle and their imitations in French and English. If the Elizabethan reader preferred drama or poetry to prose-fiction, he could see many a production of a romance play, such as Gascoigne's Supposes, the anonymous Mucedorus, or a comedia dell'arte in the repertory of a visiting group of Italian comedians;

or turn to some pastoral verse, or even the most ambitious works of Renaissance poetry, the epics of Ariosto, Tasso, and Spenser. But if he liked romance intermingled with burlesque or parody, Aldington's translation of the Golden Ass or Rabelais' Gargantua lay ready to hand.

If we disregard the more complex forms such as romance-epic, it is, I think, possible among all this variety and wealth of romantic literature to distinguish three basic types of romance especially prominent during the Renaissance: First, the Renaissance romances of chivalry, such as the cycles of Amadis de Gaule and of Palmerin; then the idyllic pastoral romances, whose original inspirations were Daphnis and Chloë and the eclogues of Theocritus and Virgil; last, the travel romance of love and preserved chastity and under the attacks of cruel fortune, which reached the Renaissance through two channels: the Alexandrian romances of Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius (and possibly others), and such mediaeval stories as those of the patient Griselde and of Constance.

✓ Common to all three types is the highly imaginary setting, little or no attempt being made at correct geography. Many of them accord a prominent place to the supernatural, in the form of such devices as visions, oracles, or the display of divine Providence, or some enchantment. Almost always, the stress is on spectacle and mood rather than on motivation. Among the conventions of story telling in romance are the frequent use of coincidence, disguise, and poetic justice.

But the three groups show prominent distinguishing

features. Peculiar to the romances of chivalry popular in the Renaissance are the stylized mediaeval setting, with its many walled and moated castles and its vast expanses of wild forest, and its predilection for whole series of jousts. The hero of a romance of chivalry is truly heroic; usually from early youth on, he proves his mettle in numerous exploits. He slays giants, penetrates enchanted castles, saves his parents in battle, and wins a beautiful lady. Adventure and exhibition of valour by far overshadow the love interest. Fortune may be made to play an important role, but only with a view to setting off the hero's unparalleled greatness. The romances of chivalry were strictly, though of course not comprehensively, biographical. And it is only as biography that they can claim to any structural unity. They lent themselves to indefinite continuation, the masterful exploits of a hero, if they appealed to the reading audience, being carried on in a new work by his son, or nephew, or if necessary even great-grandson. It is in this last respect alone that the structure of the romance of chivalry may have exercised some influence on Shakespeare's last plays. But little in them suggests any resemblance to the loose succession of episodes of heroic valour, displayed at chivalric tournaments, which characterize this group of romances.

Daphnis and Chloë and the whole group of Renaissance pastoral romances prove more important to our purpose, at least as far as The Winter's Tale is concerned. Though several of the pastoral romances of the Renaissance contain structural features not found in Daphnis and Chloë, there is reason to believe that,



at least in the majority of instances, their basic structural pattern is derived from that of the Greek romance (6). With a view to defining the genre of pastoral romance, I shall therefore describe the basic characteristics of Daphnis and Chloë, commenting only briefly on the elaboration or modification which the pattern underwent in later works (7).

In Daphnis and Chloë and most pastoral romances, the element of travel is far less prominent than in the two other types of romance. Generally, in fact, these romances have a more closely knitted unity. Daphnis and Chloë is less episodic than most chivalric romances, certainly less than any other Greek romance. Extraneous episodes occur, such as that of the myth of Pan and Syrinx (II, xxxiv) and Philetas' idyl of Love in a garden (II, xxxvi), but in this respect the artist shows surprising moderation (8). The main plot of these romances tends to be simpler than that of Heliodorus or Achilles Tatius, and far more static. Violent changes in mood, at any rate in Longus and some members of the genre, are few: the whole tone of these works is simpler, even if the simplicity is artificially contrived, as part of a sophisticated purpose. As for spectacular heroics, Daphnis and Chloë contains some, but fewer than many romances.

The central interest of pastoral romances lies in their elaborate treatment of the rarefied sentiments of idyllic love. Daphnis and Chloë provides a minute account of the growth of the innocent love - an all too innocent love, the modern reader may well feel - of two children of noble birth, Daphnis and Chloë, who, ignorant of their true parentage, ply the shepherd's trade.

Their masters and companions are other shepherds, some rude and awkward, some gentle in their manners. While the central characters of pastoral romance are aristocratic, much more room is given to characters of low birth than in chivalric romance. Shakespeare was not the first in letting an Autolycus and a clownish shepherd's son dominate some episodes in pastoral, as he does in The Winter's Tale, even though Autolycus has no counterpart in its direct source.

As in the chivalric romances, the hero and heroine of Daphnis and Chloë and many pastoral romances are protected by some form of supernatural providence. In Daphnis and Chloë, the lovers are at once the victims and the protégées of Eros, the god of Love who rules nature, and thus enlists the forces of nature (of Pan) in sympathy with his specific purpose. To the reader this is revealed fully early in the book, to the two children only gradually. It is Eros who brings the children together, who stirs up in them sentiments of love, who rescues them from predicaments, as when he incites a storm causing shipwreck to the pirates who had stolen Daphnis and some of his cattle, and who finally contrives the recognition and happy resolution. In Greene's Menaphon, too, not only Fortune but Love also is blamed by the lovers for some of their misfortunes.

A last notable feature of Daphnis and Chloë is its chronological framework. Though they spend not only their youth, but, as is intimated in the ending, most of their lives in rural surroundings, the lovers were born in the city, and return to it for their wedding ceremony. This feature reappears in a more

pronounced and elaborate form in some works of Elizabethan pastoral fiction, notably in Greene's Tullies Love, Menaphon, and Pandosto, and in Lodge's Rosalinde, the two last mentioned of which furnished Shakespeare with the plots of As You Like It and The Winter's Tale. In both plays, the action moves from the city into a green world and in the final scenes back to the city (9). The main difference, structurally, between some of the pastoral romances of the Renaissance and Daphnis and Chloë can be stated in two words: greater complexity. Nor need we look far for a reason: the attempt to combine some of the main features of chivalric or Heliodorian romance with those of pastoral, as is the case in the greatest English example of prose romance, Sidney's Arcadia (10). The many variations this complexity and attempt at a wider synthesis of forms took need hardly occupy us in this context.

The foremost representatives of the last group of romances which will be defined here, are Heliodorus' Aethiopica and Achilles Tatius' Clitophon and Leucippe, both available to Shakespeare in popular Elizabethan translations (11), and, in less pure form, various versions of the stories of Apollonius of Tyre and of Constance. For reasons which will become apparent later (12), and for economy's sake, the following account of this genre will be based mainly on the two former romances.

In all of these romances, Fortune plays a dominant role (13). They depict the manifold adventures, the long suffering and the final reunion of characters, mainly of lovers, whose complex fate is entirely or almost entirely shaped by the powers of Fortune

these romances (17). Its authors are hardly interested in character; their aim can be defined in terms of plot only, a plot as complex and as varied in situations as any to be met with anywhere. Following the practice of Homeric epic, Greek romance opens in medias res and makes extensive use of reminiscence, which fulfils simultaneously the functions of supplying the antecedent action and of adding variety of story material to the work. Suspense is built up mainly through dramatic irony, so that as the story proceeds the reader wonders increasingly how the writer will be able to carry it to a neat conclusion. He then fulfils our expectations by disentangling with consummate skill the manifold threads of the action. Much of the appeal of these romances thus consists in the pleasure of following their author's immense ingenuity in the construction of the plot, which leads from one theatrical incident to another. Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius aimed at anything but the sustained and simple mood of Daphnis and Chloe, or the repetition of incident that characterizes most chivalric romances. They revel in the grotesque and the paradoxical. Near-deaths are frequent. If the heroine of a modern novel were to find herself successively in the midst of an artillery duel, in a torpedoed ship, in a train jumping the tracks while crossing a bridge, and under the wheels of a lorry, were to survive without a scratch, and be reunited to a husband or lover who has undergone similar adventures, her fate would resemble that of a Heliodorian heroine. But mock-deaths occur still more frequently. In Clitophon and Leucippe, for instance, the hero is several times persuaded by some ingenious

spectacle that his beloved has been executed. Pastoral or chivalric romance can be sophisticated enough in its treatment of emotion, but for sheer theatricality, Heliiodorian romance is unmatched.

This high degree of complexity of Heliiodorian romance is not shared by some of its mediaeval derivatives, notably the stories of Apollonius of Tyre and of Constance. But this greater simplicity merely enabled its authors to concentrate on one of the basic effects cherished by Alexandrian romance, that of pathos. In the appeal to pathos, Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius sought to outdo even the Odyssey. This they achieved mainly by replacing the wandering hero by a wandering heroine. Her sufferings and misfortunes furnish a main interest in their work. This feature, which sets the romances of fortune far apart from chivalric and strictly pastoral romances, we shall do well to bear in mind when dealing with Cymbeline.

Only a bare outline of the nature of prose romance has been presented here. For deeper insight into this subject, I must refer my readers to the following chapters. My account, in the second chapter, of the more visible structural characteristics of the last plays, together with the discussion in the present chapter of the main peculiarities of some forms of romance popular in Shakespeare's day, has prepared us for the ~~chief~~ task of this thesis, to which I now proceed: a more thorough investigation into the nature of structure and imagery, and their function, in the last plays. We shall find in the following chapter, however, that in the earliest of these plays, Pericles, our undertaking is fraught with difficulties.

CHAPTER 4

PERICLES

A Saint's Play in Secular Disguise.

Be quiet then as men should be,  
Till he hath pass'd necessity.  
I'll show you those in troubles reign,  
Losing a mite, a mountain gain.  
(II, Gower, 5-8)

Chapter 4

A. The Play's Mixed Authorship, and Other Problems.

Most Shakespearean scholars of the present day (1) believe that Pericles is only partly by Shakespeare. Before proceeding with a discussion of its structure and significance, I shall therefore state plainly in which sense I regard it as Shakespeare's. But as my view on this subject agrees with that of most critics, I shall not at this point assemble again and defend in detail all the evidence, but content myself with restating the main conclusions, as conveniently summarized by E. K. Chambers (2), adding merely a few brief comments, in so far as they seem relevant to the particular enquiry of this thesis.

Not much can be made of external evidence in this particular problem. The title-page of the first Quarto attributes the authorship of Pericles to Shakespeare alone. This, however, cannot be considered as trustworthy evidence (3), and it is moreover neutralized by the fact that Pericles was not given a place in the first Folio. No other contemporary reference concerning the play's authorship has come down to us. E. K. Chambers, like most critics, therefore bases his conclusions solely on internal evidence. He divides the text of the play into four parts: a) the main substance of Acts I and II; b) that of III-V; c) the scenes in the brothel, namely IV ii, v and vi; d) the prologues and epilogues spoken by Gower, including their dumbshows. Of these he regards, and in my opinion rightly, (b) as definitely Shakespeare's and (c) as

likely his; (a) as definitely not Shakespeare's and (d) as probably not his. As to his collaborators, George Wilkins, William Rowley and Thomas Heywood have all been suggested, the first more convincingly than the other two. A fair case can, in my opinion, also be made for John Day (4). But the evidence for none of these authors is even nearly conclusive. The latest contributions on the subject of Pericles by Hardin Craig and Kenneth Muir (5), which throw new light on its relation to Wilkins' Painfull Adventures, do not take issue with Chambers on the question of the play's mixed authorship. Collaboration among dramatists was common at this time, and Pericles bears the mark of such co-operation as clearly as any play.

A corollary to these remarks is provided by the following observation. The story of Apollonius of Tyre, in all of its earlier versions, divides sharply into two parts, the fortunes of the hero in each part undergoing a complete reversal. Other dramatists of the Renaissance (6) were therefore led to present the story of Apollonius in the form of two companion plays, the first of which concludes with Apollonius' marriage. Though a single play with a five-act structure, Pericles reveals this same sharp division at the end of the second act. It would not be far wrong, as a matter of fact, to describe the play's opening two acts, which portray Pericles' change in fortune from the time of his escape from Antiochus to his marriage to Thaisa, as forming a prelude to the more important action of the final three acts. We know, in fact, of one occasion early in the seventeenth century, when Pericles was presented at Court in two



sections (7). It would therefore have been natural for collaborating playwrights to divide their work along the very lines reflected in the play itself by differences of style and detailed workmanship. But it is of course also possible that Shakespeare was merely asked hastily to embellish an old play, or perhaps merely a crude draft of the story of Apollonius of Tyre in the form of dialogue; and that he concentrated on the second part, contenting himself with changing or adding an occasional line or phrase in the first. Either of these views appears more likely than that recently advanced, with great skill but nevertheless unconvincingly, that rather than playwrights, different composers are to blame for the play's incongruities (8).

But whichever of these theories proves the more acceptable, Shakespeare cannot be held wholly responsible for the play's overall design. It is safe to assume that Shakespeare had a hand in Pericles, especially in its second part, and that he was acquainted with the structure of the whole, which exercised considerable influence upon his later work. But to what extent he himself fashioned its structure it is impossible to estimate in the light of facts at present known. One may be tempted to attribute the great virtues of the plot construction of Pericles, its clarity and completeness, to the guiding hand of Shakespeare. No thread is left hanging loose, and though the action shifts frequently, great care is taken to inform the audience at every turn as to time and place. Yet surely these virtues were not beyond the reach of a number of minor dramatists

of Shakespeare's age. The architect of Pericles must have been greatly helped, moreover, by the nature of its sources, especially by Gower's version of the story in the Confessio Amantis (9) which is both clear and unified. At the same time, it seems highly unlikely that the dramatically awkward scenes in the first two acts could have been Shakespeare's. As will be shown later in this chapter, the structure of Pericles in general follows that of its source rather too closely to provide a completely satisfactory vehicle for the vision it was intended to express (10). Yet once all these matters have been pointed out, the fact remains that Shakespeare was sufficiently interested in Pericles at least to write or rewrite the main body of the final three acts; and that does make him in large measure responsible for the work's structure.

Modern editors are therefore right when they include Pericles in the Shakespeare canon, and I am justified in giving it a place in this thesis. But it has a right to be here for another reason. In a number of respects, some of which have already been indicated in the course of Chapter 2, the structure of Pericles foreshadows that of the plays Shakespeare was to write within three or four years after its first appearance on the stage (11). That the relation to The Winter's Tale is particularly close will reveal itself as my discussion proceeds (12). If therefore it is possible to discover an informing idea or core of thought behind the structure of Pericles, this may provide one with clues towards the understanding of those of Shakespeare's last plays which are wholly and indisputably his own.

But on that account, in turn, it seems wise to consider the structure of Pericles as a whole, and not merely those particular features which Shakespeare was to employ again, or which find a direct equivalent in the later plays. Because we have good reason to believe that Pericles appealed profoundly to Shakespeare's imagination, it is vital that we should try to understand the play's form as well as possible, without being deterred from such an enterprise by the initial strong impression that whatever its character, it can hardly be more than imperfectly realized.

The play's imagery, however, is a different matter. Certain of the images in the later, Shakespearean scenes, can also be said to anticipate, though in a limited sense only, the practice of the later plays. The imagery of Pericles' speeches to Marina in the crucial scene in Act V, where he meets his daughter again, serves to rarify the scene's peculiar and highly ecstatic, almost religious mood, foreshadowing some of the images in the scenes of reconciliation or restoration in Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale; one or two, as will be shown later (13), even serve to crystallize a basic part of the play's underlying vision.

But a few outstanding examples apart, the imagery of Pericles reveals no wider function that might help to illumine the significance of either Pericles or the later plays. Even some of the more striking images, such as the extended parable of the swallowing and casting forth of civilization by the whale in the conversation of the fishermen, seem superimposed, and their function is limited to the heightening or embellishing of

the immediate context, without echo or anticipation or other link to other parts of the play. I can, for instance, discover no significant iteration of imagery here, which might serve to evoke persistently some important theme. And one would hardly expect to do so in a play so manifestly of mixed authorship. For these reasons, no useful purpose would be served by a detailed investigation of the play's imagery as a whole, and I shall confine myself to drawing attention to one or two central images, while discussing the purpose of the play's general design.

Before proceeding with an account of the play's structure, however, it seems wise to add a further word of caution, so as not to be misunderstood by the reader. In the attempt to discover significance in the structure of Pericles, one is bound to be severely hampered by the strong impression of crude or otherwise imperfect workmanship in parts, and also by the fact that it is almost universally admitted that the play lacks in dramatic effectiveness. Yet, as will be seen, it is possible to point out certain general principles which inform the structure of Pericles, and even to discover hints of a deeper vision to which it was designed to give shape, even if these are imperfectly realized. There will, at any rate, be occasion to advance the thesis that certain features of the play's structure, which one would generally regard as undesirable in dramatic composition, find some justification in terms of the purpose of Pericles.

B i. The General Nature of the Action and the Incidents.

Several of the major differences in the structure of the action between Pericles and Shakespeare's earlier comedies and tragedies were mentioned in the course of Chapter 2, but the main distinction has yet to be pointed out. In most comedies and tragedies, though not necessarily in histories, the action is organized around some central and highly concentrated conflict, whose development and issue form the foundation for the play's content. The norm of structure in such plays, followed in the majority though not in all instances, is to prepare for the main issues in the opening act, then to involve the leading characters in increasing complications up to the play's climax, which usually occurs shortly after the middle, and finally to carry the action through to its catastrophe or resolution. A structure of this kind is designed largely with a view to creating dramatic suspense and sustaining it over most of the play. The action usually moves from one group of characters to another, from protagonist to antagonist, or intriguer to the subject of his intrigue, thereby widening more and more the possibilities for irony, one of the main contributing factors to dramatic suspense.

But in Pericles, dramatic irony is used sparingly and, what is even more peculiar, there is no central conflict. If it is a unified play in any sense, it is so not by virtue of a single action but because almost all the incidents directly affect the well-being of its two protagonists, Pericles and Marina. The action simply comprises the manifold adventures of

father and daughter over a large number of years. Rather than a drama in the usual sense of the term, Pericles is thus a biography in the form of dramatized narrative.

This biography, as has already been remarked, is presented in two main sections, which are only loosely connected - so loosely indeed, that little that takes place in the opening two acts is essential to the understanding of the action in the remaining three. As indicated on the title page of the first Quarto, the play contains "the true Relation of the whole Historie, adventures, and fortunes of the said Prince Pericles : As also [namely in the second part], The no lesse strange, and worthy accidents, in the Birth and Life, of his Daughter Mariana"(14). These adventures or "accidents" are highly varied in kind. By the end of the action, Pericles truly has run up and down the gamut of experience. He has enjoyed the hospitality of generous and wise rulers and suffered from the tyranny or ingratitude of others. He has been shipwrecked several times and restored to wealth and honour. He has seen the birth, marriage and seeming death of those most beloved. His own sufferings have been such that he has been for a long time in a state of utter despair, but he has also come to know the return to joy, and the final grace of the gods. In the world of man, he has been face to face with both the highest good and the worst possible evil. But he has learned not merely about man's moral nature, but also about Providence: he has been tossed on the seas of fortune, and when he had given up all hope, life's greatest gifts were restored to him by the benevolent gods.

It should be noted that though supernatural forces often play a part in the action of Shakespearean tragedy, nowhere in them is there a like emphasis on the role of Fortune or Providence in the shaping of man's life.

Obviously an action of this kind is highly serious in the Aristotelian sense of the term. About this the spectator is left in no doubt from the very beginning. The nature of the opening incident, Pericles' discovery of Antiochus' incest and his flight from his wrath, prepares him for the serious mood which dominates most of the play. Outside of the brief interlude of the fishermen, there is no place in this play for the expression of carefree sentiments; the largest part of its action is taken up with misfortunes, though the conclusion is one of joy. As if the moral inferences of the play were not made clear enough by the events themselves, Gower harps on them once more, in his Epilogue. Especially striking for a Shakespearean drama is the fact that the seriousness of the action is seldom mitigated. "Comic relief" is introduced only for brief moments, as in the conversation of the fishermen in the second act, and the racy dialogue in the scenes at the brothel. But no scene in Pericles approaches in tone those of Autolycus, Perdita and Florizel in The Winter's Tale, of Cloten in the earlier parts of Cymbeline, or of Stephano and Trinculo in The Tempest. Pericles contains no idyllic scenes and leaves much less room for light comedy than Shakespeare's other romances.

Considering the frequent development of the notions of mercy and justice in Shakespeare's earlier plays, and the special

emphasis they receive in the three other Romances, where an act of pardon towards the offender plays a decisive part in the ending, it is particularly surprising that in Pericles the final outcome of events is regulated strictly in accordance with the notions of poetic justice. Pericles contains no acts of mercy or forgiveness, no mention even of these notions: towards the offender of the moral law, the gods in the end exercise stern justice. Helicanus relates how Antiochus and his daughter finally provoked Jupiter's vengeance:

Even in the height and pride of all his glory,  
When he was seated in a chariot  
Of an inestimable value, and his daughter with him,  
A fire from heaven came, and shrivell'd up  
Their bodies, even to loathing. (II, iv, 6-10)

In a similar spirit, Gower relates in the Epilogue how upon learning of the criminal ingratitude towards Pericles, the people of Tarsus burnt Cleon and Dionyza in their palace, and comments: "The gods for murder seemed so content To punish." Thus in Pericles Shakespeare did not reshape the ending of the action to permit for the exercise of forgiveness towards the offender, as he was to do in Cymbeline where Iachimo meets with pardon. But he adheres at this vital point of the action strictly to Gower's version in the Confessio Amantis, and so maintains the tone of old-fashioned moral earnestness.

The impression of gravity in Pericles, however, is decisively qualified by the marked unreality of many of its incidents. The audience are seldom encouraged here to engage in that "willing suspension of disbelief" which Coleridge considered an essential accompaniment of effective drama. For



such a willing suspension, several of the incidents put too much strain on our credulity; for instance, Thaisa's revival by Cerimon, after her coffin has been cast up by the sea, or, in a different manner, Marina's energetic and successful defence of her chastity in the brothel. Incidents of this kind, quite apart from the vision near the end, remind one that the play is a romance in dramatic form.

ii. Basic Problems in the Construction of Pericles.

From this description of the general character of the action of Pericles, it has become evident that it is a play utterly unlike any of Shakespeare's earlier comedies or tragedies. In trying to understand the basic difficulties of construction Shakespeare was facing while at work on the Romances, one must remember that never before Pericles had he attempted to dramatize in its entirety a romantic story covering a period of fifteen or twenty years, in which the hero and his family undergo a considerable number of adventures and many turns in fortune. The two basic problems, as I see them, which the playwright had to face in Pericles are these: how to compress an action of such vast scope into five acts, into "two hours' traffic of our stage", without sacrificing some of its essential elements; and second, how to hold the audience's interest in a play whose action over large parts provided little possibility for dramatic suspense. The scope of the action of Pericles is more akin to that of brief epic than to that of most actions considered suitable for the brevity of dramatic form (15). The biographical nature of the plot, with its emphasis on loss and restoration,

provided little or no opportunity for the complication essential to dramatic suspense, except in the scenes immediately before the resolution. The playwright thus had to devise a different way to make the intervening action sufficiently interesting to the spectator.

iii. The Method of Construction.

What principle of organization and what particular devices did the architect of Pericles employ in order to solve these two basic difficulties? He presented the many adventures of Pericles and his daughter in roughly chronological order, as he found them in his source. It would, in fact, be difficult to imagine any alternative arrangement. Each scene thus, with only one or two exceptions, presents directly a slice of the biography of Pericles or his daughter. Compelled by the exigences of dramatic brevity, he concentrates in almost every instance on the immediate incident itself and its direct effect upon Pericles or Marina, providing at best only a minimum of dramatic preparation. This method he employs even in the play's opening scene, where he at once plunges into the climactic situation of the incident of Antiochus. At this point it is pertinent to note that the account, found in Shakespeare's sources, of how Antiochus after struggling against his criminal passion for a long time at last compelled his daughter to incest, and the long story of previous ill-fated suitors, is here omitted, or only recalled in a few of Gower's lines. Pericles himself faces the riddle at the opening of the very first scene.

As the large number of incidents left little or no room

of lines, and thus considerable time. After his opening forty lines, the audience is prepared not merely for an unusual play based on a story of olden times, but informed of enough background to comprehend the swift developments at Antiochus' court without further explanation. As the play proceeds, Gower frequently interposes and relates the necessary background to later events before permitting the actors to proceed with their task. In the Epilogue he disposes orderly and concisely of remaining loose threads. Thus the dramatist, unhampered by the need to explain the frequent changes in time and place by dramatic means, can concentrate on the main incidents in the play proper. Gower's part is therefore quite unlike that of the Greek chorus, for far from participating in the action, he presents it (17).

But only part of Gower's function has so far been described. He not merely provides necessary information to the audience and ties up the play's different sections, but he attempts to guide the audience's response. In his Prologue, he assures them that this old tale has been found entertaining and in other ways beneficial by generations of listeners before. To many, it has been no less than a "restorative" (18), which reference may provide a possible hint as to the final purpose of the play, with regard to the audience. As the play proceeds, he anticipates the nature of its ending (19). Again and again he comments on its didactic import, and in the end he summarizes the moral wisdom that may be derived from it. One of his obvious functions is therefore to heighten further the play's serious

tone. In more than a superficial sense, the play is presented through him as if it were his own dramatization of his story in the Confessio Amantis. Thus Wilkins, on the title page of his prose version of the story, could refer to the play "As it was lately presented by the worthy and ancient poet John Gower" (20). How much the play is influenced by Gower's point of view is seen in the correspondence between his moral attitude and that reflected in the play's action itself. The rather stiff moralistic presentation of several of the characters, so surprising in a work to which Shakespeare contributed a large share, may find its justification in the mental attitude of its choric presenter. To a high degree the action is presented at one remove, through Gower's eyes.

If, however, one considers the appeal of the play as a whole, still another function of Gower's will become clearly apparent. His vividly realized character contributes to the work's total effect, Gower is pictured as an old man who seems to have temporarily stepped out of his grave in order to re-enact, in the form of dramatized narrative, his version of an old story. His idiom, so at least it must have sounded to Elizabethan ears, is essentially that of his own poetry. Archaic and rather awkward, it is yet attractive by virtue of its very archaism and though usually "unrefined", at moments quite poetic. Gower may have embodied to Jacobean ears the character-study of a mediaeval poet whose moral advice, firmly rooted in an unquestioned tradition, sounded sweet and simple, at once naive and true, and if strait-laced, certainly picturesque.

What, one may well ask, is the purpose of this picturesque reincarnation in a play of a mediaeval poet? The explanation may be quite simple: he provided the dramatist with the opportunity of a coup-de-théâtre in a play lacking in dramatic interest. Seen in this way, Gower is decked up with a colourful personality, for its own sake. It seems highly likely that some such purpose was in the dramatist's mind. But the possibility must at least be considered that the structure of Pericles, of which the chorus forms a part, is more closely integrated than at first apparent: that Gower is part of an all-embracing design, which includes both him and the action proper. This would not exclude any spectacular development of Gower for its own sake. But it would mean that apart from the functions considered, there is still a more basic reason for the employment of Gower in Pericles. The answer to this problem must be deferred until other features of the play have been more fully understood.

We have still to answer the question, by what means the dramatist attempted to sustain the interest of an audience in an action which by its very nature was ill-fitted for dramatic presentation. The device of Gower, however useful for purposes of condensation, was hardly likely to improve the meagre potentialities for dramatic suspense. By minimizing dramatic preparation, the playwright deprived himself of an all-important factor in the heightening of the dramatic power of his incidents. Strange as it seems, one can only conclude that the dramatist, except perhaps in sections of the fourth and the fifth acts,

was singularly unconcerned with creating dramatic suspense. The sheer rapidity with which incident follows upon incident makes the audience's intimate participation in the action next to impossible, during the opening three acts, at any rate. Moreover, while the action of the second part is organized towards the climax of the scene of Marina's reunion, it is difficult to appreciate from the strictly dramatic point of view the slighter scene of Thaisa's reunion which follows and which is presented at a lower pitch (21). Nor is there any use of dramatic surprise in the manner of Beaumont and Fletcher, in this play. The audience expects the final outcome, and is kept informed of Thaisa's revival from the end of the third act on.

Apart from the slowing down of the action in the final two acts referred to earlier, the dramatist, if he was worried about this practical problem at all, must thus have concentrated on other means than the dramatic heightening of incidents to make his work effective on the stage. It is easily seen that one such way was suggested to him by the highly romantic character of the action and the great variety of the incidents: that of making a spectacle compensate for drama. And, indeed, spectacle is employed far more lavishly in Pericles than customarily in Shakespearean comedy or tragedy. This "spectacular" quality of Pericles reminds us rather of the history plays.

Spectacle is so prominent in the play that at moments it completely overshadows the action, as during the long scene of the reception before the lists, when the knights pass before the king and his daughter, each one showing the device on his shield.

Judged by purely dramatic standards such a scene would be inexcusable, even in a dramatist far inferior to Shakespeare. But it was designed as spectacle, and as such its virtues should be judged (22). It is moreover highly likely that a larger place was reserved for spectacle in the play as a whole than is directly indicated in the texts of the early Quartos. One need only think of the scenes of the storms and of the lists to become aware of the possibilities for the employment of spectacular effects in this, as I prefer to call it, piece of pageantry. The special references to Pericles' skill as a lutist and to Marina's art of singing seem to indicate that a wide use of music was also envisaged for the production. Gower's "spectacular" characterization thus fits the general <sup>nature</sup> character of this work, just as his moral outlook is reflected in the development of the action.

If my account of the structure of Pericles has been convincing so far, it may still be contended that the exploitation of spectacular effect provides at best a poor substitute for concentrated dramatic action in any play. This, however, appears to me to be only a half-truth. It can be argued that by the very nature of its action, Pericles requires a wide use of spectacle, which is not of course to imply that the particular application was in every instance skilful. We must take into account in the case of Pericles not only the highly romantic nature of some of the incidents, but the vast biographical scope of the action as a whole. The point of view from which an action like that of Pericles can be presented is necessarily less immediate than that taken in Hamlet or Macbeth. In tragedy, the significance

of an event appears mainly in the light of its immediate effects and consequences: in Pericles each incident is seen as part of a long process. And for that very reason, each individual happening appears removed into the distance, and we approach it rather as we would some crucial event in our own lives which took place many years ago. The analogy between literature and life, at this point, is fairly close; for in life as in literature, important happenings seen at a distance, in the light of later developments or as part of a process, are largely bereft of any power of immediacy, and instead assume interest for us as spectacle. The prominence given to spectacle in Pericles is in accordance with the nature of its action as well as the dominant perspective in which it is presented.

B. iv. The Treatment of the Minor Characters.

A thorough account of the characters in Pericles lies outside the scope of this thesis. But certain aspects of characterization, such as grouping of characters and general methods of their presentation, are sometimes closely related to a play's underlying design. As Pericles is a biographical play, the treatment and in fact the whole conception of Pericles' own character and to a lesser extent that of his daughter, are relevant to our purpose, for they may enlighten us on the function of structure of the work as a whole.

The treatment of the minor characters is rigorously determined by the play's biographical conception. The action is focussed almost solely on Pericles and Marina. The other characters are important only as instruments, not for themselves.



of faith, of loyalty." Helicanus' part in the play does more than anything else to remind us that the action does not involve only the private fortunes of Pericles and his family, even if these receive by far the greatest emphasis. As a king, Pericles has public as well as private duties. Several times during the play a political theme is hinted at, as for instance in the deliberate contrast between Simonides' sound sense and good government and Antiochus' proud pomp and tyranny. The welfare of his countrymen, so the spectator is given to understand, will be assured by the happy resolution of Pericles' family affairs. It is for this reason, evidently, that Shakespeare finds a place for Helicanus in the recognition scenes. It must however be said that there he appears as hardly more than an onlooker to a private action. The public action in Pericles is indicated rather than developed. In Cymbeline it was to be given a much more prominent place.

#### B. v. Pericles' Character and the Pattern of his Fortunes.

The treatment of the minor characters in Pericles provides further justification for the statement made earlier in this chapter that Pericles is a biography in dramatic narrative. The play's happenings are significant only in so far as they mould the lives and fortunes of Pericles and, to a lesser degree, of Marina. The play consists of their "adventures", in a much stricter, a more confined sense than that in which Hamlet portrays Hamlet's fortunes, or King Lear, Lear's. Therefore, if the structure of Pericles has any deeper purpose, it must be sought mainly in the pattern of Pericles'

The main characters in Shakespeare's comedies or tragedies, while not fully in control of their fortunes by any means, are presented as active figures, as men and women who make decisions - or show fateful indecision -, thus contributing to a chain of events which eventually leads to their happiness or ruin. Not so in Pericles; for there the events are usually portrayed as happening to the protagonists. One can infer from Pericles' talents and activities that he is a man of unusual powers, a skilful soldier as well as a great musician, a man of great authority among his subjects, and of generous dealing. But he is presented mainly as the plaything of Fortune and the gods. He does not create his fortune in any important sense: he endures Fortune's blows and accepts her gifts. Such a manner of characterization, it is true, can be explained partly by his indirect presentation through Gower; but it is inherent in the nature of the play's action, and thus indicative of the kind of view of life which informs Pericles.

Besides being presented mainly passively, Pericles is drawn as an impeccably good man, a man without defect, which constitutes another essential difference from the manner of characterization applied to Shakespeare's tragic heroes, but foreshadows the idealized presentation of Imogen and, more emphatically still, of Hermione in The Winter's Tale. Pericles cannot be said in any sense to deserve misfortune or suffering, let alone the immensity of loss that lies in store for him. He is drawn without moral weakness, or even any ambivalent passion; that is partly why he does not strike us as especially interesting.

Nor is his daughter Marina in any sense responsible for her misfortunes, though her chastity safeguards her from worse. Both Pericles and Marina undergo intense suffering, though both are wholly good.

My reason for emphasizing this point is that some leading Shakespearean scholars of today have shown unwillingness to face its implications, by trying, in one way or another, to discover a trace of guilt in Pericles, Thaisa, or Marina. To these critics, thus, Pericles' fortunes follow the course of guilt, chastisement, atonement, and restoration. G. Wilson Knight, for instance, in an otherwise illuminating essay on Pericles (23), argues that Pericles is somehow infected by the evil of Antiochus' daughter whom he tried to woo, and therefore has to undergo purification through suffering. But when was a character ever conceived as worthy of the god's chastisement, whose only wrong was to have discovered another's evil, and who ~~had~~ recoiled from it at once? Kenneth Muir's imaginative suggestion, that in the original uncorrupted text, it was clearly indicated that Thaisa upon suddenly marrying Pericles broke a vow to Diana (24), is equally misleading; if not that, certainly incapable of proof. In the text which has come down to us, there is no indication that Pericles and his family are chastised by gods incensed against them on account of some broken vow or mingling with evil men. It is perhaps relevant at this point to note, that generally in the play, except in the instance of Dionyza's ungrateful conduct towards Pericles and his daughter, evil actions are not carefully motivated. Pericles suffers as a

good man, and for reasons beyond human comprehension, reminding us of Tobit in the Apocrypha (25). As Gower puts it, Pericles' sufferings simply serve to show how "those in troubles reign, Losing a mite, a mountain gain" (26). Let us beware of manufacturing explanations, like Job's comforters'.

As has already been pointed out, the experience Pericles undergoes in the course of the action is manifold in kind. Being a man unusually gifted from the beginning, he has by the end of the play undergone all the practical education a philosopher king might desire. That aspect of Pericles' career, however, receives only secondary emphasis; like the political implications of the action, it is indicated rather than impressed upon the spectator's mind. What matters in the play in terms of action is the sudden changes in Pericles' fortune, his severe losses, the sufferings which ensue, and his restoration to joy. To comprehend the vision of life which underlies Pericles, one must understand primarily the meaning and pattern of these basic experiences and Pericles' reactions to them.

As was to be expected, the blows Pericles undergoes increase in severity and in their crushing effect upon his happiness. In his first shipwreck he loses his companions and most of his goods, and is reduced to nakedness, begging for help among fishermen. But his armour is soon cast up again by the sea, and before long he has not merely achieved victory at the tournament organized by the local king but gained the affection of his daughter. Pericles' response to the first storm is utterly unlike Lear's (27). Lear faces the storm to the full,

as if himself were the person to whom it could do least harm:

Let the great gods,  
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,  
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,  
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,  
Unwhipp'd of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;  
(King Lear, III, ii, 49-53).

But Pericles thus addresses the gods of thunder:

Yet cease your ire, you angry stars of heaven!  
Wind, rain, and thunder, remember, earthly man  
Is but a substance that must yield to you;  
And I, as fits my nature, do obey you.  
.....  
Let it suffice the greatness of your powers  
To have bereft a prince of all his fortunes;  
And having thrown him from your watery grave,  
Here to have death in peace is all he'll crave.  
(II, i, 1-11)

Lear never expresses obedience or submission to the angry elements. If in that play one looks for a parallel for "death in peace is all he'll crave", one must turn to Kent's words near the end. Soon, however, Pericles' fortunes take a turn for the better again, and he has reason to thank the gods for having sent him to Pentapolis.

His address to the second storm, before he learns the bitter news of Thaisa's death, is more urgent, though again quite unlike that of Lear:

Thou god of this great vast, rebuke these surges,  
Which wash both heaven and hell; and thou, that hast  
Upon the winds command, bind them in brass,  
Having call'd them from the deep! O, still  
Thy deafening, dreadful thunders; gently quench  
Thy nimble, sulphurous flashes!  
(III, i, 1-6)

Pericles is now concerned more about the safety of his wife than about his own well-being. When Lychorida informs him that the queen has died, she implores him: "Patience, good sir; do not

assist the storm", and after his brief outburst:

O you gods!  
Why do you make us love your goodly gifts,  
And snatch them straight away? We here below  
Recall not what we give, and therein may  
Vie honour with you.

she again urges him, this time successfully: "Patience, good sir, Even for this charge" (III, 1, 22-7). He has a companion in grief, this time, and his awareness of new responsibilities towards his daughter quickly quietens any rebellious mood to which his mind might have been prone. He even yields without long debate to the sailors' request that his Queen be at once buried at sea. But his whole-hearted submission to inevitable fate finds its clearest expression in the following scene at Tarsus, where upon recalling the death of Thaisa he says to Cleon and Dionyza:

We cannot but obey  
The powers above us. Could I rage and roar  
As doth the sea she lies in, yet the end  
Must be as 'tis.

(III, iii, 9-12)

His words recall Edgar's in King Lear:

Men must endure  
Their going hence, even as their coming hither;  
Ripeness is all:

(King Lear, V, ii, 9-11)

So far Pericles has borne his misfortunes steadfastly. Yet one more tragedy is to overtake him when at Tarsus he is led by the tomb erected in her memory to believe that his daughter Marina has died. Now his patience has reached an end, at least for a while. The occasion is presented in dumbshow only, but its instruction clearly conveys the violence of Pericles' grief: "... whereat Pericles makes lamentation, puts on sackcloth, and

in a mighty passion departs". After this event, he no longer washes his face and, as we learn at the beginning of the fifth act, he refuses food. He withdraws from human society altogether, not speaking a word to anyone. Yet he does no violence to himself, and as if Fortune had by now done her worst, he survives the next tempest without physical harm; Gower relates that

He bears  
A tempest, which his mortal vessel tears,  
And yet he rides it out.

(IV, iv, 29-31) (28).

In the scene of the reunion with Marina, the note of endurance is struck clearly again, at a vital moment. After Marina's first words, Pericles pushes her firmly away - how firmly appears from her lines:

I said, my lord, if you did know my parentage,  
You would not do me violence.

(V, i, 98-9)

Pericles evidently has not yet mastered his grief so far as to bear it with restraint. Yet though he will not let himself believe, at first, that her story could "prove the thousandth part of my endurance" (V, i, 134-5), something in her face and general bearing, which reminds him of Thaisa, persuades him to listen to her. As she speaks on and he contemplates her face, his doubts dissolve, and he expresses his emotion in an image at once beautiful and deeply meaningful:

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

(V, i, 136-8)

G. Wilson Knight's comment on this passage will bear quoting in full:

We remember Viola's 'Patience on a monument smiling at grief' (Twelfth Night, II, iv, 116); but these lines hold a deeper penetration. The whole world of great tragedy ('kings' graves') is subdued to an over-watching figure, like Cordelia's love by the bedside of Lear's sleep. 'Extremity', that is disaster in all its finality (with perhaps a further suggestion of endless time) is therefore negated, put out of action, by a serene assurance corresponding to St. Paul's certainty in 'O death, where is thy sting?' Patience is here an all-enduring calm seeing through tragedy to the end; smiling through endless death to ever-living eternity. (29)

The idea of "Patience . . . smiling Extremity out of act" is indeed one that carries us beyond the world of Shakespeare's tragedies (30). One would search in vain for it among Beaumont and Fletcher's tragi-comedies, which differ from Shakespeare's romances not only in structure, as has been pointed out, but, more fundamentally, in the vision of life they contain. When Wilson Knight relates Pericles' words to those of St. Paul, he points, I believe, to a very real analogy. For while the series of Pericles' adventures is not to be regarded as a deliberate allegory of the life of the good Christian, as traditionally conceived, it can hardly help reminding us of it. Pericles and Spenser's Red Cross Knight have different personalities and different duties. But both are subjected to a series of tribulations, for a time alternating with brief episodes of good fortune, progress or comfort. In the lives of both, tribulation reaches an extreme, before they are freed from it by outside help and are prepared for a joy which outbalances any hardship, tragic loss and loneliness they had to endure. Often in religious literature, the Christian protagonist is presented more passively than Spenser's Knight of St. George; for instance St. John of the Cross relates (31) that the believer



must pass through the ordeal of extreme negation, or utter darkness, before he can receive the light of redemption. Like so many mediaeval Christian saints and figures in the Old Testament, Pericles is fitted with the quality of passive endurance. His indirect presentation, however undramatic, appears therefore singularly appropriate.

But Marina, aided by the grace of Diana, the play's presiding goddess, becomes the main instrument in the freeing of Pericles, her father, from his condition of inward darkness after extreme tribulation. She enables him to see beyond tragedy. The extent of her sufferings bears comparison with his, and her expression, like "Patience . . . smiling Extremity out of act", is the living image of her powers of calm endurance, and more, of her capacity to transcend tragic experience. But as his daughter, Marina is part of Pericles' own personality, a symbol of the fruition of his marriage with Thaisa. She clearly represents - though this is probably only part of her function in the play - that hope man can find in the younger generation, more especially in his children, of renewal, which reconciles him to life even after he has undergone severe disillusionment. Some creative power at work in this world can take him beyond tragedy to reaffirmation and joy. But the tragic experience brings with it humility, sympathy, and wisdom, all of which qualities are in the course of the play stressed in both Pericles and Marina. As to Marina, let Pericles' own words speak:

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:

(V, i, 119-21)

To give an expression of this creative, renewing principle closely related to ordinary human experience is the function of the double plot in Pericles.

C. Shakespeare's Emphasis on the Theme of Patience.

If we examine the treatment of the story of Apollonius of Tyre in the play's main sources, Gower's Confessio Amantis and Laurence Twine's The Patterne of Painfull Aduentures (32), we shall find further support for the contention that the theme of endurance and patience, which bears suffering calmly eventually to transcend it, is stressed in Pericles and is essential to the understanding of its function of structure. It is true that Gower and Twine tell a story which in almost all its parts closely anticipates that of Shakespeare's play; the two main protagonists, Apollonius of Tyre and his daughter, in both versions undergo similar adventures, and the outward occasion, at any rate, of their reunion is the same. But in Gower the story is narrated for a specific didactic purpose which, though still present in Shakespeare's play, receives less emphasis there:

in ensauple his life was write  
That all lovers mighten wite  
Howe atte last it shal be sene  
Of love what they wolden mene.  
For se now, on that other side,  
Antiochus with all his pride  
Which set his love unkindely,  
His ende he hadde sodeinly.  
.....  
Lo thus, my sone, might thou lere,  
What is to love in good manere  
.....  
Fortune though she be nought stable,  
Yet at somtime is favourable  
To hem that ben of love trewe. (33)

The opening lines of Gower's epilogue in Pericles are:

In Antiochus and his daughter you have heard  
Of monstrous lust the due and just reward:  
In Pericles, his queen and daughter, seen,  
Although assail'd with fortune fierce and keen,  
Virtue preserved from fell destruction's blast,  
Led on by heaven, and crown'd with joy at last:

He proceeds to interpret some of the other characters. It is clear that while some of the spirit of Gower's story lives on in Shakespeare's play, its purpose is wider. In Twine the aim is merely to portray the instability of Fortune.

Much more important to our argument, however, is the different treatment of the hero's response to his misfortunes both in Gower and in Twine from that in Pericles. In neither of them is the idea of endurance of suffering with patience especially emphasized. On the contrary, in all versions that might have been known to Shakespeare, not only Gower's and Twine's, but also Wilkins' and that of the Gesta Romanorum (34), Apollonius on the occasion of his wife's death bursts out in a frantic display of grief. In Gower, Apollonius' reaction is the opposite, as nearly as it can be conceived in the context of the story, to that of Pericles quoted earlier in this chapter. I quote only part of the passage:

Ha, thou Fortune, I the defie,  
Now hast thou do to me thy werst.  
Ha, herte, why ne wolt thou berst,  
That forth with her I mighte passe?  
My paines were well the lasse.  
In such weping and suche crie  
His dede wife which lay him by  
A thousand sithes he her kiste,  
.....  
He fell swounende as he that thought  
His owne deth, which he besought  
Unto the goddes all above  
With many a pitous word of love. (35)

Shakespeare's Pericles, though not so clearly as in some of his other plays, the story or plot is mainly a means to an end. The story of Pericles is very much like the story of Apollonius of Tyre: the purpose to which it is put is different. The view of life Pericles contains is new, and of Shakespeare's making. In this instance, as always almost, Shakespeare started not with a story but with a vision; and then he looked for stories through which he might be able to give this vision expression.

That view of life is not unlike the traditional Christian view of <sup>the</sup> sufferings man must undergo before he can penetrate to a full vision of God's goodness and purpose for him. The story of Apollonius of Tyre, like that of the Odyssey which, I believe, strongly influenced its original version (38), presents a pattern of the course of human life partly analogous to the biblical one. If Shakespeare's play, with its emphasis on the place of patience and creative redemption in human life, suggests a still closer analogy to the Christian or biblical view, it is not because he wanted his play to be more Christian - that would be a preposterous deduction. But as he conceived the significance of the tragi-comic pattern of the story of Apollonius of Tyre more deeply than did Gower or Twine or Wilkins or even the author of the Gesta Romanorum, he was led to a view of the place of suffering in a great man's life more like that of another profound view, the Christian one. His play remained secular in content and intention.

D. Pericles and Mediaeval Drama.

I Further light is thrown on the nature and function of structure of Pericles by the fact that it clearly belongs to a certain dramatic tradition with which Shakespeare was undoubtedly acquainted: that of the vernacular religious drama in its later, more developed and less rigid forms, especially the Saint's play and related forms of drama (39). From plays of this kind most of the broad structural features of Pericles are derived; among them the device of the choric presenter in the person of a poet (40), the building up of the action out of a large number of loosely related episodes, the treatment of the play as a "pageant" rather than a work of highly concentrated action around a central conflict; the tragi-comic development of the action, the large part taken in it by supernatural powers, and the construction of the whole so as to serve an explicit didactic end. /

I If the resemblance in structure between Pericles and the Digby play of Mary Magdalene is unusually close, extending as it does even to the use of identical incidents, this may be attributed partly to coincidence or episodic similarity in the material of the two plays; a more adequate explanation is that both plays are written in the same tradition of dramatic composition. Even closer is the structural analogy between Pericles and two French plays of the sixteenth century on the apocryphal story of Tobit, including as it does the use of a double plot of two generations, whose informing theme is that of loss and restoration. We know, moreover, that English plays on

the same story were performed as late as 1602 (41); and if these plays followed their source as closely as do the extant French plays, they must have been akin in structure. But their existence interests us not so much because they may possibly have influenced Pericles directly, a matter impossible to prove and anyhow unlikely, as because they represent in a firmly rooted tradition, which was continent-wide what were probably the examples closest in structure to Pericles itself.

It may be argued that the material of Pericles is drawn from secular literature, and that therefore Pericles is anything but a religious drama. But it is a secular play largely retaining the shape of a highly developed miracle play. In this respect, it represents merely a late or final stage of a general development which affected the mediaeval dramatic tradition during the sixteenth century. That manifold kinds of secular material were absorbed at that time into miracle plays or moralities is well-known. At first, this development took usually the form of farcical interludes, as in the Secunda Pastorum, but later many other kinds of material, both literary and otherwise, were liberally drawn upon. This process has in its many stages been traced with some thoroughness by a number of students of sixteenth-century French literature. There is every reason to believe, in spite of the fact that the religious drama went out of fashion in England rather earlier than in France, that it would be possible to demonstrate the main stages of this development with similar thoroughness in English drama, if more of these plays had survived; but alas, most have not (42), and

the only play on a biblical story on the professional London stage which has come down to us is Peele's David and Bethsabe. There was of course some opposition, particularly in the early days, to this secularization of the drama; but some types of more serious material from secular sources probably found their way into miracle plays or mystères rather easily, considering the example given by the mediaeval sermon with its practice of ~~a variety~~ of illustration by exempla drawn from a variety of sources.

Even if detailed evidence from English drama is rather scanty, the main stages in the process of development from the early miracle play to a drama on the story of Apollonius of Tyre seem clear: from the brief cycle play on an episode of the life of Christ to the longer non-cyclical play on a story drawn from the Old Testament or the Apocrypha, thence to the Saint's play and allied forms, and thence to a play dramatizing a story from romance closely analogous in shape to some biblical stories (in the case of Pericles that of the Book of Tobit), and suitable for a conventional didactic purpose. As the story of Apollonius was no less popular during the Middle Ages than in the Renaissance, and had been used by the author of the Gesta Romanorum as an exemplum "Of Temporal Tribulation" (43), and since it contains a view of Providence closely akin to the Jewish and Christian one, there was nothing to prevent dramatizing it in the form of a Saint's play. Nor can the substitution of Jupiter, Diana, and Neptune, for Christ or God the Father have represented a formidable obstacle for the playwright for there were abundant

precedents in sixteenth-century literature and art for the identification of Jupiter, Apollo, or some other pagan god with Christ or Jehovah (44); Everyman in the play of that name even refers to God as "the highest Jupiter of all" (45). The resemblances in structure between Pericles and certain Saint's plays and similar forms of religious drama make the development outlined in these pages highly probable. But for more detailed evidence, I refer the reader to Appendix B.

✓ The fact that Pericles represents a late development or modification of the Saint's play cross-illuminates the function of its structure, providing further support for the interpretation arrived at above. Since the view of man's suffering in the light of Providence contained in Pericles is similar to that of the Book of Tobit and - though there is no equivalent to the important role of Marina - to that of the Book of Job, it seems hardly surprising that the architect of Pericles chose for it a structure much like that of certain popular religious plays that lay ready at hand. In Pericles, as in these biblical stories, no explanation is given for suffering, but it is shown how a man, favoured with grace, rises beyond suffering. Remarkably enough, ✓ the emphasis on the virtue of Pericles' endurance, and the quality of his insight after Marina's restoration, in which the play departs somewhat from its sources, render its vision still more closely akin to that of certain biblical stories. That, perhaps, is further testimony to its depth. But it does, in the form in which the play has reached us, lack clarity; and it is obviously obscured by various imperfections in dramatic



workmanship, especially in the play's first two acts. Considering the emphasis on Gower, and the close adherence to the pattern of the episodes in the sources, it seems very likely that the playwright did not free himself enough from his material to be able to give adequate expression to his material; that, on the contrary, he was largely tied down by the much narrower vision of Gower and others. In his first attempt at writing a work that points the way beyond tragedy, Shakespeare appears to have been either not free or not certain enough to do more than hint at this vision in what is only a partly suitable shape (46). It had to mature longer in his mind, and become somewhat modified, before Shakespeare could give it clearer, more assured, and dramatically more effective expression, as he was to do in The Winter's Tale. But first Shakespeare was to engage in another experiment, one quite different from that of Pericles, but again not entirely successful: Cymbeline.

## Chapter 5

### A. The Seeming Confusion of Cymbeline.

Cymbeline is assuredly Shakespeare's own, which can hardly be said of large parts of Pericles. That doubt has been cast on passages in it does not change this fundamental fact. As it is also a much more complex play it demands a more definite as well as a more thorough approach than Pericles.

Here it is certainly not surface naivety which presents a problem. No other Shakespearean drama, not even Troilus and Cressida, confronts us with such a succession of scenes of varying mood as Cymbeline, or with a like wealth of incident. The spectator is carried from surprise to surprise by the sudden contrasts in situation and atmosphere. The extent to which unity of place is disregarded is unusual even for a Shakespearean play. From Cymbeline's court the action moves swiftly to Philario's house in Italy, thence back to England, and back to Italy again. By the end of Act II, Iachimo's plot has met with complete success and Posthumus has uttered his denunciation of womankind. After the opening scene of the third act has introduced a new action with Britain's refusal to pay tribute to Rome, only two scenes later we are transported to the surroundings of a mountain cave in Wales where we meet another group of new characters. Many more turns in the action await us in this strikingly freely constructed play, before the plot winds up in a recognition scene, which for skill and complexity has few parallels in literature.

unqualified sympathy, commits so ludicrous an error as to mistake Cloten's headless body for that of Posthumus. As if the mistake itself was not enough, she elaborates upon it, in a rhetorical lament:

The garments of Posthumus!  
I know the shape of 's leg: this is his hand;  
His foot Mercurial; his Martial thigh;  
The brawns of Hercules: . . .  
(IV, ii, 309 ff.)

The final act of Cymbeline contains what is surely one of the most bewildering battles anywhere in serious dramatic literature, a battle in which many are slain, but in which victory is shared by both sides. The Soothsayer foretells a Roman victory and events seem to be verifying his prediction, when the arrival of the unknown royal princes and Posthumus sensationally turns the tide of battle; the Britons win and Lucius, the Roman general, is taken prisoner; nevertheless, in the end, Cymbeline decides to submit himself again to Rome, and peace unites all. No wonder that some critics of Cymbeline, among them A. H. Thorndike, have speculated that Shakespeare in this play was infected by the love of the histrionic stage tricks with which some of his Jacobean colleagues cheaply purveyed to their audience.

As to the "confusion of the names and manners of different times", Dr. Johnson's analysis is, as so often, both correct and relevant. We who have been brought up on the "Elizabethan Shakespeare" are much readier to forgive the playwright certain anachronisms or even incongruous minglings of the customs of different times. That an ancient king of Britain should be surrounded by Jacobean courtiers and take for a wife a queen

who seems to have stepped out of the world of folklore would hardly strike a reader familiar with King Lear as extraordinary. Yet he will be startled, when he encounters within the compass of the same play, Roman senators and sixteenth century Italian merchants as well.

Yet this intermingling of seemingly irreconcilable worlds may be deliberate. To assume once for all that it is the product of carelessness, as Dr. Johnson did, seems hardly warranted in a play by the man who had written Macbeth and who was soon to write The Tempest. No matter how great one's respect for Dr. Johnson's judgment, it is sometimes wise not to accept his advice unreservedly. In its wording, his attack on Cymbeline curiously recalls his condemnation of metaphysical poetry in his "Life of Cowley" (2), an essay where the limitations of his critical judgment are only too evident. In the course of this chapter, I shall show that he is equally wrong in his attack on Cymbeline, though some of his words prove curiously relevant. I shall endeavour to show that the structure of Cymbeline, in all its oddity, is carefully designed and thus purposeful. This of course will not alter the fact that few readers of Cymbeline have been deeply satisfied by it.

#### B. Construction of the Plot.

We noticed in Chapter 2 that the structure of the plot of Cymbeline shares a number of important features with that of Pericles and The Winter's Tale. Like Pericles, Cymbeline portrays a serious action involving considerable pain and

is still more considerable, as will be shown below - , does not hide certain marked differences.

Some of these have already become apparent in the foregoing comparison. Supernatural forces take a share in the action of both plays, but in Cymbeline their intervention is reserved until much later - until Posthumus' dream-vision in Act V, or at earliest until the entry of the Soothsayer in IV, ii. Only towards the end of the play does the spectator learn of the interest divine Providence takes in the ultimate fate of Posthumus, Cymbeline, and Imogen, while in Pericles the miraculous begins to operate with Cerimon's revival of Thaisa in Act III. This difference, however, is more apparent than real. For the main function of the Cerimon scene is to surround the action in the second half of Pericles with an atmosphere of happy expectation, an expectation which even a whole series of misfortunes suffered by Pericles and Marina cannot becloud. In Cymbeline the introduction of Belarius and the young princes achieves a similar effect. After frowns, threats, banishment, bargaining and deceit, forebodings of war, we are suddenly placed in a world of nature and of instinctive reverence,

Stoop, boys: this gate  
Instructs you how to adore the heavens, and bows you  
To a morning's holy office.

(III, iii, 2-4),

which reassures us that no matter how great the folly of Cymbeline, the errors and guilt of Posthumus, and the sufferings of Imogen, "divine nature" will in the end bring about the well-being of them all.

To speak of the Welsh scenes as reassuring us is exact,

for the change in mood which they introduce is not entirely unexpected. Through subtler means, Shakespeare has almost from the very beginning of the play prepared us for such a development, and in fact for the tragi-comic nature of the whole action. This anticipation he effects by various means, but at present reference to a few specific passages which serve as pointers to the play's developing mood will suffice to illustrate this aspect of the construction.

The first occurs near the end of the first scene, when after the action has moved swiftly towards tragedy, Imogen expresses her longings in a curiously premonitory wish:

                  heaven restore me! Would I were  
A neat-herd's daughter, and my Leonatus  
Our neighbour-shepherd's son!

(I, 1, 148-50).

The clear pastoral suggestion of this passage prepares us, if for the time being only faintly, for a play which will not be all tragedy. Similar in purpose is Imogen's brief monologue, skilfully placed between the dissembling and the irony of the scene of the Queen with the draught of poison, and the insinuating complexity of Iachimo's speeches which follow almost immediately, thereby attaining a still heightened significance. After summarizing her predicament, Imogen refers, for the second time in the play, to her stolen brothers, thus keeping alive our expectation of them; and her lines,

  blest be those,  
How mean soe'er, that have their honest wills,  
Which seasons comfort,

(I, vi, 7-9)

re-echo the pastoral suggestion in the first scene, thus further

The heavens hold firm  
The walls of thy dear honour; keep unshaked  
That temple, thy fair mind; that thou mayst stand,  
To enjoy thy banish'd lord and this great land!  
(II, 1, 60-3).

No remark of a minor character in any of Shakespeare's tragedies parallels in tenour and suggestive anticipation the sentiment of these words, which perform a small but purposeful part in the play's tragi-comic structure. Very different from this passage is the technique employed in II, iii, the scene of Cloten's wooing with the aid of musicians. More will have to be said later about the incongruity between the wooer and his means, the beautiful morning song "Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings". At present, we may note merely that this song also plays a part in the subtle scheme of preparation for a tragi-comic development, and thus a resolution of all complication near the end; for nothing could persuade us better than this song, that beauty and goodness persist with strength in the midst of Cymbeline's world of evil and corruption. It seems hardly necessary to add to this account of tragi-comic preparation in the play, that in the fourth act, when the clouds thicken again, the anticipating note of a happy outcome is sounded from time to time, especially in the speeches of Pisanio; "The heavens still must work . . . Fortune brings in some boats that are not steer'd." (IV, iii, 41-6); and in Lucius' suggestive words to Imogen, "Some falls are means the happier to arise". The assumption repeated by John Masefield that Cymbeline was first designed as a tragedy, and then altered, has therefore no foundation (4); and it is equally mistaken to speak of

Shakespeare as keeping his audience in doubt as to how it will all end until the beginning of the very last scene (5).

Shakespeare provides many hints as to the general nature of his ending, and makes us wonder how he will artistically solve the problem of what must needs be a complex resolution.

As we noticed in the preceding chapter, the same is true of Pericles, though the technique of anticipation is much less subtle (6). Let me now discuss briefly a further difference in the construction of these two plays, namely the handling of time, that force of human experience to which Shakespeare was to give such dramatic shape in The Winter's Tale. The great shift of time described by Gower between Acts III and IV of Pericles is, as has already been pointed out, here replaced by the epic device of extended reminiscence in II, iii. Consequently, the action proper in Cymbeline covers a period of at most a few months, not fifteen years. Instead of the elaborate biography of Marina, we are given brief explanatory portraits of Posthumus (in I, 1) and of the two lost princes (in III, iii). In actual age, Imogen and Posthumus are not much older at the end of the play than in the first scene, however much may have happened meanwhile to their mental outlook.

Yet these differences should not be unduly emphasized. If Shakespeare's technique in the two plays is different, the aim is nonetheless similar. We are given to understand, in a number of ways, that the action proper of Cymbeline presents, as it were, only the final movement of a much longer one - a manner of play-writing favoured by some dramatists of the



Renaissance (7). At various points of the action, our attention is directed to a series of events preceding in time by many years those presented in the play's opening scene; for instance, in the Gentleman's account in the first scene, during which he refers both to Posthumus' birth and upbringing and to the two stolen sons; in Belarius' reminiscence; and again, though in a different manner, in Posthumus' dream-vision, when the ghosts of his parents and brothers go into the history of their own and of Posthumus' sufferings and demand of Jupiter whether Posthumus does not deserve better (8).

The surface action of Cymbeline is moreover so constructed as to convey a sense of rapidly passing time. Such common devices are used as that of presenting, sometimes directly sometimes through report, different stages of an action which we know to cover some considerable time; as in the case of Posthumus' voyage to Italy (I, i and I, iv), and of Lucius' embassy to Cymbeline's court, which takes up parts of three scenes. We know that several days must have passed between the messenger's arrival in II, iii and Lucius' departure in III, v. Therefore, when Posthumus re-enters at the beginning of the fifth act, after having been absent for almost two whole acts, enough has happened for the audience to accept unquestioningly the change in his state of mind from wrath and emotional denunciation to contrition and self-accusation. The action of Cymbeline is so organized as to give full weight and credibility to such inward development, to which our sense of the passing of a considerable stretch of time vitally contributes. There is no mistaking Posthumus' contrition -

or even Iachimo's - for a mere stage convention devised to help the poet unravel his plot, as one suspects to be the case in Two Gentlemen of Verona.

Related to the changed technique in Shakespeare's handling of time in Cymbeline is the reduction of female protagonists from two, Thaisa and Marina, to one, Imogen. Imogen in fact is the only character in Cymbeline of whom we can with certainty say that she takes a large part in the action during its entire course. The organization of Cymbeline's royal family is very different from that of Pericles'. In the end, Pericles finds again first his daughter and then his wife. Of Imogen's mother there is no mention - though Shakespeare leaves us in no doubt about the practices, past and present, of her wicked step-mother. The family reunion celebrated at the end of Cymbeline involves a father, his three children and a son-in-law. For this and other reasons, the treatment of recognition in the fifth act had to be different. The two simple recognitions in Pericles give place to a single long scene with a whole series of recognitions and peripeteia. But the different structure of the final scenes illustrates in each play that of the whole work. Cymbeline's immense complexity appears still more conspicuous, when set side by side with the bareness of Pericles.

Cymbeline is constructed out of an unusually large variety of story-elements, which are moreover so intimately fused that it is difficult to disentangle them all clearly or to state dogmatically which of them Shakespeare started with, which of them provided him with the core of the plot around which the remaining

material could be organized. In that sense, Cymbeline is a much more closely welded composite than, say, King Lear or As You Like It, choosing two plays almost at random. The story which stands out most prominently is of course the one from Boccaccio (9). A man is lured into a wager on the chastity of his wife; having been artfully deceived, he orders her death; but she escapes in disguise, and after a period of time the villain is unmasked and the husband gladly forgiven.

But Imogen and Posthumus are but two of the play's five protagonists. Their story, while elaborated for its own sake, supplies only a section of the complex family history of Cymbeline. The three crucial episodes in Cymbeline's life may be thought of as forming the cores of three separate stories: that of the theft of Cymbeline's sons by a discontented courtier, their upbringing in wild surroundings and reunion with their father; that of Cymbeline's domination by a witch-like queen and her son, which results in the expulsion of Posthumus, and indirectly in Imogen's flight, until events make possible their reunion, after the queen's death; and, linked to this, that of the conflict of Britain with Rome over Cymbeline's refusal to pay the customary tribute.

One could with almost equal justice, therefore, regard as the play's central action either that which treats of the fortunes of Imogen and Posthumus or that concerned with the disposal and restoration of Cymbeline's family, which coincides with the movement from war to peace in Britain's relations with Rome. One's choice would depend mainly on whether one regarded

Posthumus or Cymbeline as the more important figure, Imogen providing the main link between them. The colourlessness and weakness of Cymbeline's character would persuade most to choose Posthumus, as did Coleridge, who commented:

There is a great significancy in the names of Shakespeare's plays . . . Cymbeline is the only exception; and even that has its advantages in preparing the audience for the chaos of time, place, and costume, by throwing the date back into the fabulous King's reign. (10)

Undoubtedly, in the play as a whole, it is Posthumus who takes the more active part and who cuts the more interesting figure. Yet in the important final scene, Cymbeline stands at the centre, which suggests that Shakespeare perhaps wished to indicate also the effect of the action on his character.

The interweaving of different plots results in a large number of characters. Cymbeline is reunited at the end with no fewer than four members of his family, in two separate groups. Of evil schemers, the play has no fewer than three, Iachimo, the Queen, and Cloten, a structural feature shared only by King Lear and The Tempest among Shakespeare's tragedies or comedies. Characters are often grouped in pairs, and there is much use of parallelism with contrast; e.g., two evil intrigues against Imogen's chastity, two thefts, two visions (the Soothsayer's public vision, and Posthumus' private one) (11).

But we may perhaps be able to understand better the construction of this exceedingly complex play by tracing the curve of the fortunes of the protagonists. Up to the end of Act II, the interest is almost wholly confined to the private fortunes of Posthumus and Imogen, which rapidly deteriorate;

from the opening frowns of Cymbeline to Posthumus' banishment, the latter's deception by Iachimo, to his order to Pisanio to murder Imogen, even while Imogen herself is pestered by the unpleasant but insistent Cloten. The first two scenes of Act III introduce the political plot - we have been prepared for it in the messenger scene of II, iii - showing us Cymbeline persuaded by the Queen and the uncontrollable Cloten to make war on Rome. At the same time, Imogen prepares herself for the journey on which we know she is to be killed by Pisanio. Then occurs the sudden shift to idyllic surroundings, with the picture of princely youth eager to share a life of action. The scenes from III, iv to V, iv inclusive are concerned in the main with the sufferings of Imogen after her escape from death, the preparations for battle even while Cymbeline's domestic troubles are mounting, the slaying of Cloten, the great display of valour by the two princes and Posthumus, which decisively affects the battle's outcome, the two visions, and Posthumus' repentance and inward preparation for death in prison. A final long scene unrolls a whole series of recognitions ending in general harmony, with pardon for the evil-doer and peace and plenty for a Britain voluntarily reunited with Rome under Jupiter.

As this final scene is structurally the most remarkable and complex, and throws light on the direction of the entire plot, a somewhat closer examination of it will prove useful. It bears a rather similar relation to the remainder of the play as do the last scenes in All's Well and Measure for Measure, on which E. M. W. Tillyard has commented as follows:

The technique of both plays is to accumulate through their course matters standing in need of forgiveness; and to postpone the time of reckoning to a long and elaborate last scene. Such scenes, where large numbers of characters are gathered, where sections of these characters are ignorant of facts known to other sections while the audience knows everything, must have tickled the Elizabethan taste. They have not stood the test of time and emerge as melodramatic rather than dramatic, giving the serious the taint of frivolity. Treated thus, the theme of forgiveness could never succeed. Apart from this staking too much on a grand finale, there is the problem, recurrent in Shakespeare, of how to avoid bathos between a climax about the middle of the play and the renewed elevation of the ending. (12)

This criticism applies in considerable measure to Cymbeline.

But it would be fatal to follow the example of Shaw and dismiss the last scene lightly as a mere meaningless tour de force.

Its first twenty odd lines form a kind of introduction in which Cymbeline, grateful to the as yet unrecognized Belarius, Guiderius and Arviragus for their decisive action in battle, dubs them knights. Next Cornelius enters and reports the death of the wicked queen. The revelation of her deceit rouses Cymbeline to comment on his past folly, especially regarding Imogen. But this reflection is confined to a few lines, for now Lucius and the other Roman prisoners, including the disguised Imogen and Posthumus, are brought in. Having mercilessly condemned them all to death, Cymbeline's heart softens at Lucius's appeal for his page, the disguised Imogen. So much is Cymbeline charmed by this page that he tells her he will fulfil any request. Imogen does not, as expected, plead for the life of Lucius, her late master, for she has meanwhile recognized her husband's ring on Iachimo's finger. Asked how he came by it, the repentant villain tells his story. This leads to Posthumus' casting off his disguise and to his outburst of self-accusation for having wronged Imogen.

But when the still disguised Imogen intervenes between him and Iachimo, Posthumus strikes her, causing Pisanio to reveal her identity. A brief explanation by Cornelius of the Queen's box of poison, the only clumsily handled episode in this otherwise brilliantly constructed scene, intervenes before Imogen and Posthumus are reunited with each other and with Cymbeline.

But again the mood shifts rapidly when upon Cymbeline's expression of concern over the whereabouts of Cloten, Pisanio tells him of Cloten's pursuit of Imogen which is followed by Guiderius' characteristically brief and brisk comment that he slew him. This momentarily threatens a reversal of fortune, for Guiderius is condemned to death. However, Belarius' revelation of Cymbeline's two lost sons soon disperses the clouds. A series of minor revelations follows, including that of the identity of Posthumus with the "forlorn soldier" who did so much to turn the course of the battle.

The complex web of recognitions has now been completed. Only the fate of the defeated remains to be decided by their conquerors. The private action involving Posthumus, Imogen, and Iachimo soon reaches its conclusion in Posthumus' forgiveness of the repentant slanderer. It is significantly this act which calls forth Cymbeline's exclamation:

Nobly doom'd!  
We'll learn our freeness of a son-in-law;  
Pardon's the word to all.

(V, v, 420-2) (13)

The charitable conclusion of the private action prepares the way for the peace-making in the public action. After the Soothsayer has interpreted Posthumus' book, Cymbeline voluntarily submits

to Rome. The ending shows us Lucius and Cymbeline joining in the sacrifice "in the temple of great Jupiter".

Thus the final scene carries us through a long series of interrelated recognitions and reversals of situation. As mysteriously foretold in the Soothsayer's prophecy and Posthumus' vision, the reunion of a royal family is accomplished. This in turn becomes the instrument for the resolution of the public conflict and the establishment of a state of productive peace, in accordance with the desire of Jupiter, the play's presiding god. In the course of the play, the protagonists of a public and a private action, Cymbeline and Posthumus, are roused to tyrannical anger by wicked intriguers. Both are later made aware of their folly. But Cymbeline sees the example of his son-in-law's forgiveness before he is himself finally converted to the course of peace and sanity, to action in harmony with Imogen's earlier remark:

I' the world's volume  
Our Britain seems as of it, but not in't;  
In a great pool a swan's nest:

(III, iv, 136-8)

and with the will of the gods. Far from being informed by the spirit of selfish nationalism to which Cloten had given expression earlier ("Britain is A world by itself", III, i, 12-3), Cymbeline's final act reconciles him with Rome. Britain bows to Augustus Caesar, who in the final scene becomes almost identified with Jupiter (14), and she does so with dignity.



C.1. Distancing and Irony.

The most conspicuous of the differences in structure between Cymbeline and Pericles remains yet to be noted: the lack in Cymbeline of any equivalent to the curious poet-presenter, who does so much to give Pericles its archaic colouring. In Cymbeline, all the audience learns about the action comes from those who participate in it. No moral comment is passed on the action from without. But as the action of Cymbeline is as vast as and even more complicated than that of Pericles, Shakespeare had again to face the problem of how to concentrate it into five acts, into "two hours' traffic on the stage", and yet keep the audience informed of essential background. This, I believe, accounts for the unusual number of speeches in this play, which are loaded with informative matter for the audience's benefit, Belarius' monologues and long asides, in which he dwells on the past of the two royal sons and on their characters, providing an extreme example (15). But as on the whole, the action of Cymbeline is presented directly, not indirectly like that of Pericles, it does not share the earlier play's remoteness. Yet the play cannot be said to mark a complete return to Shakespeare's dramatic manner in King Lear or Antony and Cleopatra, for in Cymbeline too, the audience over large parts of the action is encouraged to view it as a story or distant spectacle (16), rather than participate in it more deeply or intimately.

Seen negatively, the features we have just discussed amount to a lack of sustained dramatic tension. One may blame partly the very complexity of the action for this. The fortunes

of so many characters are involved in this play, that even the most attractive of them, with the exception of Imogen, are sometimes lost sight of for many scenes. It looks therefore much as if it had been Shakespeare's aim in Cymbeline to depict not so much the fortunes of individuals as those of an entire and rather complex family. But if this conjecture is true, Shakespeare set himself a task beyond the capacities of the dramatic form. The treatment of the play's main villain, Iachimo, is no less episodic. He dominates the two richest scenes in the early part, but vanishes almost entirely after the end of Act II, returning at the end only to contribute his share to the unwinding of the plot; a notably different treatment from that accorded to Edmund in King Lear, who dominates a much larger part of the action, though he is only the villain of the sub-plot.

But it is not enough to say that the action of Cymbeline, by reason of its great complexity, does not lend itself to intensely dramatic treatment. Shakespeare was obviously aware of this difficulty, and, judging from modern performances, his success in holding his audience's attention sufficiently shows that he solved it at least partly (17). Yet it remains then all the more remarkable that on numerous occasions in the play, Shakespeare employs devices whose effect is anything but to heighten dramatic tension.

The many informative speeches directed squarely at the audience, which have already been noted (18), may have been necessitated by the nature of the play, and perhaps should be

regarded as a resort to what was, from the dramatic point of view, the least possible evil. But such an explanation can hardly account for the, for Shakespeare, astonishingly large amount of indirect characterization in Cymbeline. This seemingly undramatic manner of characterization is in large measure applied even to so important a character as Posthumus. For a leading protagonist, Posthumus is given few lines during the two opening acts, not to mention his complete absence during Acts III and IV. Shakespeare builds up this important character more by the comments passed upon him by, and the influence he exercises upon, Imogen, Pisanio and others, than by the self-revelation of direct speech. Except for the occasion of his monologue in II, v, Posthumus comes impressively forward only in the final act, and even there he is mute during much of the all-important scene of recognition. Truly during most of the play, he is a man more spoken about than speaking.

This largely indirect presentation of some of the characters in Cymbeline, notably Posthumus, is in close association with what is clearly the main device of distancing characters and action from the audience: that of irony applied in a peculiar manner. In Posthumus' case, irony soon appears in the contrast between the unlimited praise heaped upon him during the opening scene, first by the courtiers, and shortly after by Imogen, and the lack of prudence and his liability to criminal jealousy, which he demonstrates so blatantly in the Italian scenes. Shakespeare thereby partly dethrones his hero

before the action has run much of its course, and thus encourages the audience to watch him from a distance, rather than bestow upon him its unlimited sympathy. Shakespeare does of course not make Posthumus appear despicable. Some of his words even during the Italian scenes will endear him to us, as when he answers Iachimo, who has just compared Imogen's worth with that of a diamond:

You are mistaken: the one may be sold or given, if there were wealth enough for the purchase or merit for the gift: the other is not a thing for sale, and only the gift of the gods.

(I, iv, 78-81).

The sentiments he voices at the beginning of the fourth scene of Act II on the prospects of the conflict between Britain and Rome are in accord with our highest expectations of him. Yet irony underlines his weaknesses to such an extent that Posthumus appears to us not only in a mixed light - so indeed do Hamlet and Macbeth - but suffers in our estimation.

How Shakespeare treats his protagonist in the play's first half will appear clearly, if one compares Posthumus' monologue on the chastity of women with Hamlet's on the same subject. The two monologues show strong similarity in idiom and imagery; yet their effect is utterly different. We can understand that a man's mind suddenly confronted with the revelation of unchastity on the part of the person most honoured will be capable of violent disillusionment, which may turn even to an overwhelming sense of physical repulsion. But the violence of Hamlet's outburst seems genuine: that of Posthumus' is rhetorical and theatrical. The reason may be looked for partly

in the verse. But the context alone is significant enough. The Queen has given Hamlet some cause: Imogen has shown to us - and to Iachimo - how far the thought of unchastity is from her mind. The strong underlying irony of Posthumus' monologue determines our reaction more than any peculiarity of verse-technique ever could. And the irony reflects harshly on the speaker, for unlike that of Othello, Posthumus' change occurs all in one leap. It may furthermore be significant that we hear of Posthumus' method of vengeance, so strongly contrasted with Imogen's words to Iachimo, "How should I be revenged?" (I, vi, 131), only indirectly, from Pisanio.

A rather crude form of irony, that of having a minor character contradict someone's remarks in an aside, or comment upon his schemes behind his back, is applied in the play's opening scenes to Cloten and the Queen. While the effect of Iachimo's evil designs is modified for us by his quality of showmanship and the theatricality of his situation, our impression of evil in Cloten and the Queen is qualified by the emphasis upon their folly, or self-deception.

In Cloten's first two scenes, he is attended by two lords, one of whom flatters him excessively while the other makes mocking asides in which he lets us know the plain facts of the matter under debate. Cloten has just challenged Posthumus:

Have I hurt him?

2 Lord. (Aside) No, faith; not so much as his patience.

1 Lord. Hurt him! His body's a passable carcass, if he be not hurt; it is a throughfare for steel, if it be not hurt.

2 Lord. (Aside) His steel was in debt; it went o' the backside the town.

(I, ii, 5-12).

The manner of this scene is unlike the presentation of the villains in Shakespeare's tragedies. It reminds us rather of that in which Jonson introduces his braggadocios and Bobadills. Thus Cloten is revealed rather as a fool than as a villain:

2 Lord. (Aside) You are a fool granted; therefore your issues, being foolish, do not derogate.  
(II, 1, 45-6).

Later on in the play, when Shakespeare wishes to emphasize Cloten's baseness rather than his comic folly, he leaves out the two lords.

The impression of evil is likewise qualified in the treatment of Cloten's mother, the Queen. Her simulation and cunning show are, from the very outset, revealed to be singularly ineffective, except towards Cymbeline himself. In the opening scene, Imogen comments on her: "O Dissembling Courtesy! How fine this tyrant Can tickle where she wounds!" (I, 1, 83-5). But the full ironic treatment of her is reserved for the fifth scene, where she accepts the small box of poison from her doctor and passes it on to Pisanio.

In construction, this scene is one of the strangest in the whole of Shakespeare. It is framed by a short episode of the ladies who are commanded to gather flowers, which provides an ironic undercurrent for the sinister interviews. Pisanio's entry on the far side of the stage occasions the first of the scene's many sides:

Queen. Here comes a flattering rascal; upon him  
Will I first work: he's for his master,  
And enemy to my son.  
(I, v, 27-9).

The Queen's move to the side gives Cornelius his opportunity of confiding to the audience that far from being deceived he has himself outwitted the Queen by furnishing her with a substance which will cause the taker to fall into a long sleep, "to be more fresh, reviving". The next aside comes after the doctor has been dismissed and the interview with Pisanio completed. Here the Queen's comment on this "sly and constant knave" is interrupted by the re-entry of Pisanio, accompanied by the ladies carrying flowers. In the last three lines of this scene so rich in intrigue and counter-intrigue, Pisanio assures us, with a turn of his head towards the departed Queen:

But when to my good lord I prove untrue,  
I'll choke myself: there's all I'll do for you.

Irony does not spare even Imogen. Romantic critics have been so fascinated by her innocence, her pathos, her feminine enterprising spirit, and the poetry of her speech, that they have usually passed in silence over the moments when we are invited rather to chuckle at her amusedly than to feel for her deeply. There is little irony in most of the scene of her interview with Iachimo, where she bears herself admirably. But when, near the end of this scene, she so readily falls into his trap, a negative side of her innocence appears. During the bedchamber scene, near the opening of which Imogen makes her unwittingly ironic remark, "My eyes are weak", our admiration for her receives a greater blow. Her character, of course, remains unspotted in our eyes. But when was innocent honour ever portrayed in the context of such romantic

and at the same time businesslike evil?

the flame o' the taper  
Bows toward her, and would under-peep her lids  
To see the enclosed lights, now canopied  
Under these windows, white and azure, laced  
With blue of heaven's own tinct. But my design,  
To note the chamber: I will write all down:  
Such and such pictures; there the window; such  
The adornment of her bed; the arras, figures,  
Why, such and such; . . .

(II, ii, 19-27)

We see Imogen through the eyes of the artist Iachimo, and cannot help smiling just a little maliciously at her unawareness of this important activity in her bedchamber.

A noteworthy instance where irony qualifies our response to Imogen occurs in her words of painful surprise soon after reading Posthumus' letter to Pisanio. The mood of this episode is almost throughout one of deeply moving pathos which is further enhanced by the directness and simplicity of most of Imogen's words; yet with the one significant exception of her exclamation:

I false! Thy conscience witness: Iachimo,  
Thou didst accuse him of incontinency;  
Thou then look'dst like a villain; now methinks  
Thy favour's good enough,

(III, iv, 44-7).

the theatrical irony of which an audience can hardly escape.

Yet on the whole, irony leaves Imogen free until that most bewildering incident of mixed pathos and ludicrousness, when upon awakening beside the trunk of Cloten, she mistakes it on account of the clothes for that of her own Posthumus. Merciless to any idealized notion of her character that may have formed in our minds, Shakespeare makes her elaborate



upon the incident:

The garments of Posthumus!  
I know the shape of's leg: this is his hand;  
His foot Mercurial; his Martial thigh;  
The brawns of Hercules: but his Jovial face -  
Murder in heaven? - How! - 'Tis gone.  
(IV, 11, 309-13)

A more absurd context could hardly be devised for mythological imagery!

The handling of this incident, if of nothing earlier in the play, should lead one seriously to question the assertion sometimes made that Shakespeare in this play sought simply to delight his audience with sentimental tragi-comedy. And we had better be wary before accounting this incident by an unfortunate lapse in Shakespeare's judgment under the impact of the stage-success of the histrionic Fletcher. It is but the most striking of many instances of mockery, which are sufficiently numerous to incline the perceptive reader to supplement his sympathetic view of Imogen for a moment with one so devastatingly ironic as to be apparently irreconcilable with it.

### C.2. Ironic Perspective.

Enough has been said on the ironic treatment of some of the characters in Cymbeline to convince us that irony contributes a great deal to the vision of life presented in this play, and in a measure determines its structure. But before attempting to estimate the full significance of the irony in Cymbeline, it will serve a good purpose briefly to consider dramatic irony in general. Irony lies close to the

core of drama because of its separation, in many varied ways, of appearance and reality. Dramatic irony occurs when a character's utterance or act reminds the audience acutely of his ignorance of some facts relevant to the situation. His words may be known by the audience to be sharply contradicted by reality, they may merely reveal his unawareness of the schemes of others, or they may inform us of steps taken by him in a direction unwittingly against his own interest. Our reaction to a specific ironic situation in a play will depend partly on whether the sense of irony is shared by one of the characters or not. In the former case, the irony often arises from an action of comic or serious intrigue, as when the disguised Rosalind trains her lover in the art of wooing, or when Iago lays his elaborate trap for Othello even while rising in his confidence. But occasionally this type of ironic situation will occur when a character is deliberately left by his companions in ignorance, or confirmed in a mistaken notion, because for one reason or another it would be unwise for them to reveal their knowledge; as when the lords encourage Cloten in his self-praise for imaginary heroism; or when Edgar maintains his disguise even after Gloucester has become aware of his folly in believing Edmund's slander.

But if the audience is alone in sensing the irony, its reaction will be partly determined, it need hardly be said, by the goodness or badness of the characters involved, and if the character is good, by the nature of his deception or ignorance. The complex developments which arise from the

unawareness of the identity of the two royal sons on the part first of Imogen and then of their father represent a stock-situation of comedy. Here the irony involves no suffering, it only betrays ignorance. On the other hand, such a situation as Imogen's mistaking Cloten's body, however ludicrous, can hardly be said to be comic in the usual sense of the term: the effects upon Imogen are too pathetic for that. When pathos and grotesque irony combine acutely, as they do here, we move in the sphere neither of tragedy nor of comedy but in the world of a genre different from both. Likewise the kind of irony which we experience when Pisanio after all his helpfulness hands the Queen's box of poison to Imogen is proper in drama only to tragi-comedy.

Unfortunately for the analytical critic, the problem of the nature of dramatic irony is further complicated because the types of irony so far described may coincide with a non-dramatic variety, engineered by "fickle fortune", which has been described as "a contradictory outcome of events as if in mockery of the promise and fitness of things" (19). This kind of irony certainly contributes to our sense of Imogen's predicament when she mistakes Cloten for Posthumus, for it was she who was indirectly responsible for Cloten's dressing himself up in Posthumus' garments in the first place. The sense of the complex incongruity of this incident makes us wonder, whether in the world of this play some Hardyish god is at work. Supposing the play was conceived in a serious spirit, what vision of life, we might well ask, can include

such mockery and yet tell us of joy and reconciliation in the end?

The object of these general remarks on the nature of irony in drama has been to prepare us for a more special consideration of irony in Cymbeline which should throw further light on the significance of its structure. So far, our analysis has led us to note two significant types of ironic situations which have no parallel, at any rate not in degree if in kind, in Shakespeare's high tragedies or earlier comedies: the device of the repeated ironic aside as part of the introduction of an evil and despicable character, and that of grotesque irony applied to a situation of intense pathos (20). We shall now trace more systematically the more obvious manifestations of irony in the play, attentive to any significant development or pattern that may emerge.

In Act I, the irony is directed mainly at Cloten and the Queen. Cloten is an aggressive but cowardly simpleton mocked behind his back by his attendant lords. The irony of the second scene is static: it reflects on past rather than future developments. The Queen, by contrast, surrounds herself with an atmosphere of elaborate show (I, v), but ironically such solid and intellectually quite average men as Cornelius and Pisanio easily recognize her true nature and design. Cornelius lets us know that he has outwitted cunning villainy by substituting a sleeping-potion for poison; Pisanio's words have already been quoted in this chapter. The irony has become dynamic, that is, it contributes to the growing suspense: will

Pisanio drink the sleeping-potion, and under what circumstances?

In Act II, the irony turns more against two of the protagonists, Imogen and Posthumus. When Imogen after successfully resisting Iachimo's temptation so readily acquiesces in his feigned praise of her virtue, an ironic situation of a kind frequently met with in the early parts of a romantic comedy is set up. In the scene of the bedchamber, the irony becomes more pathetic, especially in Imogen's words, "my eyes are weak". But the pathos is mitigated by the sense of the sheer gusto of Iachimo's speech. What is hardly less important, if more subtle in manner, the irony embraces Iachimo as well, for Shakespeare sees to it that his words are always in character, the imagery as well as tone of his speech reminding us constantly of reality behind appearance. All Iachimo's cunning cannot remove hell from his consciousness:

I lodge in fear;  
Though this a heavenly angel, hell is here.  
(II, ii, 49-50).

But Iachimo's plot does succeed, and so the irony comes to enfold Posthumus too. Now its work is much more destructive, for it impresses upon us a weakness in Posthumus incongruous with what we have been led to expect. Anticipatory irony is used when early in his meeting with the Italian merchants, he humbly refers to his "mended judgment" (I, iv, 43). When he is easily lured into a wager of a kind perhaps natural for a merchant in a Boccaccio novelle, but hardly befitting a man who is the promise of England and the favourite of her princess, we wonder whether the mending has been adequate. His emotional

attack on the chastity of Imogen, his mother and all womanhood, so blatantly contradicted by the facts, more than confirms our suspicion.

In the opening scene of Act III, where Lucius conveys Augustus Caesar's ultimatum, Cymbeline's mental enslavement by the Queen reaches its climax. The irony of his weakness hardly requires comment. It takes on a purely comic colouring when Cloten and the Queen try to outdo each other in their haughty replies to Lucius, while Cymbeline sits still, except for a completely ineffective reprimand to Cloten: "Son, let your mother end" (III, 1, 38). What interests us more is that the irony in this scene reflects upon the Queen as well. As the action advances in Cymbeline, it becomes increasingly manifest that not only has the Queen devised her elaborate intrigues for the benefit of a most unworthy son, but this son of hers is so boorish in his folly as constantly to advertise it, thereby making her task twice as difficult. The Queen's "dissembling courtesy" is largely neutralized by Cloten's aggressive manner. Highly ironic is the Queen's stern advice to him:

Frame yourself  
To orderly soliciting, and be friended  
With aptness of the season; make denials  
Increase your services; . . . (II, iii, 46-9)

At this point, irony of fate - that a wicked and cunning Queen should have so inapt a son - coalesces with dramatic irony. That soon after his boast, "we will nothing pay For wearing our own noses" (III, 1, 13-4), Cloten forgets his country in

asleep, only to have a strange vision and find upon awakening a book whose meaning he cannot grasp.

Or senseless speaking, or a speaking such  
As sense cannot untie,

he comments on the paradoxically worded message, and then laughingly adds:

Be what it is,  
The action of my life is like it, which  
I'll keep, if but for sympathy.

(V, iv, 146-9).

No longer does circumstance mock at Posthumus without an answer from him! Ironically, the Gaoler re-enters at this very moment to fetch Posthumus for "hanging". An exchange of banter follows, the Gaoler proving a worthy partner in Posthumus' wit. Near the end of the dialogue, he comments upon the situation with the very term I have chosen to describe the dominant note of the whole scene:

What an infinite mock is this, that a man should  
have the best use of eyes to see the way of blindness!  
(V, iv, 187-9).

The King's messenger puts an end to this merry episode by ordering Posthumus' manacles to be removed so that he can be brought before the King. But first Posthumus and the Gaoler indulge their wit upon the implications of this new development:

Post. Thou bringest good news, I am called to be made free.  
First Gaol. I'll be hanged then.  
Post. Thou shalt be then freer than a gaoler; no bolts for  
the dead.

(V, iv, 192-6).

The reference to bolts rings back to Posthumus' monologue earlier in the scene. Soon after, we learn that Posthumus is

in fact led to the freedom which brings reunion with Imogen and his act of pardon towards the slanderer. After Posthumus has inwardly prepared himself for death, in expiation for his crime towards Imogen, and has learned how to mock back merrily at fate itself, he becomes free in more than one sense of the term.

We have shown that in Cymbeline the irony extends until all the major figures are, in one way or another, touched by it, until its cutting edge is applied as ruthlessly to Imogen as earlier to the Queen. And we have drawn attention to the distinct mocking tone which accompanies it and which close to the end receives its most remarkable elaboration in the Gaoler scene. Both evil and error in Cymbeline are seen in the perspective of irony. Increasingly as the play advances, irony is directed at the different characters and their pursuits, until hardly anything, whether cherished or contemptible, is wholly excluded. Ironic perspective clearly has a part in the work's complex vision of life. That is why the various devices of distancing the audience from the action, which were examined earlier in this chapter, are employed. The play's main characters appear to us as more and more small and helpless in a world of forces largely beyond their control, until we know for certain that only some kind of miracle can release them from their predicaments. The repeated expression of the hope "Heaven mend all!" further prepares for the divine intervention in the action near the end. As Pisanio says: "All other doubts by time let them be clear'd" (IV, iii, 45).



To complete our consideration of the nature and function of irony we must pay some attention to the vision of Jupiter in V, iv. The authorship of the whole or part of this passage has been questioned by a number of critics but I am convinced that Shakespeare wrote it, at least in large part (22). The most thorough defence of the passage is to be found in "The Vision in Cymbeline", an article by G. W. Knight (23), with which, on the whole, I am in agreement. Of the evidence marshalled by Knight, the following seems to me to be most pertinent: the vision is closely woven into the play, for it repeats details of Posthumus' biography given in the first scene; it is referred to again close to the end of the final scene; it presents a Roman god overseeing and directing human action, paralleled in Pericles and The Winter's Tale; there are frequent appeals to heaven or the gods in this play, Jupiter being referred to thirteen times outside of the vision, of which the Soothsayer's independent dream of Jove's bird and the final sacrifice in Jupiter's temple are the most important; the vision is paralleled by similar devices in Shakespeare's other late plays, e.g., the Vision of Diana in Pericles and the Masque in The Tempest.

All the evidence listed either relates the Vision to the play's own structure or directs us to structural parallels in Shakespeare's other late plays. The defence of the passage on stylistic grounds, by Knight and others, is far more tenuous and need not occupy us here. To the strictly structural arguments, I have two to add. Not merely the earlier extended

account of Posthumus' family, but also the general emphasis in the play on family relationships fits the motif of the spirits of Posthumus' father, mother and brothers expressing great concern over his fate. Secondly, Jupiter's words largely echo the general import of the play, and his remark, "in Our temple was he married", anticipates, in a sense, the ending where Britain and Rome celebrate peace together "in the temple of great Jupiter". Much of the artificiality and oddity of the whole passage can be justified, I think, by the fact that it is conceived as like a masque.

For me the most bewildering aspect of the masque is the absence of any reference to Posthumus' crime. His family clamour in his behalf as if he had never deviated from the path of nobility. This surely is the oddest manifestation of irony in the whole play. I have no explanation for it, in dramatic or other terms. Nor does Jupiter justify Posthumus' sufferings on the grounds of anything but his arbitrary will and the knowledge that men usually appreciate his gifts better after having gone through trials.

For this and other reasons I do not feel completely assured of the authenticity of the masque as it has come down to us. Its general tenor, however, should be accepted. As it stands, its main effect upon us is to remove us once more near the end of the play from the human scene, to see it through the eyes first of spirits and then of God himself. From heaven, we can regard the fortunes of Posthumus through the perspective of time. What appeared "senseless" takes on significance, for men's

lives are guided by Jupiter. Yet Jupiter is not altogether a seriously conceived and charitable god. He has more of Jehovah in him than of Christ. To human beings his actions appear at least in part arbitrary, if not amusing. The conception of its presiding god fits that of Cymbeline as a whole.

### C.3. Ironic Perspective cont.

The nature of its irony and its pervading tone make it plain that Cymbeline is a tragi-comedy in more than a shallow sense. The hull of a whole fleet of Renaissance plays may resemble that of Cymbeline; an action which moves from rupture and separation through increasing calamities of the protagonists to a resolution of all difficulties in a joyful conclusion. But Cymbeline is a play of a different order from these plays, not only by virtue of certain outward features, discussed in the second chapter, but pre-eminently because it contains a vision of life which is itself tragi-comic. The action of Cymbeline is simultaneously serious and comic from beginning to end. And if Shakespeare sometimes employs spectacular effects, they are occasioned by a larger purpose, not by any desire to play cat and mouse with the audience, as in Fletcherian tragi-comedy.

The following reflection may help us to understand still better the manner in which Cymbeline affects an audience. The experience of great tragic drama differs from the experience of tragedy in life, for drama is an imitation of an action, not the action itself. It is presented on a stage and therefore removed from life, however closely it may image it. Our willing suspense

of disbelief can never be absolute. We in the audience never cease to be beholders. Great drama appeals at one and the same time to our fondness for identifying ourselves with the fortunes of others, and that for setting ourselves a little apart from the stream of life and looking at it as we do at a picture. Tragic drama moves us to pity and terror but never ceases to be entertainment. A sudden tragic occurrence in life, on the other hand, can hardly be entertaining. To be entertained we have to remove ourselves from it; to someone uninvolved who reads a glowing account of the event in his paper, it may well become "fascinating" (24).

In Cymbeline the action, as I have shown, is further removed from us than in the Tragedies. We see the characters, most markedly Cloten and the Queen, but at moments all of them, from a distance. The asides and other devices create the impression that much of the action is presented indirectly. For noticeably often in the play, we look at characters through the eyes of others. In Pericles, the drama is almost all indirect: in Cymbeline, it is a curious mixture of indirect and direct. This explains the stress on spectacle in the play, which has been so much commented upon, and for which the argument of the influence of the Blackfriars' stage hardly supplies an adequate explanation (25). It further explains the strong histrionic quality of the play, and the marked rhetoric of some of its longer speeches, such as Posthumus' condemnation of womankind and Imogen's mythologizing over the body of Cloten. It explains, in other words, why we are so often reminded while

message, Posthumus comments with the bewildered and mocking words already quoted. But in the following scene, the Soothsayer unties the sense.

In Cymbeline, man's fortunes and sufferings are accordingly first presented through the eyes of men and then, in a flash, illuminated by the divine perspective; a perspective which largely shapes our lives, whether men sense the process as just or meaningful all the time or not. If this interpretation is correct, the Book of Job provides as close an analogy to Cymbeline, as it was indicated to possess to Pericles; and by virtue of its analogy, it can further help one to grasp part of the vision of Cymbeline. In the Book of Job, too, the course of man's fortunes is first interpreted through the eyes of men, and then revealed to be purposeful by an intervening god. There, too, evil, represented by Satan, is reduced to a comic figure, for though he may temporarily cause grievous suffering, his designs are from the beginning revealed to be futile, or rather, they are incorporated in a larger purpose which he refuses to grasp. When Jehovah appears to Job when he has been reduced to despair and abandoned by his friends, his manner is at least as threatening and awe-inspiring as Jupiter's (27). We learn that human suffering, however undeserved from our point of view, can acquire strange purposefulness, as part of a mysterious process of divine Providence.

Our argument up to this point has gradually advanced from purely technical considerations and the analysis of outward features of the play's structure towards a partial interpretation

of the view of man's existence which the structure was designed to embody. We may pause here for a moment, and glance back at our argument. It will be readily perceived that the profoundly tragi-comic view of life contained in Cymbeline in turn illuminates certain peculiarities in its design to which we have previously drawn attention. The immense complexity of the play, the use of theatrical incidents and of sharp contrasts of mood, the deliberate distancing of the action from time to time, the spreading of the irony until it envelops even the play's heroine in its merciless web: all of these are part of Shakespeare's daring and experimental design, to provide a shape adequate to contain a vision of life different from but as profound as that of his tragedies.

D.1. Cymbeline as Romance.

Yet the unreality of some incidents in Cymbeline still calls for an explanation. That is in truth what disturbs us most about the episode of Imogen with the body of Cloten. The strange mixture of irony and pathos, and the fact that our beloved heroine is exposed to such an absurd predicament contribute to our bewilderment over it, but the heart of the matter is the sheer unreality of the episode, which strikes us all the more because of its incongruity with the manner in which Imogen has been presented before. Lytton Strachey, after remarking that up to about 1608 Shakespeare's plays had been essentially realistic, writes:

all this has now changed: we are no longer in a real world but in one of enchantment, of mystery, of wonder, a world of shifting visions, a world of hopeless anachronisms, a world in which anything may happen next. (28)

Amusingly enough, Lytton Strachey in his anxiety to castigate Victorian criticism of Shakespeare employs words very close to those of Dr. Johnson. The answer to both critics is that the greatest literary tradition contains several works which portray a world in Lytton Strachey's sense essentially unrealistic. His argument has been firmly refuted by Dover Wilson and Peter Alexander, among others (29). A poet may use the fantastic because it is the only way for him to penetrate to the kind of reality, or perspective of life, with which he is especially occupied.

This is what happened in Cymbeline, the construction of which can be shown to have been modelled, like that of Pericles and The Winter's Tale, though apparently less directly, on prose romance. This holds not merely for parts of the play, such as the plot of Belarius and two lost princes, or the device of the sleeping-potion which effects "a show of death", which have been commonly recognized as stock-features of romance: it holds for the structure of the entire play. This fact has been either overlooked or neglected by almost every critic who has so far written on the play (30), with the notable exception of Hazlitt, from whose comment I quote at some length, since it illuminates several facets of the play's structure:

Cymbeline may be considered as a dramatic romance, in which the most striking parts of the story are thrown into a form of dialogue, and the intermediate circumstances are

explained by the different speakers, as occasion renders it necessary. The action is less concentrated as a consequence; but the interest becomes more aerial and refined from the principle of perspective introduced into the subject by the imaginary changes of scene, as well as by the length of time it occupies. (31)

It will be noted that Hazlitt's description refers to many of the aspects of structure commented upon earlier in this chapter; to select but a few: the large amount of explanation of "intermediate circumstances", the general lack of concentration in the action, the application of "the principle of perspective", "the length of time it occupies". All of these Hazlitt relates, and rightly so, to the play's general form as a dramatic romance.

The main characteristics of Alexandrian and Elizabethan prose romance have been outlined in Chapter 3. Of the three kinds of romance described there, idyllic romance, derived from Longus' Daphnis and Chloe, and Elizabethan chivalric romance seem, from the structural point of view, least relevant to our understanding of Cymbeline. But the play's structure reveals sufficiently close correspondence with the romances of fortune by Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius, to make it highly likely if not certain that, directly or indirectly, the design was largely modelled on them(32). This is not of course to reject the generally recognized sources of the play, such as Boccaccio, Frederyke of Jennen, and Holinshed. But Shakespeare wove the material derived from various sources into a pattern resembling that of Heliodorian romance. And it is as a dramatized romance that the play ought to be judged, and not as a nationalistic or historical play (33), nor as a tragedy which Shakespeare for some reason or other chose to end happily.



romance of fortune, suspense in Cymbeline is built up largely through dramatic irony. In Cymbeline, too, the reader is made highly conscious of the artist's ingenuity in developing a complex web of plots whose threads are to be sorted out only near the end, but then in a grand finale. He is encouraged to delight in the sheer artistry as much as, or even more than in the content; thus the prevalence of theatrical effects in Cymbeline, which have more than their counterpart in Alexandrian romance.

As has been shown in Chapter 3, Alexandrian romance likes near-deaths and mock-deaths of the kind experienced by Imogen, as part of its tragi-comic pattern. But what is even more revealing, in Cymbeline, too, the central suffering character is a wandering woman. The long episode of the wanderings of Imogen in Cymbeline most clearly confirms the relation of the play's pattern to that of the romance of fortune. The spirit of pathetic irony mingled with the grotesque, so characteristic of the fourth act of Cymbeline, is that of Alexandrian romance. This last point is of particular relevance, since it is strengthened by a resemblance of a particular incident in Cymbeline to Clitophon and Leucippe. No source, to my knowledge, has so far been advanced for the odd episode, mentioned already several times in the course of this discussion, when Imogen mistakes the headless Cloten for her husband on account of his clothes. In the fifth book of Clitophon and Leucippe, the heroine is seized by Chaereas and a band of pirates. Upon being pursued by Clitophon, they stage for his benefit the spectacle of the execution of a harlot

dressed up in Leucippe's garments. The trick is of course successful, and only near the end does Clitophon learn what really happened. Earlier, he had indeed buried what he believed to be the headless body of his beloved. As this romance was extremely popular during the Renaissance, this incident may well have been imitated several times before Shakespeare; it seems, however, to be the ultimate source for the similar episode in Cymbeline.

The emphasis on the chastity of Imogen in Cymbeline also corresponds, mutatis mutandis, to that in Alexandrian romance, where it is usually the heroine's main task to defend her chastity against her lover's lustful rivals. But the mental agility the ladies of romance exhibit in the course of such adventures has no counterpart in Imogen. Shakespeare's heroine shares little of the gift of dissimulation with her Alexandrian counterparts. Her answers to Cloten are unambiguous. If any woman in Shakespeare reminds us of Cariclia, it is Helena in All's Well. One should note, however, that in Cymbeline, he endows Cornelius and Pisanio with the gift of dissimulating intrigue against the powers of evil, as when Cornelius fools the Queen with his box of poison, remarking, in words typical of the spirit of Alexandrian romance: "and I the truer, So to be false with her" (I, v, 43-4). Pisanio speaks in the same vein, when commenting on his own behaviour towards Cymbeline: "Wherein I am false I am honest; not true, to be true" (IV, iii, 42), (36). We see that the motif of false-to-be-true, so common to Greek romance, recurs in Cymbeline, though Shakespeare retains

of Melita's murder of Leucippe, decides to accuse himself before the court, for he is afflicted with pangs of conscience over his intimacy with Melita, and anyhow is weary of this world. His death seems certain (like Posthumus'), when in the nick of time Sostratus, Leucippe's father, arrives upon the scene. He has been sent by Diana who "appeared in the night privately to Sostratus, and foretolde him that he shoulde finde a daughter and a sonne in law at Ephesus" (38). Clinias rebukes him, yet shortly afterwards, "one of the Sextens came running to the Priest, and tolde him, that there was a straunge mayde which came to Diana for succour". Clitophon, still in his fetters, rushes up towards the temple, but is restrained at first by the gaolers who, slow to grasp all the implications of this news, do not know whether Clitophon is to be set free or not (recalling the witty dialogue on freedom, bondage and hanging in Cymbeline). Some of the details of this episode are of course quite unlike those in the Gaoler scene of Cymbeline, yet the range of similarity is large enough to be significant, and helps to illuminate one more puzzling scene in the play in terms of its determining form. Lastly, Harmonias, the herald of Book X of the Aethiopica, may have suggested the name of Philarmonius, the Soothsayer in Cymbeline (39).

#### D.2. Dramatic Romance.

There is considerable evidence in support of the view that in the construction of Cymbeline Shakespeare was influenced, directly or indirectly, by the model of the Alexandrian romance

of fortune. That he did not follow his model all the way is hardly surprising. An attempt to dramatize such a story as The Aethiopica would be doomed to failure from the outset, if the author were not willing to make considerable changes in his material. In adapting a romance narrative the skilful dramatist will greatly simplify, concentrating on only a few significant incidents of the story; he will through various devices attempt to give his characters life; and he will develop a more static manner of presenting the plot. In short, he needs to simplify, vitalize and focus.

One aspect of the technique of Cymbeline is described in the passage already quoted from Hazlitt's essay:

in which the most striking parts of the story are thrown into the form of a dialogue, and the intermediate circumstances are explained by the different speakers, as occasion renders it necessary. (40)

Cymbeline is like other good plays in that it presents only a few striking physical actions on the stage, the larger part being given up to a series of comments or reports on these and other events. Among the works of Shakespeare, Cymbeline is unusual not only for its spectacular episodes, but also for its amount of reported action, from the scenes following Posthumus' banishment, during which we watch him on his journey through other eyes or minds, to Belarius' long account of antecedent action, and to Posthumus' description of the crucial battle in V, iii, the action of which has previously been sketched so briefly that it certainly requires clarification.

In spite of its relative complexity, the plot of Cymbeline is considerably simpler than that of Clitophon and

Leucippe, or, for that matter, most Renaissance dramatic adaptations of Alexandrian romance (41). Though Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius were masterful craftsmen, the leisurely narrative of prose romance permitted them to include episodes for the sake only of varying the colour. In Cymbeline, on the other hand, not a single episode could be omitted without damaging the play's fabric as a whole. To quote Hazlitt again:

The most straggling and seemingly casual incidents are contrived in such a manner as to lead at last to the complete development of the catastrophe. The ease and conscious unconcern with which this is effected makes the skill more wonderful.

A still more difficult problem Shakespeare had to face was how to endow his romance with the vitality essential to drama. Shakespeare had earlier tried his fortune successfully with romance of a different kind, in The Midsummer Night's Dream and As You Like It. Both have a cheerfully unrealistic setting yet bristle with life. Shakespeare in them gives us living characters, men and women full of eagerness and energy expressed through fast-moving dialogue. Many of the characters are humanized through a series of homely touches: a bit of shrewdly realistic observation, the expression of a distinctly sympathetic sentiment, or a simple domestic image. The exploiting of contrasts through dialogue often further heightens the dramatic life of these plays. Whatever criticism is levelled at the characterization in Cymbeline, Shakespeare can hardly be accused of having lost in it his supreme gift of vitalizing speech and personalities.

In eagerness and enterprising spirit, Imogen ranks with

any of Shakespeare's boy-heroines. Until the moment when Pisanio confides to her the true nature of Posthumus' message, she is all swiftness of desire, impatient of any attempt to mark the limitations physical weakness can set to the attainment of the mind's longings. As this quality of Imogen is observed by almost everyone who writes upon the play, I shall merely quote a few famous passages. "I would thou grew'st unto the shores o' th' haven, And question'dst every sail", she exclaims to Pisanio who is returning after Posthumus' embarkation. And later, when she learns that Posthumus is in Milford Haven:

Imogen. How many score of miles may we well ride  
'Twixt hour and hour?

Pisanio. One score 'twixt sun and sun,  
Madam, 's enough for you, and too much too.

Imogen. Why, one that rode to's execution, man,  
Could never go so slow: I have heard of riding wagers,  
Where horses have been nimbler than the sands  
That run i' the clock's behalf.

(III, ii, 66-72) (42)

Another energetic figure in the play is Iachimo who shows lively practical imagination and forethought when, having attempted to persuade Imogen to wanton conduct unsuccessfully, he quickly adopts a different method to win his wager yet. The scene of his first encounter with Posthumus, himself a man of energy, is full of dramatic life. First, suspense is aroused in the merchants' sceptical discussion of the great praise heaped upon Posthumus. Once Posthumus arrives, he soon falls into the trap set by the business-like Iachimo. In the Italian scenes which are among the liveliest in the play, Shakespeare was indeed helped by his very material, by the realistic spirit which infuses Boccaccio's tale. Their straightforward prose, full

with the imagery of debt and payment, is a proper vehicle.

Wit, which contributed so much to the life of As You Like It and Much Ado, is noticeably absent in Cymbeline. The significant exception is the scene with the Gaoler. But there are many other passages true to Shakespeare at his lively and dramatic best (43).

Nevertheless, what is true of parts of Cymbeline is not true of the whole, as critic after critic has remarked. In vitality, Cymbeline does not rank with As You Like It, Twelfth Night, or Othello. Part of the reason, I think, is to be found in the very nature of its plot. A plot based on the Alexandrian romance of fortune does not lend itself to continuously vivid dramatization. We should not forget that in Cymbeline Shakespeare was engaged in a new dramatic experiment. For such a drama, he had no adequate model to follow.

He relied to a large extent on the technique of episodic enlivening, the supreme example being the incident of the wager. Its elaboration out of all proportion with its importance to the action probably has this simple dramatic explanation. Foreseeing the difficulty of arousing the audience's interest in the romance-action, he delayed it until Act III, beginning with a tale of clever intrigue with its realistic, flesh-and-blood Iachimo. By the time he proceeded to the real business of romance with all its improbabilities, but also its inherent seriousness, he was fairly certain to have his audience with him. Such a method of construction was, moreover, not out of harmony with Alexandrian romance itself, where an episode of picturesque intrigue

sometimes relieves us from the weary stream of reversals of fortune.

Yet this is not the whole story, for we have yet to mention Shakespeare's most important departure from the model of the romance of fortune: the role performed by some of the protagonists of Cymbeline in accomplishing the designs of Providence. In the world of this play, the wonder which must take place before men are released from muddled insight, degradation and helplessness, is effected through the active co-operation of the play's heroes. However long it may appear so, man is not pictured as entirely at the mercy of Fortune in Cymbeline. Wonders will by some always be interpreted as the outcome of chance. The Lord whom Posthumus encounters on the battle-field is one of these:

This was strange chance:

A narrow lane, an old man, and two boys.

But Posthumus is quick to answer:

Nay, do not wonder at it: you are made  
Rather to wonder at the things you hear  
Than to work any. Will you rhyme upon't,  
And vent it for a mockery?

(V, iii, 51-6)

Lest the ironic belittling of human virtue and human endeavour in Acts II and III should have done its work too destructively, we are strongly reminded, as the play moves towards its ending, of the necessity of strength and active valour which, even if not all the time clear-sighted, will eventually be sanctioned by divine Providence, and crowned with joy. A great man contributes to miracle. The view of life set forth in Cymbeline reminds us strongly of our limited



control over our actions as well as of the necessity for continuing humbly to strive for noble ends.

It is furthermore of symbolic significance that the noble action of the two princes, Belarius, and Posthumus is performed by men who are "unknown", and whose clothes do not betray their immense promise and virtue. In Posthumus' case, his clothes reflect his inward condition of heart-rending repentance for his wrong action in ordering the death of Imogen. He counts himself among those who have contrived to "murder wives much better than themselves For wrying but a little!" (V, i, 4-5). Inward development accompanies outward action, and clearly are both in accordance with the will of Jupiter, though this point is implied, not stated in the play. Posthumus' change has a counterpart in that of Iachimo, the intriguer. It reaches its climax when he answers the contrite Iachimo with pardon. This act in turn finally converts Cymbeline from tyranny to peace-making with Augustus:

Nobly doom'd!  
We'll learn our freeness of a son-in-law;  
Pardon's the word to all.

(V, v, 420-2)

Soon after, the Soothsayer "unties" the sense of Posthumus' book,

The marked inward development in some of the leading characters which becomes conspicuous in the last act, as well as the supernatural atmosphere of the ending, distinguishes Cymbeline both from Shakespeare's earlier romantic comedies and from the Alexandrian romances. The opening lines of the play were the First Gentleman's "our bloods No more obey the heavens". Cymbeline's final speech begins:

Laud we the gods;  
And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils  
From our blest altars.

(V, v, 474-6)

The attitude of worship, with which the scene of Belarius and the two princes in their Welsh cave began,

Stoop, boys: this gate  
Instructs you how to adore the heavens, and bows you  
To a morning's holy office,

(III, iii, 2-4)

has spread to Cymbeline's court.

Cymbeline is not a play about impossible miracles. On the contrary, its dominant tone is highly critical of those human dreams and pursuits contrary to healthy and vigorous reality. Yet, on the other hand, it is not the realists, in the narrow sense, who win the day. Iachimo learns early that such unheard of phenomena as ladies who can defend successfully their chastity against his charm and art of deceit do exist. He learns later something about his own mind. In the world of Cymbeline miracles can be accomplished. The eyes of sceptical realists are revealed to be blind, or at least to overlook certain essentials. For these we need the eyes of a visionary, and a man who knows from experience something of his weakness. In that sense, romance can become a higher form of reality.

Therefore, the difference between the interplay of realism and romance in Cymbeline and that in As You Like It may well have a more fundamental reason still than any so far advanced. Here the solid earthiness of Touchstone and the vivacity of Rosalind do not negate romance. But some characters, especially Posthumus, through experience and inward development

are shown to become worthy of the fruits of reality which lie behind romance.

Works of romance literature, such as the Roman de la Rose or the Faery Queen or Shakespeare's last plays, deal, if they are not merely histrionic and spectacular, mainly with the inward world of man's experience. Realistic literature deals mainly with what happens on life's surface. There may have been a number of reasons why near the end of his career Shakespeare turned to romance. One of them, I believe, was that he wanted to dramatize certain truths about man's inward world, truths for which tragi-comic romance seemed to furnish the best available medium.

But before reaching our full conclusions as to the purpose of Cymbeline's structure, let us consider for a while its imagery.

#### E. The Character of the Imagery.

Further insight into the nature of Cymbeline can be gained from a study of its imagery, and this insight is, as I hope to show in the following pages, consistent with the view of the play so far put forward, consistent, in other words, with the play's function of structure. Whatever we think of Cymbeline, there will by now at any rate be no doubt left in our minds that Cymbeline is a very different kind of play from either Shakespeare's great tragedies or comedies. Its structure is different, and therefore presumably its purpose. It should then not surprise us if we find that the imagery, too, is unlike

that in the plays Shakespeare wrote immediately before the Romances, such as Antony and Cleopatra, King Lear, Timon of Athens and Coriolanus. This simple consideration seems to me of major importance when one attempts to analyse and evaluate Shakespeare's use of imagery in Cymbeline. But it has not been taken into account in the recent study of Shakespeare's imagery by W. Clemen (44), who sees in the imagery of Cymbeline a "regression" in Shakespeare's development after the triumph of the Tragedies, or in I. Evans' recent book on Shakespeare's language (45).

But the peculiar character of the play's imagery does not allow itself to be defined in a simple generalization. The imagery reveals a degree of complexity as great as that we have remarked in the play's structure. Some of the images, though relatively few, resemble in their explosive impact upon the imagination the striking metaphors of the Tragedies. We meet them especially in Imogen's speeches, as when she says to Pisanio soon after Posthumus' departure:

If he should write  
And I not have it, 'twere a paper lost,  
As offer'd mercy is.

(I, iii, 2-4)

Few images, even in Shakespeare, rival in brevity, simplicity and concentration of feeling, Posthumus' welcome to Imogen in the final scene: "Hang there like fruit Till the tree die".

Images fraught with emotional significance and dramatic power, like these, however, are rather rare in Cymbeline; far less prominent, certainly, than in Macbeth, King Lear or Antony and Cleopatra. This accounts partly for a generally calmer tone

in the verse, and that in spite of the fact that quantitatively Cymbeline is rich in imagery. Far more images seem to project a reflective turn of mind, as if emotions were being recollected very much in tranquillity, rather than a strong impulse to penetrate to the kind of picture that may adequately express some powerful feeling or experience. This predominant quality of the play's imagery, to appeal quietly to the imagination rather than produce an effect of startling revelation, agrees with the rather removed character of the action discussed earlier in this chapter.

But the nature and effect of these less powerful groups of images need to be more clearly defined and distinguished. By contrast with the Tragedies, a surprising number of them seem conventionally rhetorical, and are only saved from being trite - and even that does not always apply! - by the beauty of a detail. Pisanio's speeches abound in images put at the service of mere rhetoric, as when he reflects on Posthumus' wrongful accusation of Imogen:

No, 'tis slander;  
Whose edge is sharper than the sword; whose tongue  
Outvenoms all the worms of Nile; whose breath  
Rides on the posting winds, and doth belie  
All corners of the world.

(III, iv, 31-5).

Sometimes, a conventional image will be employed in a concluding sentence summarizing a longer speech, as in: "Fortune brings in some boats that are not steer'd" (IV, iii, 46) (46). Purely rhetorical, too, are many of the mythological images in Cymbeline, the outstanding example of which has been quoted earlier in this chapter (IV, ii, 310-14). In this particular

instance, of course, conventional rhetoric is put to the special use of elaborating upon the grotesquely ironic and at the same time wholly unreal situation; in other words, here imagery is clearly at the service of structure and structural intention.

But though conspicuously more often than in the Tragedies, it is only in a small number of instances that images are merely employed as a device of rhetorical elaboration in Cymbeline. Far more prominent are passages in which unelaborate images are called up by a character to define more clearly or to emphasize an idea. These images often attract us rather by their beauty of suggestion rather than by their emotional power, as appears in the opening speeches between Belarius and the two royal princes. Belarius thus elaborates upon his praise of their simple quiet lives:

O, this life  
Is nobler than attending for a check,  
Richer than doing nothing for a bauble,  
Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk.  
(III, iii, 21-4)

Guiderius however feels that such a life is not suitable for the young, and describes their existence as

A cell of ignorance, travelling a-bed,  
A prison for a debtor that not dares  
To stride a limit.  
(III, iii, 33-5)

Arviragus' images are slightly more elaborate, but essentially of the same character:

We are beastly: subtle as the fox for prey,  
Like warlike as the wolf for what we eat:  
Our valour is to chase what flies; our cage  
We make a quire, as doth the prison'd bird,  
And sing our bondage freely.  
(III, iii, 40-4)

Images of this kind do not affect us - or Belarius for that matter - with the flash of revelation; the situation, indeed, would hardly warrant images of that kind. These calmly emphasize feelings which have gradually grown in the two princes over a number of years.

Most of the many references in the play to money or the value or price of an object or person, of which we shall have to say more later, are images of a similar kind, serving to give emphatic expression to a certain idea, rather than expressing strong emotion; as when Iachimo says: "If you buy ladies' flesh at a million a dram, you cannot preserve it from tainting" (I, iv, 129-31); or Posthumus' words in prison when, reflecting upon his injustice to Imogen, he addresses the gods:

For Imogen's dear life take mine; and though  
'Tis not so dear, yet 'tis a life; you coin'd it:  
'Tween man and man they weigh not every stamp;  
Though light, take pieces for the figure's sake:  
You rather mine, being yours: and so, great powers,  
If you will take this audit, take this life,  
And cancel these cold bonds.

(V, iv, 22-8)

This last image, in fact, seems consciously elaborated by the analytic intellect, rather than by the imagination. But it, again, represents an extreme case.

Some of the more involved images in Cymbeline seem likewise deliberate, expressive of a complex intellectual process rather than springing, like so many of the images of Macbeth, from the deeper layers of the poet's consciousness. Conspicuous are a number of images in which the particular is compared to the general, the concrete to the abstract, contrary to the more accustomed form of simile or metaphor, as when Iachimo says to

Imogen:

Sluttery, to such neat excellence opposed  
Should make desire vomit emptiness,  
Not so allured to feed.

(I, vi, 43-5)

This rather difficult image is representative of others in Cymbeline. Iachimo invents a situation in which, not Imogen herself but what he asserts to be her essence - namely "neat excellence" - is set face to face with its generalized opposite - "sluttery" -, and then describes the effect upon an imagined beholder by the verbal image of feeding or vomiting, which, however, is put at the service of another abstract noun: in the beholder, "desire" is made to "vomit emptiness". A compound image of rather different kind, but similarly difficult, occurs in Arviragus' comment on Fidele:

Grow, patience!  
And let the stinking elder, grief, untwine  
His perishing root with the increasing vine!  
(IV, ii, 59-61)

This image may be said to consist of two parts. It begins by comparing, in the conventional manner, grief to a stinking elder-tree; but the elder-tree in turn supplies the noun for a desired action which forms the core of the image, the keywords being "untwine" and "increasing". The reader is not likely to grasp its precise import upon first perusal. Neither is the image likely to affect him with the power of revelation of a "before unapprehended relation of things". It is, like many other images in the play, reflective in nature. But, and this is the point I wish to emphasize, it is utterly unlike the simple rhetorical and other kinds of imagery in the play, thus further



illustrating the manifoldness of expression in Cymbeline.

The general nature of the imagery of Cymbeline is indicative of a manner of writing both complex and deliberate. As one attempts to estimate the significance or implications of some of the images, however, one comes up against a further problem. To a degree not paralleled in Shakespeare's tragedies, certain functions of the imagery of Cymbeline reveal themselves clearly only if its interaction with other elements in the play is taken into account; the interplay with background, scenery or incident, on the one hand, and with certain other devices of expression, especially that of reiterative statement or description, on the other. Much of the pastoral imagery of Cymbeline, for instance the imagery of trees, birds, open air, distance, flowers, bears some significant relation, in terms of its wider function, to the scenes in the Welsh mountains, and therefore also, by contrast, to the artificial atmosphere at the court, which is in turn presented by various means, including incident, characterization, mannerisms of speech and imagery. Similarly, the rather frequent images of striking or hitting in the opening scenes should presumably be considered together with the incident of Posthumus' striking of Imogen shortly before discovering her identity, in the final scene. Likewise, reiterative descriptive phrases, such as those suggesting a contrast between a man's outward and inward character, obviously interact with the many images referring to garments. For these reasons it would be unwise to confine oneself to a narrow interpretation in an analysis of the play's imagery and its

Posthumus as

  such a holy witch  
That he enchants societies unto him;  
Half all men's hearts are his.

He sits 'mongst men like a descended god:  
  (I, vi, 165-8).

This piece of dissembled and overdone praise Imogen interrupts with the words: "You make amends". Overdone it certainly is: though Imogen's speech is full of references to the heavens or divine powers, she never herself refers to her lover in the language of magic, or equates him with the gods. Imagery of ironic implication is also employed to dramatic effect in the scene in Imogen's bedchamber. The "dragons" in "hell" (Iachimo in the trunk) are ironically contrasted with the "heavenly angel" (Imogen) in a chapel. Thus the imagery contributes to our sense of the play's widening perspective.

Among images which subtly prepare us for later events, many of the allusions to nature in the two opening acts, about which more will be said later, stand out. A telling instance occurs at the dramatic moment, in Posthumus' conversation with his Italian host, immediately before Iachimo's return from Britain. Posthumus remarks that he will

  abide the change of time;  
Quake in the present winter's state, and wish  
That warmer days would come:  
  (II, iv, 4-6).

By the end of this scene, little will be left of this quiet note of hope; and yet strangely his wish will be fulfilled.

In Cymbeline as in Shakespeare's other plays, imagery often contributes to characterization. For instance, the sense

of Imogen's feminine purity and at the same time highly active imagination is heightened by the richness of imagery which characterizes her speech, and, more especially perhaps, by her many allusions to tiny objects, particularly in the early scenes, as in

but  
To look upon him, till the diminution  
Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle;  
Nay, follow'd him, till he had melted from  
The smallness of a gnat to air . . . .  
(I, iii, 17-21) (48)

and earlier:

Thou shouldst have made him  
As little as a crow, or less, ere left  
To after-eye him.  
(I, iii, 14-6)

Significantly enough, a similar use of the image of the crow occurs in the scene which first introduces Imogen's brothers, Guiderius and Arviragus, when Belarius says to them:

Consider,  
When you above perceive me like a crow,  
That it is place which lessens and sets off:  
(III, iii, 11-3)

Cloten the braggart has never learnt this particular lesson. Several times in the play, his images emphasize by contrast the utter unlikeness of his mind to Imogen's. Especially interesting here is Shakespeare's use, for this purpose, of imagery of ambivalent meaning or implication. Imogen's speech, as already remarked, is rich in religious references, and the Second Lord speaks of "That temple, thy fair mind", when imploring the heavens to aid Imogen against her many enemies at the end of II, 1. The First Lord, on the other hand, flatters Cloten, and, referring to his encounter

with Posthumus, says: "the violence of action hath made you reek as a sacrifice" (I, ii, 2). He continues: "where air comes out, air comes in: there's none abroad so wholesome as that you vent", a rather different approach to the subject of air from Imogen's, quoted in the preceding paragraph. In Act II, Scene iii occurs what is perhaps the most ironic use of ambivalent imagery in the play, applied to Cloten. The scene opens again with a piece of flattery by the First Lord: "Your lordship is the most patient man in loss, the most coldest that ever turn'd up ace." , which contrasts with the constant exhibition of his "hot" humour; but scarcely a hundred lines later, when reviling Posthumus in Imogen's presence, Cloten speaks of him as "One bred of alms and foster'd with cold dishes" (II, iii, 114). While not too much should be made of this ironic use of ambiguous imagery in the service of characterization, Shakespeare does employ it as a means of further heightening the utter opposition in nature between some of the play's characters.

Another minor and rather obvious function of some images in Cymbeline is to epitomize, in certain situations, a character's state of mind. An image of this kind will sometimes also sound a note of ironic foreboding as when Imogen, upon setting out with Pisanio for Milford Haven, but as yet ignorant of Posthumus' letter, says:

I see before me, man: nor here, nor here,  
Nor what ensues, but have a fog in them,  
That I cannot look through.  
(III, ii, 77-9).

F.2. Imagery and Mood.

The two functions of dramatic imagery, however, which are in my opinion most pertinent to a play's structure, in the broad sense defined in the opening chapter, are subtly to contribute to the play's developing mood and to suggest its underlying thought and theme. Though often, a particular image will act in both these ways, it is nevertheless possible and instructive to distinguish between images which primarily help to evoke mood or atmosphere and those which direct us to the play's themes or core of thought.

✓ Mood-evocative images are those of strong emotional connotation. They easily allow themselves to be listed in a series of contrasting pairs, such as images of joy and peace and images expressing conflict, uneasiness, confusion, war, bitterness, anger; images of poison, sickness or disease and images suggestive of vigour and health; images of dignified affection and images of lust. Images having these and similar connotations furnish the raw material of emotional language for any dramatist. In a good poetic play like Cymbeline, they will be skilfully organized so as to conduce to a psychological state of mind in the audience or reader, which will affect his response to the action.

Often, of course, images of this kind merely support the mood called forth by the general manner of speech and outlook of certain characters, or by the action itself. The imagery then merely acts as a means of intensifying a dramatic situation, which would still be essentially the same, though less vivid, were the

a creature such  
As, to seek through the regions of the earth  
For one his like, there would be something failing  
In him that should compare.

(I, 1, 16-22)

This rather melodramatic method of juxtaposing images of sharply opposed connotation is applied in many other scenes of the play - and more conspicuously than usually found in Shakespearean drama - , thus adding to the widening sense of irreconcilable moods and outlooks until, by Act III, the impression of division is so strong, as to make any eventual reconciliation seem impossible. I shall content myself with pointing out merely a few especially striking instances in the rest of the play. Iachimo is several times characterized by the imagery as a devil or an inmate of hell, and contrasted with Imogen's almost divine purity, as appears with devastating irony in his own remark, when climbing back into the trunk: "Though this a heavenly angel, hell is here" (II, ii, 50). Cloten's reference to "calves' guts nor the voice of unpaved eunuch to boot", immediately after the song to morning with its beautiful natural imagery, acts upon us, as already stated, like a shock, and heightens the sense of the utter inability of certain evil minds in Cymbeline to appreciate even in the slightest what is treasured by others, and thus of the inevitable and irreconcilable clash between them. When Posthumus has been misled by Iachimo as to Imogen's virtue, he dramatizes his deception by contrasting with the help of imagery his earlier impression with the seeming truth; ". . . that I thought her As chaste as unsunn'd snow" with the reference to the mounting boar. Sometimes, these contrasts

of outlook and imagery occur in speeches by different characters in different scenes. Imogen's words to Pisanio:

Hath Britain all the sun that shines? Day, night,  
Are they not but in Britain? I' the world's volume  
Our Britain seems as of it, but not in't;  
In a great pool a swan's nest:

(III, iv, 135-8)

recall Cloten's narrowly nationalistic remarks to Lucius:

Britain is  
A world by itself; and we will nothing pay  
For wearing our own noses

(III, i, 12-4)

and

If Caesar can hide the sun from us with a blanket, or put  
the moon in his pocket, we will pay him tribute for light.  
(III, i, 41-4).

Here, of course, it is not the images themselves that are contrasted, only the sentiments to which they give expression.

As the play advances, this placing of images in counterpoint appears more and more strongly in a new variation, which reaches its highpoint in the final two scenes. In the scene of Posthumus and the Gaoler, some images of opposed meaning are juxtaposed for the purpose of paradox, while others are put at the service of punning. Posthumus' comment on his execution: "So, if I prove a good repast to the spectators, the dish pays the shot" is answered by the Gaoler: ". . . you shall be called to no more payments . . . you come in faint for want of meat . . . sorry that you have paid too much" (V, iv, 154-62). The Gaoler can only conclude on Posthumus' merriment in facing death with a paradox: "that a man should have the best use of his eyes to see the way of blindness!" (V, iv, 187-9).

But far more often in the play, and especially in the

final scenes, paradox is expressed by direct statement, even without imagery. As these paradoxical statements play an important share in the developing pattern of the play's mood, and therefore contribute to a task performed partly by the imagery, they deserve our notice in this context. Paradoxical statements are more numerous in Cymbeline than in any other Shakespearean play, with the possible exception of Macbeth. The large majority of them involve the contrast between the notions of dreaming and awaking, speaking truth and lying, freedom and bondage, and, especially often, life and death, or death and rebirth. Pisanio thus comments in an aside on his service to Cymbeline and Cloten: "Wherein I am false I am honest; not true, to be true" (IV, iii, 42). Posthumus hopes at last to win his freedom, meaning from his guilty conscience, by allowing himself to be made prisoner. His monologue opening, "Most welcome, bondage!", continues:

The penitent instrument to pick that bolt,  
Then, free for ever!

you good gods, give me  
pick that bolt,  
(V, iv, 9-11).

Only when Posthumus is inwardly prepared for death does Jupiter arrange his reunion with Imogen. But, in view of the play's action and its significance, the many paradoxes concerned with life, death and rebirth are the most important. They begin early, as we have noted, in the scene of the Queen, Cornelius and the Doctor, foreshadowing events to come. They multiply as the play moves towards its conclusion, and occur thickly in the opening parts of the final scene. Upon seeing Fidele again, Guiderius remarks: "The same dead thing alive" (49).



The images and statements of sharp contrast or paradoxical import in large parts of the play are set against the mood of unity and reconciliation in the end, where not merely is a family reunited, but Britain makes peace again with Rome, in the spirit of Imogen's, not of Cloten's, earlier words on Britain's place in the world as a whole. The play may be said to move from the mood of sharp and spreading conflict to that of paradox and then to that of unity (50). This may throw light on the intention or purpose of some of the images, admittedly not very frequent, in Cymbeline expressing the idea of fusion, or knitting, or some other manner of unifying. And as Imogen is from the beginning of the play the character whose outlook most clearly anticipates that shown by all characters in the scene of reconciliation, it may be significant that a number of these images are used by or refer to her; as when Cloten objects to Imogen's contract with Posthumus in the following terms: "to knit their souls, On whom there is no more dependency But brats and beggarly, in self-figured knot" (II, iii, 117-9). When accepting Imogen's diamond, Posthumus exclaims: "sear up my embracements from a next With bonds of death!" (I, i, 116-7) (51).

But, in accordance with the direction of the action during the larger part of the play, images of the opposite import, referring to the striking, hitting, cutting, or shaking off of a thing or person are far more frequent. When Imogen learns of Posthumus' letter to Pisanio, she exclaims: "Poor I am stale, a garment out of fashion . . . I must be ripp'd: - to pieces with

me!" (III, iv, 49-51). A conspicuously large number of these images occur in I, i and I, iii, where their function is mainly to anticipate later events. They occur in a great variety of contexts. Examples are: "Crush him together rather than unfold his measure duly", "abide the hourly shot of angry eyes", "a pinch in death", "prick", "broke mine eye-strings; crack'd them", "Shakes all our buds from growing". In the rest of the play, this subject is repeated less often, but nevertheless a sufficient number of times to exercise some influence on our response. Belarius, for instance, refers to Cymbeline's ungenerous treatment of him in the image, "Shook down my mellow hangings, nay, my leaves" (III, iii, 63). In the same scene, a similar image occurs in a very different context. Belarius says of the royal princes that though brought up far from court, "their thoughts do hit The roofs of palaces" (III, iii, 83-4). Shakespeare was obviously fond of the image of "hitting", for it occurs again near the end, when Cymbeline thus describes the scene of Posthumus' and Imogen's reunion:

See,

Posthumus anchors upon Imogen;  
And she, like harmless lightning, throws her eye  
On him, her brothers, me, her master, hitting  
Each object with a joy: the counterchange  
Is severally in all.

(V, v, 392-7).

These words appear only a short time after Posthumus, in his anger at being interrupted, has struck down the as yet unrecognized Imogen; a notable example of the interaction of imagery and incident in Cymbeline.

It is significant that several of the references to

striking or shaking off are linked to images of trees, branches or buds, as in "Shake all our buds from growing" (I, iii, 37), "Shook down my mellow hangings, nay, my leaves" (III, iii, 63), and the reference in the book Posthumus finds upon awakening from his vision to "lopp'd branches". These branches, he reads, "being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old stock and freshly grow" (V, iv, 140-2). This reference is repeated during the Soothsayer's exposition in the final scene, and is partly paralleled in Posthumus' beautiful image upon welcoming the rediscovered Imogen.

These images of the partial destruction or the fruitful growth of a tree seem to me to be particularly important in Cymbeline. They epitomize, as it were, the action, and at the same time point to its centre of interest, the fortunes and division in Cymbeline's family, and the ultimate return to unity and fruitful growth. The healthy tree in Cymbeline is the primary symbol for a sound family. And this symbol, so clearly suggested in the passages quoted, seems to me to be all the more a happy one, since it fits the emphasis on nature and its contribution to the resolution of the conflict in the action of Belarius and the two royal princes. It is furthermore supported by the very large number of other images taken from nature. Nature, as C. F. E. Spurgeon has pointed out in her valuable study of Shakespeare's imagery (52), supplies the subject for one of the two quantitatively dominant clusters of imagery in Cymbeline. Most of these, she tells us, refer either to trees or to birds (53), and one of their main functions is to mould

the play's atmosphere, to produce subtly a state of mind in the audience, so as to guide and modify its response to the action. Some of these images have already been quoted; it is not necessary to repeat here the longer lists provided in the studies by Miss Spurgeon, W. Clemen, and others.

F.3. Imagery and the Play's Underlying Thought.

But, as already indicated, the images drawn from nature help to convey, some faintly and obliquely, others strongly, especially when tree-imagery is applied to human action, part of the play's underlying idea or thought. The theme of nature and the nature of princes is sounded especially clearly in the scenes of Belarius and the two royal sons. Here, Belarius himself makes explicit the contrast between the artificiality and corruption of the court and the noble simplicity of their country life, a motif constantly encountered in the pastoral poetry and prose of Shakespeare's day. Consistently with the convention of pastoral literature, the princely nature of Cymbeline's sons is reflected in their speech, bearing, and especially valour, though they are ignorant of their parentage and live in humble surroundings (54). Belarius says of them,

though train'd up thus meanly  
I' the cave wherein they bow, their thoughts do hit  
The roofs of palaces, and nature prompts them  
In simple and low things to prince it much  
Beyond the trick of others.

(III, iii, 83-6).

Their behaviour is clearly contrasted with Cloten's false nobility and boastfulness, which shows itself not only in his private conduct, but also in his narrow nationalism (55). It

is thus the two princes, Belarius, and Posthumus, who save the fate of the British army. Though the royal princes are given a relatively minor role in the final scene, and references to nature are not conspicuous there, it is clearly implied, that their return to Cymbeline's court means a return of simplicity, reverence and vigour, which was being fostered in the solitude of the Welsh mountains, even while corruption reigned at court. The imagery, which gives further emphasis to this motif, contributes therefore indirectly to the manifestation of a central theme in the play. To this theme I shall return when discussing The Winter's Tale, where Shakespeare was to express it still more clearly as well as more effectively.

The other dominant cluster of imagery in Cymbeline is that which again and again calls up ideas of value, of buying and selling, of debt or payment. That a play should portray the clash of different sets of values is nothing unusual. But in Cymbeline, the great pervasiveness of images of value suggests that this theme has some special importance; that Shakespeare perhaps, as A. A. Stephenson and C. F. E. Spurgeon have suggested (56), was occupied with the idea of absolute value.

That two motifs of the plot, those of the wager and of Rome's claim of tribute, would in themselves account for a large number of references to payment, debt, gold, or somebody's worth does not deprive Miss Spurgeon's findings of their relevance. It would, of course, be sheer folly to draw far-reaching deductions from the fact that value-imagery runs thick in the two early scenes when Posthumus and Iachimo meet. Miss Spurgeon

was quick to attract our attention to the many instances in the play, where references to value can hardly be said to be dictated by the narrative. Since there will be occasion to quote others as the discussion proceeds, I shall content myself here with a few examples. When Belarius gives in to the two royal princes eager to join in the battle, he remarks:

No reason I, since of your lives you set  
So slight a valuation, should reserve  
My crack'd one to more care.

(IV, iv, 48-50)

Imogen tells Cloten: "You lay out too much pains For purchasing but trouble" (II, iii, 87-8). Posthumus in prison, desirous of death, says of the gods:

I know you are more clement than vile men,  
Who of their broken debtors take a third,  
A sixth, a tenth, letting them thrive again  
On their abatement:

(V, iv, 18-21).

The imagery of payment finds its way even into the funeral dirge: "Home art gone and ta'en thy wages". It would however be wrong to disregard entirely those value-images which are closely related to the narrative. Both imagery and narrative, in their different ways, keep the idea of value in our minds, and as the play proceeds unfold this theme in a number of variations.

W. Clemen has shown how images of value are skilfully employed as a device in the play's characterization. Cloten and Iachimo usually think in terms of payment or of bribing with gold. On the other hand, as we have seen, Guiderius, Arviragus and Belarius, "when honour's at the stake", do not value even their lives. The world of money has no real meaning for Posthumus and Imogen whose noble nature, developed by their mutual love, raises

them beyond it. True, Imogen offers payment for the food she has taken from Belarius' cave, but what is stressed here is her revulsion at the slightest thought of stealing. Repeatedly the very words employed by Posthumus and Imogen reflect the inadequacy of measures of payment to their way of thinking. Of Posthumus himself, Imogen says that he "overbuys me Almost the sum he pays" (I, 1, 146-7). Philario feels this way about his service to Posthumus:

Your very goodness and your company  
O'erpays all I can do.  
(II, iv, 9-10)

Iachimo, when describing how he came by Imogen's bracelet, ironically uses the same kind of diction:

Her pretty action did outsell her gift,  
And yet enrich'd it too:  
(II, iv, 102-3)

Less ambiguous is Posthumus' simple assertion during his interview with Iachimo that Imogen is not for sale but "a gift of the gods". The noble characters in Cymbeline, as in Pericles, think not in terms of debts but of gifts. Value-imagery may be said to focus sharply for us, at various moments in the play, the mingling and clash of different philosophies of life. To Cloten,

'Tis gold  
Which buys admittance; oft it doth; yea, and makes  
Diana's rangers false themselves, yield up  
Their deer to the stand o' the stealer; and 'tis gold  
Which makes the true man kill'd and saves the thief.  
Nay, sometime hangs both thief and true man.  
What can it not do and undo?

(II, iii, 67-73)

Posthumus in the opening scene expresses to Imogen a sentiment, which his experience will do much to deepen:

As I my poor self did exchange for you  
To your so infinite loss, so in our trifles  
I still win of you.

(I, i, 119-21)

Guiderius and Arviragus, too, have a nobler code of values. They indignantly reject payment from Imogen for the food she has taken in their cave.

So far, I have shown how Shakespeare put his imagery of payment or value to varied dramatic use. As one tries to estimate its primary function, it is well to remember that if Shakespeare was deeply occupied with some idea or truth, in assuming expression it became inextricably interwoven with his dramatic art. Shakespeare's approach to reality was through drama. Cymbeline thus does not advocate a view of life: it is an image of a view of life. Let us therefore not make the gross mistake of looking for an expression of the dramatist's own view on the question of right value in a particular passage of the play.

That Shakespeare did not propagate a rigid view of ethics is made clear by, for instance, the disagreement about the suitability of their existence in Wales, between Belarius and the two princes. What suits Belarius at his age, after his disappointments at court, cannot satisfy Guiderius to whom the idyllic solitude of their cave has become

A cell of ignorance, travelling a-bed,  
A prison for a debtor that not dares  
To stride a limit.

(III, iiii, 33-5)

True to the spirit of drama, Shakespeare presents a character's mental attitude seldom in isolation, but in its interplay with



the attitudes or opinions of others. But nevertheless, he does of course subtly encourage us on many occasions to give our preference to a particular view or judgment. When Imogen and Cymbeline conflict in their view of Posthumus' nobility or "value", we in the audience side with Imogen. And we are not surprised that Imogen convinces Iachimo during their encounter, that he has been mistaken in his earlier cynical evaluation of all women (in I, iv), that she is indeed "the Arabian bird" (I, vi, 17).

As we have seen, the truly noble characters in Cymbeline, by contrast with Cloten and Iachimo, do not set much store by money, or valuable material objects; at most, a jewel is valued by them for its symbolic meaning, for the faith and loyalty it represents. That in Cloten's speech on the power of gold (II, iii, 67-73), he refers to it as the corrupter of honour, more particularly of chastity and of truth, is significant. For Iachimo, too, is a thief, who in order to win a jewel in a wager does not shrink from undermining someone's honour. The action as well as the language of the play clearly suggests that chastity, valour and reverent humility, that is to say, inward qualities, are to be valued above any price, certainly above any outward thing, like money, or riches, or good clothes, or favour at court.

Part of the purpose of these intervening remarks is to direct attention to the relation, in function, between the imagery of value on the one hand, and that of garments as well as the repeated references to "inward" and "outward", on the other.

A great part of the action in Cymbeline revolves around mistakes in judgment of value, their consequences and their ultimate correction. This is seen clearly when we focus our attention on those episodes directly concerned with Posthumus. Though, in Iachimo's idiom, our eyes are "precious" enough to "distinguish 'twixt The fiery orbs above", we often, especially when people are involved, "can . . . not Partition make . . . 'Twixt fair and foul". On the level of imagery, this is expressed mainly in some of the references to garments, or to a person's "mean" or unpromising looks, especially with reference to Posthumus.

It is Posthumus' fate until near the end of the play to be taken by various kinds of people at less than his due worth. The Frenchman boasts:

I have seen him in France: we had very many there  
could behold the sun with as firm eyes as he.  
(I, iv, 10-11)

Most poignantly this unjust contempt of Posthumus is expressed in the repeated descriptions of him as a beggar, for instance in Cymbeline's words to his daughter:

Thou took'st a beggar; wouldst have made my throne  
A seat for baseness.  
(I, i, 141-2)

Iachimo, when telling the merchants assembled in Philario's house of Posthumus' banishment, explains that divorce was forced upon Imogen "for taking a beggar without less quality" (I, iv, 20-1). In Act II, Scene iii we are not surprised to hear Cloten speak of Posthumus as a beggar and "One bred of alms and foster'd with cold dishes" (II, iii, 114). He does so again in

And at the height of her distress, Imogen describes herself as "a garment out of fashion" (III, iv, 49).

This same theme of true and false values, of apparent and real worth, of nobility and valour appearing in the garb of beggars, is expressed in our play also by what is perhaps its most striking group of thematic key words, in the sense defined in Chapter 1: the terms "inward" and "outward", "without" and "within". The first Gentleman says of Posthumus,

I do not think  
So fair an outward and such stuff within  
Endows a man but he

(I, i, 22-4),

a judgment not shared by the evil Queen or the angry Cymbeline. Philario, in the fourth scene, speaks of that "which makes him both without and within" (I, iv, 8-9). Iachimo at the first sight of Imogen conveys his surprise in an aside:

All of her that is out of door must rich!  
If she be furnish'd with a mind so rare,  
She is alone the Arabian bird, and I  
Have lost the wager.

(I, vi, 15-8)

In the bedchamber scene, even while in the act of slipping off Imogen's bracelet, he notes the mole upon her breast:

and this will witness outwardly,  
As strongly as the conscience does within,  
To the madding of her lord,

(II, ii, 35-7)

In the scene with Pisanio on the way to Milford Haven, Imogen again uses similar words:

Wherefore breaks that sigh  
From the inward of thee? One but painted thus  
Would be interpreted a thing perplex'd  
Beyond self-explication:

(III, iv, 5-8)

Later, upon awaking from her dream, she remarks:

The dream's here still: even when I wake, it is  
Without me, as within me; not imagined, felt.  
(IV, ii, 307-8)

Lastly, when Posthumus in his long monologue before joining battle expresses his purpose, he does so as follows:

Let me make men know  
More valour in me than my habits show.  
Gods, put the strength o' the Leonati in me!  
To shame the guise o' the world, I will begin  
The fashion, less without and more within.  
(V, i, 29-33)

Before the play ends, Posthumus will make true this assertion in more than one sense: through his valour, through his humility and self-negation, and through his act of forgiveness.

Just as the Queen's "show" and Cloten's concern with garments are indicative of their shallowness of mind, so Posthumus' silly habit symbolizes his contrite state. The meanness or lowliness of their surroundings similarly sets off the inward qualities of the royal princes. By the use of imagery of clothing and the many references to a character's "without" and "within", Shakespeare thus further develops as well as clarifies some of the implications of one of the play's main themes, if not its central theme, that of man's attainment of a deepened sense of values.

In this more detailed analysis of the play's imagery, I have endeavoured to show that the general character as well as the subject-matter of the prevailing images is congruous with its peculiar structure. And at a number of points, it has already been clearly indicated that the imagery and related forms of expression can assist us in understanding better the play's

nature and general underlying meaning. But before defining somewhat more broadly the conclusions of this analysis, I wish to draw attention to what may be a major limitation in my procedure. Earlier in this chapter, it was argued that in writing Cymbeline, Shakespeare's probable starting point was Greek romance or one of its derivatives, in the form of prose or drama. From it, he drew the general scheme of structure, which he adapted to suit his own purpose and vision. But for this experiment in what was for him an essentially new and complex form, anticipated only in part by some third-class Elizabethan plays and Pericles, Shakespeare also required a style proper to the new form, and therefore at least in certain respects different from that of his other plays. For this style, he may have been without model. But it appears likely that in this sphere too, he would have relied partly on the established tradition of prose-romance, and perhaps also on certain tragicomedies. And as imagery is one aspect of style, its characteristics too may have been taken over in part, even if in a more or less modified form, from romance. A systematic approach to the subject of imagery in Cymbeline would therefore involve an examination of the general features of style, with emphasis on the imagery, of Elizabethan prose-romances, and of such plays as The Rare Triumph of Fortune and Love and Mucedorus. Then only would one be able to estimate the degree of conventionality of Cymbeline's imagery and thus Shakespeare's precise contribution. For instance, some of the images of trees and branches into which I have read a deeper significance (57) may in fact

be part of the conventional style of romance. Even if this be so, of course, Shakespeare may have employed them to heightened significance. But such a study is beyond the scope of this thesis and I must leave it until a later date.

#### G. Conclusion.

In the course of my study of the imagery in Cymbeline, it has become progressively more evident that both its general character and its prevailing subject-matter are in harmony with the view of the play's structure advanced earlier in these pages, and that they further illuminate the purpose of its structure (58). The highly varied character of the play's imagery, which a broader analysis than has been attempted in these pages would indeed reveal to be merely one facet of an elaborate scheme of style (59), goes hand in hand with and reinforces the complex pattern of the action. Its predominantly intellectual and reflective tone fits the strongly ironic mood of the play whose action is presented at a greater distance from us than that of the great tragedies. Its frequent picturesque quality encourages us further to watch the action at a remove, like a strange tale that holds our interest and obviously enfolds some deep wisdom, but which assumes the surface of mere and innocent entertainment, and where the characters seem to move about in a world whose laws are very different from those of surface reality. Whatever the view of life underlying this piece of theatre, it is brought home to us with no great urgency; so little indeed, that many readers will merely note, though perhaps less censoriously than

Dr. Johnson, "the absurdity of the conduct . . . and the impossibility of the events in any system of life". Yet the deeper vision is there in Cymbeline for whoever is prepared to read it sensitively; a vision in which life is seen from a greater distance than in the Tragedies, and thus over a larger area of time, embracing parents and children, crime, punishment, regeneration and forgiveness, and that eternal process which Goethe spoke of as the "Stirb und Werde", a phrase inadequately conveyed in English by "dying and renewed growth"; a vision which includes the tragic act and its immediate effects but also those resilient forces which will always decisively modify tragedy in time; a vision through which life is progressively revealed as simultaneously comic and tragic, and here even the most bewildering sallies of the imagery and action find their explanation.

The subject-matter of the most prominent images - value, garments, and nature - and the direction of its development in the play supports the belief that Shakespeare was concerned especially with inward truths. In Cymbeline, after much error, suffering, and inner growth, men attain to a more profound sense of values and view of the nature of things. The theme of Cymbeline is the providential revelation in time of truth and inward value. The private and public visions reach beyond the world of physical sight, leaving it far behind. Thus, imagery and action move from conflict or dramatized juxtaposition to paradox and thence to an all-unifying fusion; only, a few images in the speeches of Imogen and later those of the royal princes

anticipate early the glory of the ending. Then, men no longer move on the level of reality in which an Iachimo distinguishes "the twinn'd stones Upon the number'd beach", in which Imogen's eyes are too weak to see the near-by thief (opening of II, ii), or in which Cymbeline can be overcome by the outward charm of the Queen. Even for this last mistake, it is made clear that no limitation of our eyesight ("Mine eyes Were not at fault for she was beautiful", V, v, 62-3) can be held responsible, but folly or lack of insight. The deeper the gift of insight man is granted, the more he will treasure those things in the world whose value cannot be measured. They will foster in him an attitude of humility wholly consistent with true honour. Then he will see fully that Imogen is indeed "the Arabian bird", a "gift of the gods", that the miracle which transcends all previous notions both of value and of reality can occur right in our midst.

Yet miracle in Cymbeline comes only when the process of inward growth in man has reached a certain stage. In miracle, God and man co-operate. However ironical or histrionic some of her predicaments, Imogen keeps her faith and inward truthfulness unspotted. And for Posthumus to be prepared, he must first undergo a painful process of humiliation and self-accusation, in the full realization of the grossness of his own crime. Then he can rise generously above such petty enemies as Iachimo. His humiliation, however, lessens neither his courage, nor his wit, as is evident in the scene with the Gaoler. The play which has earlier presented the action of Iachimo's cunning deceit and that



romance who has just been smitten by love. And when Greene elaborates upon some paradox, we are likewise made aware of his euphuistic heritage, and judge it as a more or less skilful application of a rhetorical device, not as a means to an end lying outside the sphere of style. But, as has been amply demonstrated in this account of Cymbeline, if Shakespeare adopts such means, it is for a deeper artistic purpose. This is merely to say that in Cymbeline no less than in his other, at any rate his mature, work, he depended on writers of lesser stature for material or artistic devices only: they were to be put at the service of an end entirely his own.

We have spoken of the process of inward purification which Posthumus undergoes, and which reaches its critical stage in the scene with the Gaoler and the Vision of Jupiter. It, however, is only one of the forces which bring about the joyful reunion in the end. While Posthumus is in Italy, the scene shifts to the Welsh mountains, to Belarius and the two princes. They together with Posthumus turn the tide of battle, and prepare the stage for the final acts in fulfilment of the Soothsayer's oracle. The imagery associated with the princes and recurring in the oracle is appropriately that of trees, branches and leaves. The inward process of cleansing in Posthumus is accompanied by the outward process of the cleansing of nature. The impression, at any rate, is conveyed, that with the death of Cloten and the Queen, and the return of Cymbeline's lost sons, the forces of corruption in his court are expurgated, and that we can look forward not only to a reign of peace, but

acceptable, it will no longer be possible to dismiss Cymbeline lightly as a piece of theatrical fantasy. It is, at least, a highly interesting dramatic experiment, from which we can gain insight into the fundamental problems occupying Shakespeare's mind during his final period. The play is less disjointed than it seems. A case has been put forward for the essential unity of its construction. If there is disjointedness, it is deliberately contrived so as to make all the greater the sense of unity in the end. Every thread of the action is carefully gathered up, and expectations subtly aroused from the play's very opening scene are fulfilled. In the last scene, all of the play's important characters, coming from very diverse backgrounds, meet. A larger vision of peace and unifying forces is presented than in even Shakespeare's most inclusive comedies. Posthumus, in whose fortunes Jupiter himself takes an interest, is, through his inward repentance, his readiness for expiation and growth, his decisive deed of valour in defence of his country, in which he is assisted by its true princes, and more mysteriously through the vision entrusted to him in his sleep, prepared for the reunion with Imogen, and the act of forgiveness towards Iachimo. Then Cymbeline learns from the "freeness" of a son-in-law. A private and largely inward action is linked to an outward and public one, whose main representatives, Cymbeline and Lucius, at the end pay tribute to the divine power of Jupiter, who presides ultimately over both. To give shape to such a view of life is the function of the structure of Cymbeline.

CHAPTER 6

THE WINTER'S TALE

Time as Presenter:

A Return to Simplicity.

It is required

You do awake your faith . . .

. . . That she is living,  
Were it but told you, should be hooted at  
Like an old tale; but it appears she lives . . .  
(V, iii, 94-117)

## Chapter 6

### A. Preliminary Remarks about the Play's Structure: How Shakespeare Adapted His Source.

It was shown in the preceding chapter that the action of Cymbeline is so constructed as to give shape to a view of life no less profound than but different from that which informs Shakespeare's earlier tragedies and comedies; and that this vision is more clearly realized than in Pericles. But though the intimations of such a vision are stronger in Cymbeline than in Pericles, we must side with the general consensus of opinion in regarding this play too as a partial failure. Yet it will prove especially interesting to the student of Shakespeare as a highly complex and subtle experiment from which insight can be derived as to certain preoccupations in Shakespeare's mind during his final creative period. Whatever knowledge one can gain concerning Pericles and Cymbeline, and more particularly the function of structure of these two plays, should help one to understand The Winter's Tale and The Tempest, where the vision of Shakespeare's romances was given assured expression.

It is reasonable to assume that in his new dramatic venture, The Winter's Tale, Shakespeare drew greatly on the experience he had gained when writing Pericles and Cymbeline. He must have been aware as we are that neither of these two plays was completely successful, and therefore he must have been anxious to avoid in The Winter's Tale certain structural features that had proved inadequate or even detrimental to his purpose. Above all, Shakespeare still had to find a sound

solution for the main dramatic problem which faced him in the final plays: how to provide a perspective at once wider and more flexible than befitted the vision of his earlier plays, without incurring too great a loss in suspense and in the immediacy so essential to effective drama. In Pericles the action is too remote to hold our interest throughout; the characters are too wooden, too allegorical in the narrow sense of the term, for us to take a deep interest in their fortunes; and the spectacular changes in mood and adventures follow upon each other too quickly to hold us in suspense. And to the extent that the spectacular element dominates over the purely dramatic one, the words fail to communicate all their meaning. In Cymbeline, whose construction is more definitely Shakespeare's own, the very complexity of the organization of the action and the dazzling display of ingenuity which frequently arrests our attention - as it certainly does in the final scene - distract us from the deeper purpose towards which they were designed to contribute. Again, mainly because the audience is so seldom encouraged to identify itself closely with any of the characters, the play as a whole does not move with the sense of urgency of Hamlet or King Lear, or even, so the argument will run in the present chapter, The Winter's Tale. The vision may be partly realized in Cymbeline, but we are not sufficiently directed towards it. That problem Shakespeare had to solve more adequately in The Winter's Tale.

Fortunately the problem of the relation of The Winter's Tale to its main sources is a less controversial and altogether

much simpler one than in the case of Cymbeline. For the main outline of his action, Shakespeare depended almost solely (1) on one specific work, Greene's Pandosto, also known as Dorastus and Fawnia, a romance in prose (2). It is therefore relatively easy to trace part of the process of the play's construction. It will be seen that a number of structural features in his source proved convenient to Shakespeare's purpose, while, as one might expect from Shakespeare's usual practice, others were subjected to radical alteration and some important additions were made.

A first observation one might make about Greene's Pandosto is that its organization resembles in some respects that of the tale of Apollonius of Tyre rather closely, and that this in turn largely accounts for a closer structural resemblance between The Winter's Tale and Pericles than between The Winter's Tale and Cymbeline. The story of Pandosto, like that of Apollonius of Tyre or Pericles, concerns a king, his wife and his daughter. In both a great shift of time is introduced somewhere near the middle permitting the daughter to grow up to girlhood. The story then dwells for some considerable time on her adventures, the father who occupied the centre of interest earlier being almost lost sight of. And at the end in each case, after a recognition between father and daughter, she marries a princely lover and is happy ever after.

Like Pericles, therefore, the action of The Winter's Tale divides rather sharply into two parts. This division was in fact suggested so strongly by the two plays' respective

sources that all other seventeenth-century plays based on them appear in two semi-independent parts, or "journées" (3). And yet as regards Shakespeare's two plays, it would be much easier to imagine an expanded version of Pericles in two parts than a similar handling of The Winter's Tale, which would result in damage to some of its essential features. Most readers will concur with me that the scenes of the Bear, the Shepherd and the Clown in Act III should be followed immediately, or after no longer than the time of a usual interval, by the entry of the Chorus of Time.

The reason for this difference is that the two parts of The Winter's Tale are related to each other differently than the two parts of Pericles. This is true even of their sources: Pandosto does not, like Apollonius of Tyre, undergo a double reversal in fortune. Both parts of the story of Apollonius of Tyre end happily: in Greene, only the second part does, and there the happiness is shared only by the children, for Pandosto after a renewed jealous fit commits suicide. But what is only faintly or rather, confusedly, suggested by Greene's organization of the story, Shakespeare accentuates in The Winter's Tale. He reshapes the action so as to heighten the contrast between the two parts.

Two radical changes Shakespeare made near the end contribute to this purpose. Greene's ending was anyhow unsuitable. In Shakespeare's version of the story, if its general direction and function were to be at all akin to those of his other romances, the royal father had to participate in

the final ceremony of reunion; he had, in fact, to occupy the central place. Shakespeare thus made Leontes remain loyal to the memory of Hermione. At the sight of Perdita after her escape with Florizel to Sicily, Leontes is deeply moved, reminded as he is by her features of his former wife, but, unlike Pandosto, he does not turn against her lover. He is free now of jealousy. The other change Shakespeare made was to add the scene of the statue.

The fortunes of Leontes and his family are thus given a turn closely similar to those of Pericles, Thaisa and Marina at the end of Pericles. In both plays daughter and wife are restored to a king after long separation. Moreover, the daughter's return takes place by "happy accident", while the wife undergoes - though the process is presented at different places in the two plays - the experience of death and rebirth. And, mutatis mutandis, the role played by Paulina is similar to that of Cerimon, for she too is a "physician" (II, iii, 54); both are human instruments through whom the gods effect their designs (4).

But while the double plot of The Winter's Tale, like that of Pericles, is resolved in a double recognition, Shakespeare did not repeat the mistake of a lame conclusion. This time, he contrives the first recognition in such a way as to be able to reserve his most powerful dramatic effect until near the end. He arranges for the recognition between father and daughter to take place off stage. It is related to us by two Gentlemen, excited onlookers of the event; thus the real climax is delayed



until the final scene. The effect of the reunion of husband and wife is moreover heightened by the stunning spectacle of Hermione's statue suddenly coming to life, a surprise which the audience shares with Leontes, for no clear indication has been furnished, as in Thaisa's case, that Hermione did not undergo death. Without wishing to drive the analogy too far, the scene of the revival of Hermione achieves, in terms of actual happenings, what the scene of Cerimon's revival of Thaisa plus the final scene do in Pericles. By delaying the miracle until the end, Shakespeare achieves a much more powerful effect. It is an effect of surprise which is unique in the Shakespeare canon. But even when he does for once use surprise, his manner of doing so is unlike that of Beaumont and Fletcher (5).

But the statue scene does not merely enable Shakespeare to end his play effectively, it also completes neatly the pattern of the play as a whole. The action of The Winter's Tale concentrates on two climactic scenes, one in the middle and one at the end, which are sharply contrasted. In the first part of the play, Leontes acts rashly until Apollo makes him halt; at the end he reverently follows Paulina's guidance. The first half of the play begins with the statement of the promise of Leontes' son Mamillius,

. . . You have an unspeakable  
comfort of your young prince Mamillius: it is a gentleman  
of the greatest promise that ever came into my note.  
(I, i, 32-4),

which is soon followed by a conversation revealing to us Leontes' great love of Hermione. After Leontes' tyrannical bearing, this part ends in Mamillius' death and Hermione's apparent death.

The second half begins with the saving of Leontes' baby daughter Perdita. It ends in Perdita's marriage and Hermione's restoration to life and to a humbled Leontes. This principle of simple contrast, which informs the structure of The Winter's Tale, is expressed in the Shepherd's words to the Clown: "thou met'st with things dying, I with things new born".

In Pericles and Cymbeline, too, as has been shown (6), the action is constructed around certain pivotal scenes which are set in sharp contrast to each other. But in both plays the effect of these contrasts is dulled by the frequency with which the action changes from place to place or from one set of characters to another. The very multiplicity of effects eventually lowers our power of receptiveness towards them. In The Winter's Tale, on the other hand, contrast is used sparingly and to better effect. There is no danger, as there is in Cymbeline with its multiple plots, that the action might ever become obscured for us.

Through his greater economy in the use of contrasts and other strong dramatic effects and his superior exploitation of the few he did use, Shakespeare achieved what had been lacking in large parts of Pericles and Cymbeline: he achieved dramatic concentration. The superiority, in terms of dramatic intensity, of The Winter's Tale to Pericles and Cymbeline is particularly marked in the opening acts. In them the action is concerned with a single issue: will Leontes discover the wrongness and injustice of his accusation early enough to avoid catastrophe? Until the opening of Act III there is no change in place. The

action moves forward with singular speed, the rapidity in development being matched only by that of Macbeth. Consequently the play achieves, at this stage at any rate, a remarkable pitch of suspense, far superior to that of Cymbeline, not to mention Pericles. The organization is effective enough to make Hermione's long and dignified appeal in the trial scene one of the most moving moments in Shakespearean drama.

But while it seems certain that Shakespeare with a view to achieving dramatic concentration and effectiveness reorganized his main plot in the manner described, he was motivated, as has already been remarked, partly by a different conception of the final stage of Leontes' fortunes, and furthermore by his desire to give greater prominence to Hermione, the Queen. In Pericles Thaisa is an undeveloped character who interests us only in so far as her fortunes affect those of Pericles, her husband. In that play it is the daughter, Marina, who takes the active part among the female characters. In The Winter's Tale, on the other hand, though Perdita has some importance, Hermione's is the dominant role, as is borne out by her treatment in both the trial and the statue scenes. In the latter, Perdita is a relatively minor figure. Her role is somewhat subdued to allow room for the greater development of Hermione. This is a further reason for the indirect narration of Perdita's recognition by Leontes in the final act.

This is of course not to say that Perdita's role is a passive one. During the long pastoral scene she shows that she is not easily talked out of her convictions; that is evident from

the final turn she gives to the debate with Polixenes on Art and Nature, and from her remarks soon after Polixenes has thrown off his disguise and played the tyrannical father with her and Florizel:

for once or twice  
I was about to speak and tell him plainly,  
The selfsame sun that shines upon his court  
Hides not his visage from our cottage, but  
Looks on alike.

(IV, iv, 434-8)

Yet she is without Marina's aggressiveness, and to that extent at once more likeable and more suitable, it seems to me, to the vision of Shakespeare's final plays (7).

It is nevertheless true that Shakespeare gives Perdita a relatively minor role. Not merely is she overshadowed by Hermione in the final scenes; she also yields the central place to Autolycus during large parts of the pastoral scenes. To them Autolycus adds more than a touch of realism. His schemes involve people's purses, not, like the Queen's in Cymbeline or Dionyza's in Pericles, their lives; nor like Iachimo's, their honour and good name. Autolycus is the comic antagonist of The Winter's Tale. That his adventures do in fact constitute a minute kind of subplot becomes evident once his attitude towards the Shepherd and the Clown near the end of the fourth act is compared with that in the fifth (8). When dressed in Florizel's courtly garments he meets the Shepherd and Clown, he can play the gentleman with them. But when he meets them again in Sicily, a comic reversal in situation has taken place, and he promises them half-meekly, half-roguishly, to amend his life.

One should not underestimate Autolycus' role in The

Winter's Tale simply because he does not greatly influence its main plot. As a comic figure he has no counterpart in Pericles or Cymbeline, nor, for that matter, in Greene's Pandosto. He is entirely Shakespeare's creation. It is in no small measure owing to him that The Winter's Tale is different in character from as well as more successful as drama than Cymbeline. For with Autolycus we step into a world of pure comedy in which the master of thievish pranks rules as king; a world which might be briefly interrupted but, we feel sure, could never be undone by any tyrannical act of a Leontes or his like. In all the complex intermingling of different worlds in Cymbeline, we miss this note of light-heartedness that more than anything else in life reassures us of its continuing vigour and thus of its power to recover after even the worst of catastrophes. The remarkable achievement of the construction of The Winter's Tale is that Shakespeare was able to intensify his serious action as well as sound again clearly a note not heard since As You Like It and Twelfth Night, and moreover that he developed his comic scenes in such a way as to contribute harmoniously to the effect of the play as a whole. Autolycus' comic reversal of fortune is placed in counterpoint with the resolution of the serious action. And his sheer ability to lead an interesting and happy, however irresponsible, life helps to prepare us, as part of a subtle and complex process, for the mood of the restoration and miracle in the final scenes (9).

B. Detailed Analysis of Structure and Imagery.

So far, I have concentrated on some of the broader characteristics of the structure of The Winter's Tale, seen in the light especially of the play's relation to Pericles and Cymbeline on the one hand, and to its source, Greene's Pandosto, on the other. The account is admittedly incomplete. One or two of the play's most conspicuous features, such as the peculiar handling of Leontes' character as well as fortunes, which differ considerably from those of Greene's main character, Pandosto, and the device of the Chorus of Time, have not yet been considered. For reasons which will appear later, I shall defer discussing their role in the play until a more opportune moment.

At the beginning of this chapter, the statement still requiring proof was made, that in The Winter's Tale Shakespeare's vision finds assured expression. I now propose to go through the play in greater detail, noting and commenting upon those features, as they appear, which seem to contribute significantly to the play's unfolding design and direct us, sometimes clearly, sometimes more obliquely, to its underlying idea or vision. At first the procedure will necessarily be mainly analytical, but as the relations of the play's different parts appear more clearly, interpretation of the purpose or functions of the design and the nature of the play's vision will play an increasing part.

As in the previous chapter, not only the nature and direction of the action, but also devices which affect the spectator's perspective of it and those means by which the playwright establishes, intensifies, or alters the play's

prevailing mood, will occupy our attention. So will the imagery, which is not treated separately in this chapter because much of it is so dramatic that its effect and purpose can be seen only in its interplay with other elements of the drama, and sometimes, moreover, other qualities of its poetry. But a few preliminary words about the imagery will be in place. As Wolfgang Clemen has pointed out (10), in certain parts of the play, especially in Acts II and III, few images force themselves upon our attention. In those scenes they usually assume the form of brief and not unusually striking metaphors, and in some of them imagery is in fact almost completely absent. But when imagery does occur in the play's first part, its immediate function is strikingly often that of foreshadowing events soon to take place, or, when occurring in Leontes' speeches, that of heightening the sense of dramatic irony by unwitting self-revelation, as in "I am a feather for each wind that blows" (II, iii, 153); other examples will be quoted later. In other scenes, by contrast, especially in the pastoral scenes in the fourth act, the imagery is remarkably rich and often bold, thus providing a great deal of "colour", as against the relative bareness of some earlier scenes. As the discussion moves to those particular scenes, imagery will necessarily take up a larger space.

For purposes of this analysis, the play can conveniently be divided into five sections which in themselves possess a certain unity of tone or prevailing mood: 1) the opening scene and that part of the second scene which precedes Leontes' first

indication of his jealousy; ii) the action from there on until the end of the trial scene (the oracle scene at the beginning of Act III, however, will have to be treated separately); iii) what I shall call the link scenes, at the end of Act III and the beginning of Act IV; iv) the pastoral scenes in Act IV; v) Act V.

Section i.

The sudden development of Leontes' jealousy close to the play's beginning has called forth a great deal of comment from critics. For motivation of this sudden turn of the action seems to be completely absent, contrary to Shakespeare's usual practice when treating of a character's dominating passion. The sudden outburst of Leontes, while the sky seems perfectly clear, is all the more surprising in Shakespeare's play, if one considers that in his source the king's jealousy, though equally irrational, is shown to arise much more gradually. That Shakespeare should at this point not have followed Greene's lead seems particularly strange. As to Shakespeare's text, I am certain, we are left in no doubt. Attempts have been made, by both critics and producers, to supply some of the motivation wanting in the text by bits of extra editing or stage business. Dover Wilson, for instance, in the New Cambridge edition of the play, adds certain stage directions with the obvious motive of encouraging us to believe that Leontes' jealousy is aroused step by step, however swiftly, while Hermione and Polixenes are speaking apart. To this "emendation" John Gielgud in his recent production (11) not merely subscribed, but even added further



stage business, making the conversation between Hermione and Polixenes appear as unusually intimate not merely to Leontes, but even to the audience. Such additions serve only to distort the turn of events as incontrovertibly set forth in the text. The jealousy which invades Leontes' mind has no cause: it comes upon him with the suddenness of an infection (12).

But, as will be seen, instead of direct psychological or causal motivation of conduct Shakespeare skilfully prepares us in mood for the abrupt turn in events. To this preparation imagery makes an important, though by no means the sole, contribution. We are prepared by Shakespeare, not precisely for Leontes' jealousy, but for its occasion and its effects, and not by an ordinary, purely dramatic means, but by indirect suggestion, in a manner more akin to that of music. The atmospheric effect produced in the opening 150 lines or so of the play obviously does not resemble that of the witches in Macbeth in impact, for the means are subtler: yet the effect is real and remarkably intense.

Superficially the play's first scene is a simple expository one. Minor characters, Archidamus and Camillo, engage in a conversation whose immediate dramatic purpose is to inform the audience of the extent and background of Sicily's friendship with Bohemia. Apparently all is exceedingly well in Sicily. Leontes has entertained the friend of his youth with great generosity, and his countrymen have every reason to expect much from his issue, young prince Mamillius. A happier state of affairs would be difficult to imagine. Yet the manner in

which this praise and hope are expressed by the two Lords ironically enough casts doubt upon them and prepares us subtly for the speedy rupture in the following scene. This sense of ambiguity is mainly conveyed by the large number of superlatives and the extravagance of some of the comparisons evoked:

"magnificence . . . rare . . . over-kind . . . unspeakable comfort . . . of the greatest promise that ever came into my note"; Camillo says that Leontes and Polixenes "shook hands, as over a vast; and embraced as it were from the ends of opposed winds". This last image, especially, is ambiguous in connotation - as most extravagant images are likely to be. A similar note is struck when Camillo, in praise of Mamillius, says that "they that went on crutches ere he was born desire yet their life to see him a man", crutches moreover being mentioned a second time. The connotation of crutches is sickness, a subject about which we are soon to hear more. But perhaps the most ambiguous image, in a sinister sense, is Camillo's when speaking of the friendship between Leontes and Polixenes: "and there rooted betwixt them then such an affection, which cannot choose but branch now" (I, i, 22-3). As D. A. Traversi rightly comments, branch implies either living growth or spreading division (13). The imagery of the first scene, in conjunction with other qualities of its dialogue, is partly ironical, thus qualifying our reception of the information so enthusiastically conveyed by Archidamus and Camillo.

This particular function of imagery and certain descriptive words, subtly to forebode the ensuing action, is

applied extensively in The Winter's Tale. The early part of the long second scene provides an especially interesting instance. Leontes' abrupt jealous outburst is preceded by two conversations, the first between Polixenes and Hermione on the subject of Leontes' and his own childhood, the second between Leontes and Hermione during which Leontes recalls the time of his courtship. Both conversations in their context are somewhat strange and their function on first consideration seems obscure. But both serve a dramatic purpose in more ways than one. Little attention has been paid by critics to the first of these conversations, which I shall quote at length:

Hermione.

Come, I'll question you  
Of my lord's tricks and yours when you were boys:  
You were pretty lordings then?

Polixenes.

We were, fair queen,  
Two lads that thought there was no more behind,  
But such a day to-morrow, as to-day,  
And to be boy eternal.

Her.

Was not my lord  
The verier wag o' th' two?

Pol.

We were as twinn'd lambs that did frisk i' th' sun,  
And bleat the one at the other: what we changed  
Was innocence for innocence; we knew not  
The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd  
That any did. Had we pursued that life,  
And our weak spirits ne'er been higher rear'd  
With stronger blood, we should have answer'd heaven  
Boldly 'not guilty;' the imposition cleared  
Hereditary ours.

Her.

By this we gather  
You have tripp'd since.

Pol.

O my most sacred lady!  
Temptations have since been born to's: for  
In those unfledged days was my wife a girl;  
Your precious self had then not cross'd the eyes  
Of my young play-fellow.

Her.

Grace to boot!  
Of this make no conclusion, lest you say  
Your queen and I are devils: yet go on;  
The offences we have made you do we'll answer,  
If you first sinn'd with us, and that with us  
You did continue fault, and you slipp'd not  
With any but with us.

(I, ii, 60-86)

There is nothing unusual about the beginning of this dialogue. But the turn Polixenes gives the conversation in referring to innocence and guilt startles us, and the relevance of the ensuing give-and-take between him and Hermione becomes clear only when the passage is seen in a wider context. Hermione's reactions are of course purely playful; for her, Polixenes' words have no serious meaning. But the reader can hardly help noting in them a more sinister significance: happy as Polixenes and Leontes seem at present, they can no longer be as carefree as they were before they outgrew the state of innocence. After the ideal picture of their mutual relations so far presented, this conversation, however ambiguously, is bound to cast a shadow, though even we in the audience hardly dream as yet of the thunder that is soon to come. The attentive reader will be not a little startled by Hermione's "lest you say Your queen and I are devils", words which ironically anticipate the manner in which Leontes speaks of her only a hundred lines later.

But rather than any specific image, it is here the general content of the conversation, with its repeated allusion through certain descriptive key-words to the idea of offence or guilt, that produces the general effect of ironic anticipation. The list of these terms is conspicuously long: "ill-doing", "weak spirits", "not guilty", "tripped", "temptations", "devils", "offence", "sinned", "fault", "slipped". The dramatic impact of such a concentrated series of strongly evocative terms is beyond question. There will be occasion later on to show that the dialogue just discussed serves yet another purpose in the play's design.

In the brief interchange between Leontes and Hermione (II, i, 88-105), the imagery is richer and contributes more largely to the effect of indirect dramatic preparation. To exhaust this highly concentrated and skilful episode would require several paragraphs; I shall merely draw attention to three phrases in it of great evocative power. Hermione, urging Leontes to continue in his eulogy of her, says: "cram's with praise, and make's As fat as tame things". The force of the extravagant "cram" is heightened by the assonance of the whole phrase, and the image - "as fat as tame things" - moreover seems oddly out-of-the-way, thus inviting ambiguous interpretation. Two lines further on, in what is perhaps the most beautiful image in the first act, she unwittingly alludes to Leontes' proneness to tyranny:

You may ride's  
With one soft kiss a thousand furlongs ere  
With spur we heat an acre.

When Leontes finally answers her request, and tells her when she had spoken "to better purpose", he uses an image hardly appropriate to the thought:

Why, that was when  
Three crabbed months had sour'd themselves to death,  
Ere I could make thee open thy white hand,  
And clap thyself my love.

"Sour'd to death" hardly suggests a mood befitting a happily married man's memories of his time of courtship. But the "atmosphere" of this image takes us closer to that of the end of the scene, when Leontes thinks he has been duped by an adulterous wife. Something of the headstrongness and impatience Leontes is to make such an exhibition of rings in these remarks.

Thus by means of a strange turn in the conversation, heightened by the ambiguous, even ironic quality of some of the imagery, Shakespeare prepares us in mood for the dramatic change in the relations of friends and husband and wife that is to follow.

It would hardly be proper, however, to speak of this subtle preparation of mood as "replacing" any minute dramatic motivation of Leontes' jealousy, whose absence has confounded so many critics of The Winter's Tale. The oblique manner of preparation just described does not make Leontes' sudden change in attitude more "probable" or "realistic"; it does not furnish us with a cause for this strange turn in events: it merely intimates to the alert reader that the air Leontes, Polixenes and Hermione breathe is less pure and healthy than they and their countrymen seem to think. A sudden illness attacks Leontes' mind, as it were from without, as if cast upon him by some malicious power; an illness which manifests itself in "Fancies too weak for boys, too green and idle For girls of nine" (III, ii, 178-9). No wonder that for some time those who surround him are almost too surprised to speak. As the discussion proceeds, it will be seen even more clearly that the method of preparation in the opening two scenes is suited to a play whose action is to a considerable extent governed by happenings beyond man's ordinary control. Leontes is of course not guiltless for what he does; he has reason to ask for pardon in the end. But if Leontes were to be tried in a modern court, he might well be exonerated from blame in consideration of his abnormal state of mind.

Section ii.

From the moment of Leontes' first outbreak of sexual jealousy on, until close to the end of the trial scene, the action swiftly deteriorates with hardly an interruption except for the oracle scene, whose dramatic function will be considered separately. When the suspicion of adultery on the part of his wife and his trusted friend enters Leontes' mind, it does so once for all. Shakespeare here portrays no gradual process of the growth of a tyrannous passion, as he did in Othello. No residue of trust or love in Leontes' mind fights even a retreating action against the new obsession. He is at once utterly enslaved.

The violence of Leontes' mental disease is immediately conveyed to the reader through a series of monologues in the second scene. Its persistence and hardening display themselves to those about him in a series of interviews and rash actions. Their organization is at once simple and skilful: first Camillo tries in vain to cure him "of this diseas'd opinion", but instead Leontes commands him to poison Polixenes. Further incited by the news of their escape, he rudely interrupts the domestic gathering of Mamillius, Her<sup>m</sup>ione and the two Ladies, who were just about to listen to Mamillius' "winter's tale". Hermione's protestations do not avail: she is cast into prison. Then the Lords, foremost among them Antigonus, plead with Leontes for the Queen. They acquiesce only when Leontes tells them that he has despatched messengers to Apollo's temple at Delphos, to, in his words,

by a metaphorical use of language is hardly surprising, considering the development of the events presented. Yet they have their additional importance, especially in so far as they serve to define, or to underline, the nature of Leontes' obsession, not only in its effects, but as it appears both to those around him and, ironically enough, to himself. Increasingly in these scenes, the ironical situation is developed in which Leontes attributes the diseased fancies of his own mind to the actions of Polixenes and Hermione and by implication more and more to the world in general.

Early in his jealous speeches, Leontes refers to his imagined discovery as an "infection of my brains" (I, ii, 145), thus unwittingly describing the truth. When Camillo urges him to "be cured Of this diseases'd opinion" (296-7), he persists in seeing the centre of infection in his wife's and Polixenes' actions. He remarks:

were my wife's liver  
Infected as her life, she would not live  
The running of one glass.  
(I, ii, 304-6),

and to Camillo's "Who does infect her?", he answers: "Why, he that wears her like a medal, hanging About his neck . . . ." Adultery in general, Leontes conceives as a kind of illness, beyond cure; "Physic for't there's none" (I, ii, 200). But the subject of illness informs a striking number of passages in this scene which are not directly related to the main topic of conversation and form no part of Leontes' monologues. Polixenes, upon the question whether he derives much comfort from his son, in his answer harps upon the same idea:



He makes a July's day short as December;  
And with his varying childness cures in me  
Thoughts that would thicken my blood.  
(169-71)

Camillo, defending himself against the charge of wilful negligence, speaks of "a fear Which oft infects the wisest" (261-2). Later he describes the changed atmosphere in Sicily to the puzzled Polixenes, using the same idea as an image:

There is a sickness  
Which puts some of us in distemper; but  
I cannot name the disease; and it is caught  
Of you, that are well.  
(384-7)

When he has more fully explained his meaning, Polixenes swears:

O, then my blood turn  
To an infected jelly . . .  
. . . and my approach be shunn'd,  
Nay, hated too, worse than the great'st infection  
That e'er was heard or read!  
(417-24) (14)

Closely associated with the images and descriptive references to sickness or infection are two striking images of animals whose sight was popularly believed to mean disease or death for the beholder. Polixenes, upon being told by Camillo that, though well, he himself is the source of the distemper in Sicily, answers:

How! caught of me!  
Make me not sighted like the basilisk: |  
I have look'd on thousands, who have sped the better  
By my regard, but kill'd none so.  
(I, ii, 387-90)

In an important passage in the following scene Leontes develops a similar conception, though this time the image serves to illustrate a passive act:

knowledge". But the two terms are sometimes employed with a wider connotation of meaning than merely those of recognizing truth and guiltlessness: they can refer to a general condition of man, as "innocence" does in Polixenes' speech in the second scene, cited earlier. In this wider sense, innocence can be lost by being outgrown, and curiously enough, a certain kind of knowledge contributes to the loss. If this knowledge in turn assumes a perverse form, it becomes the "infected knowledge" in Leontes' speech on the cup and the spider. That this form of knowledge is closely associated with sin is obvious. As the action advances, we learn that neither Hermione's nobility and ignorance of anything Leontes accuses her with, nor the innocence of his own baby child, which Paulina brings to him in the role, as it were, of his "physician" (II, iii, 54) can cure Leontes. For this to happen, a different form of revelation must intervene.

Eventually Perdita, his daughter, is to play a significant role in Leontes' restoration. Meanwhile she plays only the part of an "innocent" babe. Paulina's hopes that its innocence will prove a more effective advocate to Leontes than any other means are soon crushed. But meanwhile, the conception of its innocence is developed at some length, especially in Paulina's well-known speech to the gaoler. To suggest that her words sound anew a theme around which a large part of the play's action is constructed, is not to minimize the comic effect they usually convey, when the scene is acted on the stage:

This child was prisoner to the womb, and is  
By law and process of great Nature thence  
Freed and enfranchised; not a party to  
The anger of the King, nor guilty of,  
If any be, the trespass of the Queen.

(II, ii, 59-63)

If these words have a real meaning, and are not merely to be interpreted as a humorous makeshift to help Paulina smuggle the child out of prison, they tell us that the sins of the parents are not visited upon the children: that, on the contrary, Nature can create new life, unaffected and unhampered by the possible guilt or sinfulness, by the "infected knowledge", of its parents. This power of Nature to create anew and "enfranchise" will contribute to the action portrayed in the play's second part.

Earlier in this discussion Leontes' jealousy was described as a "perversion". Towards innocence it is merely blind: but its main victim is fertility. In his first jealous speech Leontes sneeringly refers to Hermione as a "fertile bosom". Though the idea is not directly expressed, it seems clear later on that if the fact that Hermione is with child has any influence on Leontes, it is further to incite him to tyrannous rage. Directly or indirectly, Shakespeare shows how Leontes' inward infection is detrimental to all that in his family which represents the fruit of his once happy marriage with Hermione. By the end of the trial, all the promise the Sicilian Lords speak of in the opening scene has gone, it seems for ever. Antigonus' threat, to "geld" his own daughters and to "glib" himself (II, i, 147-9), if Leontes' accusation of his wife should prove well-founded, only suggests in a crude form the kind of destruction of fertility Leontes is about to wreak on his own family. The first act in this direction is when, after his threat to burn it (II, iii, 156), he orders Antigonus

to expose his baby daughter, the latest proof and symbol of his fertile marriage, in "some remote and desert place quite out of our dominions . . . Without more mercy" (II, iii, 175-7).

Leontes never turns against his son Mamillius, for he recognizes his own features in him, which he fails to do, in spite of Paulina's detailed description of them, in his second child. But the very scene in which Leontes' rejection of his daughter is enacted opens with a brief reference to Mamillius' sudden illness. Leontes naturally blames Hermione's "infection":

To see his nobleness!  
Conceiving the dishonour of his mother,  
He straight declin'd, droop'd, took it deeply,  
Fasten'd and fix'd the shame on't in himself,  
Threw off his spirit, his appetite, his sleep,  
And downright languish'd.

(II, iii, 12-7)

Leontes never dreams of fastening and "fixing" the shame upon his own self. But it is indubitably implied that he is the cause of Mamillius' sickness. In terms of the play's unfolding action, the infection or disease is shown to spread and to be something very real, not just a mere fancy in Leontes' mind. What had earlier been image or part of indirect description of an imagined outrage now takes on another face, and becomes physical reality.

As the action itself gives a new turn to an idea prominent in the play's language, one is left to wonder at the full significance of the incident. Further on in the action we are made to see the events in a new perspective, when Mamillius' death follows immediately upon Leontes' rejection of the oracle and thus appears as Apollo's answer for disobedience. But earlier Shakespeare has given special prominence to the extremely close

resemblance of Mamillius to his father, to whom he appears almost as a reincarnation of his own youth:

Thou want'st a rough pash and the shoots that I have,  
To be full like me: yet they say we are  
Almost as like as eggs.

(I, ii, 128-30)

It appears that, in one sense at least, the reader is encouraged to regard Mamillius as a symbol, or rather a human image, of that part of Leontes' personality which is capable of renewal, of promise, of fertile activity. As the infection of his mind causes him to act against the rest of his family, the healthy part within himself first languishes and then dies.

To anticipate a little, the theme of the partial identity between children and parents will be repeated in a new key near the end of the play, when the as yet unrecognized Perdita reminds Leontes of Hermione: "I thought of her Even in these looks I made" (V, i, 227-8), and he receives Florizel with the words:

Your mother was most true to wedlock, prince;  
For she did print your royal father off,  
Conceiving you: were I but twenty-one,  
Your father's image is so hit in you,  
His very air, that I should call you brother,  
As I did him, and speak of something wildly  
By us perform'd before.

(V, i, 124-30)

This idea, so strongly suggested in the passages quoted, of the living renewal of man's personality in his own children surely accounts for certain elements in the play's structure, and should be kept in mind when this discussion turns to the question of the play's function of structure.

One other feature of the play's first movement should be

is true, the passage, however negative in its direct import, foreshadows, even if only faintly, the long process of sorrow and the ultimate joy that lie in wait for Leontes. But, to move from conjecture back to fact, though Shakespeare is to give greater prominence to the seasonal background of his action in the fourth act, he also places the events of the earlier part of his play in a season befitting their nature.

Before the trial scene, which forms at once the climax and conclusion of the play's first movement, Shakespeare interposes a brief scene of only twenty-two lines. Cleomenes and Dion are shown conversing upon their return to Sicily from Apollo's temple on the island of Delphos. Though in stage-productions the scene is often cut, it represents one of the more startling features in the play's construction. Its obvious immediate dramatic function is to heighten suspense until the moment in the trial scene when the oracle's contents are discovered. Curiosity is aroused as to how the message will affect Leontes and those in his care. That, however, is not its only purpose. It makes an important contribution to the play's atmosphere or prevailing mood. Though only for a brief moment, the action suddenly carries us into a world utterly different from that of Leontes' court, a place which the messengers describe in such adjectives as "delicate", "sweet", "surpassing", "celestial", "grave", "ceremonious", "solemn", "unearthly", "rare", and when directly referring to the moment of the oracle's revelation: "ear-deaf'ning", "violent". No image attracts the attention in this scene; but the tone of

the ~~highly~~ poetic description heightens the prevailing impression of reverence and wonder, which contrasts as absolutely as can be imagined with that of the preceding scenes. At the same time the scene's mood and tone strongly anticipate those characterizing the final scene, where again wonder and reverence prevail. Only then will the words of Dion, which intimate the source of a cure for Leontes' "infected knowledge", become fulfilled: "something rare Even then will rush to knowledge". Again, as in the early part of our play, Shakespeare moulds his effects partly by poetic, that is to say, by indirect suggestion. He who desires to understand the subtle construction through which he gives his vision shape must become attuned to his ways of making language fulfil part of the functions of structure.

The trial scene represents one of the pivots in the play's design, occurring as it does shortly before the great shift in time and place which takes us into a world of new characters. It forms at once a parallel and a contrast to the statue scene at the end, the climax and joyful conclusion of the play's second movement. In both scenes the three most prominent figures are Hermione, Leontes, and Paulina. In the middle of the trial scene, upon the news of her son's death, Hermione herself falls down in a deadly swoon. Paulina soon brings the terrible news, and from then on dominates the scene. In the middle of the statue scene, Paulina succeeds by "lawful" magic in breathing life into Hermione's statue. As Hermione descends, and is reunited with her husband and her daughter, Paulina steps somewhat into the background.

As regards the development of the plot, Shakespeare in this scene departed slightly but in a highly significant manner from his source. In Greene's romance, Pandosto does in fact acknowledge the truth of the oracle, but his wife and son are struck dead in spite of his obedience. Leontes, on the other hand, commits an act of outrage against the god, and thus Shakespeare contrives the immediate consequences in such a way that we understand them as actions by the incensed god. In Pericles and Cymbeline the protagonists are subjected to isolation and arduous sufferings for a long time before the gods choose the moment for their restoration to happiness. In The Winter's Tale it is Apollo, who deprives Leontes at once of his wife and of his son, the promise of his succession. The fundamental difference between these plays rests partly on a different conception of the leading male character: Leontes is neither a good man, like Pericles, nor is the evil impulse within him aroused largely by a scheming intriguer, as in Posthumus' case. There is therefore even greater stress on the need for repentance and pardon in The Winter's Tale than in Cymbeline.

Section iii: The Link Scenes.

Act III scene iii and Act IV scene i form the link between the play's first and tragic movement and the pastoral scenes of the fourth act. Only thirty lines or so earlier Paulina in her passionate denunciation of Leontes had evoked, in the form of an imaginary picture, a landscape barren and stormy. Now the action presents a storm, and shortly Antigonus



is to expose the royal child entrusted to him in the desert of Bohemia. As in King Lear, the changes in the sky and the seasons in The Winter's Tale correspond to happenings in the world of man; only in The Winter's Tale the storm is given less prominence and is presented in a different perspective, since in that play life is seen from a greater distance. As in Pericles, the storm's victims believe it to have been caused by the angry gods. "In my conscience", says the Mariner, "The heavens with that we have in hand are angry And frown upon's" (III, iii, 4-6). Similarly Antigonus believes that Apollo has directed him to leave the child in Bohemia (III, iii, 43 ff.).

Antigonus' dream is perhaps the most puzzling episode in the play. The following suggestions are made with a view to explaining its structural purpose, but I offer them as conjectures or incomplete truths, not as hard and fast solutions. Our underlying assumption here, as always in this discussion of Shakespeare's last plays, is that a scene's structural purpose can be understood only when its relation to the rest of the play is clearly seen.

A minor and indirect function of the dream is to inform the reader that Antigonus is in a measure guilty, for he executes Leontes' heinous command:

For this ungentle business,  
Put on thee by my lord, thou ne'er shalt see  
Thy wife Paulina more.

(III, iii, 34-6)

Contrary to his treatment earlier in the play, he is for a moment even made to adopt Leontes' outlook; he thinks the child's father to be Polixenes, and speaks of its "mother's

fault" (III, iii, 50). He thus becomes a fit victim for the bear, who like the storm, is an instrument of Apollo's anger.

Seen in its context, Antigonus' narration of his dream prolongs a deeply pathetic episode. Like Marina's, Perdita's life has a stormy and sad beginning, though unlike Marina, Perdita later on is not aware of her true parentage, and thus has no cause for melancholy. The scene which concludes in Antigonus' hasty exit pursued by a bear is skilfully placed between the tragic scene of the trial and the comic action hailed by the entry of the old Shepherd and the Clown. Antigonus' exit and end are pathetic; but the device of the bear itself, possibly adopted from Mucedorus (15), is of course comic. The whole incident should be compared with that of Cloten's head in Cymbeline: in both cases a death is enacted off-stage; in both the effect is, literally, tragi-comic. Thus in this part of the play the action moves swiftly, first from tragedy to pathos, then to comic pathos, and, at the entry of the Shepherd, to pure comedy.

But while in one sense the episode of the storm, Antigonus' dream and the bear may be regarded as a link between the tragic and comic parts of the play's action, looked upon in another way it stands in sharp contrast with the scene immediately preceding as well as those following it. In the trial scene Shakespeare had succeeded, with the help of a number of minute human touches (16), in conveying an impression of "reality". The homely idiom and outlook of the Shepherd and Clown who rescue the exposed child seem likewise copied from nature. In

both these scenes the spectator is encouraged to participate intimately in the action. No extraordinary effort on his part is required to engage in "a willing suspension of disbelief". Not so in the intervening episode: the dream itself, the bear's chase of poor Antigonus, and the setting, the "coasts of Bohemia", all belong to a world of fancy, of pure romance. Shakespeare was as well aware of that as his critic Ben Jonson (17). As had been intimated in the short oracle scene, and as appears crystallized in the sharp contrast between Antigonus' dream and the episode immediately following with the Shepherd and Clown, the world in which the play's action moves is neither the simple one of surface-reality nor purely one of fancy or "romance"; but the second acts, in a number of ways, upon the first. The vision which informs The Winter's Tale is realized by a manifold interplay of different planes of reality. Besides simple human acts and decisions, dreams, visions, and the gods themselves participate, directly or indirectly, in the action. To represent in a new form the interaction between a mental world of dreams and the world of physical reality appears to be one of the functions of Antigonus' dream. How important such an interplay is in some of Shakespeare's other romances was indicated in the discussion of Posthumus' dream and the Soothsayer's vision in Cymbeline (18).

Antigonus' dream is obviously of a different kind. It is Hermione's spirit who speaks to him, not a god, and moreover the information is incomplete, so that he partly misinterprets its meaning - for he believes the child to be Polixenes'. But

If I understand the passage rightly, here "dreams" is another description for "what's unreal"; passionate love or lust operates upon the unreal so strongly and directly that in a sense it is made "possible", it becomes real to the lover's mind. A "dream" is like "nothing"; yet it is realized. Leontes is aware of the paradox, and thus exclaims: "How can this be". The passage is moreover ironic, for Leontes' own suspicions are mere "dreams", and yet he acts as if they were real to a sinister degree. The dream or mere fancy based on nothing in the earlier part of the play is contrasted with the gradual fulfilment of an "undreamed of" process in the second half.

While the action of the first part developed towards death, that of the second part manifests life's power to renew itself. The contrast is tersely expressed in the Shepherd's words to the Clown, "Thou mettest with things dying, I with things new-born" (III, iii, 109-10). When shortly before Antigonus had exposed the child, he left it with the wish, "Blossom, speed thee well". Even while the bear, a kind of symbol of nature at its most destructive, is at work, a gentler process has already begun. The storm has calmed by the time the Shepherd discovers the child, and, imperceptibly almost, for there is no direct suggestion to this effect, the action is moving from winter towards the season of spring when new life unfolds itself. This the action itself is soon to confirm.

But before turning to it, let us glance briefly at the Shepherd's opening words:

of Leontes' error and its immediate consequences, and which, the reader vaguely anticipates, will finally spread to include Leontes himself. Time justifies the play's bold structure with its sharp division in the middle, and in doing so enlightens us as to part of the nature of its vision. I say "part of . . . its vision", for he of course does not anticipate the full vision at this dramatic moment. He directs us to Bohemia, to Florizel and Perdita, but adds;

What of her ensues  
I list not prophecy; but let Time's news  
Be known when 'tis brought forth.  
(IV, 1, 25-7)

That the Chorus of Time exercises in terms of the play's structure and vision the large function I have indicated will be seen more clearly once it is realized that Time is no one else but the Poet himself. It is the poet who uses his "wings in the name of Time". He presents "both joy and terror", "makes and unfolds error", and reveals "the argument of Time". The play is Shakespeare's "tale" (IV, 1, 14). And he asserts the freedom of the creative imagination, unhampered by any law or limitations established by custom or critic:

since it is in my power  
To o'erthrow law and in one self-born hour  
To plant and o'erwhelm custom.

This is no mere humorous dig at the Renaissance commentators of Aristotle's Poetics. The power referred to has always been the gift of the poet, and with its help poets of every age have revealed "freshest things" which make the present seem "stale". This gift is the eternal one of poets:

Let me pass  
The same I am, ere ancient'st order was  
Or what is now revealed. I witness to  
The times that brought them in; so shall I do  
To the freshest things now reigning, and make stale  
The glistering of this present, as my tale  
Now seems to it.

(IV, i, 9-15)

This is the critical manifesto of The Winter's Tale. The shift in time is necessary so that the new world of youth and grace can "grow"; "growing" or "growth" is referred to three times in the Time's speech. In what follows the effect of this new growth not only on Bohemia and Perdita but also on Leontes' tragic world will be revealed. Then we shall see that the Poet or Time unfolds the ways of Providence.

Time's function in The Winter's Tale is therefore similar to that of Gower in Pericles, who is also a poet who shows that "those in troubles reign, Losing a mite, a mountain gain". But the device of Time is far more successful than that of Gower, in that Time appears only once, and then dramatically, while Gower's repeated interventions turn Pericles, as has been shown, into a spectacle rather than a play; and in that Time is not a moralizing chorus. Time simply unfolds, and justifies his peculiar ways of unfolding: For Gower the story of Pericles is like an exemplum in a mediaeval sermon. On the other hand, Time provides a clearer guide to the underlying vision of The Winter's Tale than does Jupiter in Cymbeline, whose explanation is confined to "Whom best I love I cross; to make my gift, The more delayed, delighted". Time is thus the best device Shakespeare has so far employed in his last plays to direct us to the core of his vision, which, in ways different from his earlier work, was to

unfold "both joy and terror"(IV, i, 1). Time is needed, the time of many years, for those processes to develop which, after "error" has been unfolded and "freshest things" have come to "reign", culminate in the joy which is pictured in the play's final scene as a miracle.

Section iv: The Pastoral Scenes.

The construction of the action in the pastoral scenes is both simple and masterly. Various critics have commented on the artful combination of styles and moods, especially in the long fourth scene. Two plots are combined, the action shifting to and fro, from one to the other, without damaging the unified effect of the whole. The main plot revolves around the fortunes of Florizel and Perdita. The obstacle to their love is Perdita's apparent low birth, for she is taken by all to be the old Shepherd's daughter. Her fears are not entirely allayed by Florizel's reassurance to her of his steadfastness before his father Polixenes arrives disguised as a guest to their sheep-shearing feast. Soon the action reaches a climax, and Polixenes, casting off his disguise, threatens the Shepherd and Perdita with cruel punishment and orders his prodigal son back to court. But the only one crushed by this surprising turn of events is the old Shepherd. Florizel remains true to his love (IV, iv, 455-8). With Camillo's help they escape to Sicily, where Perdita's true nature is soon to be revealed. The counterpoint to this plot is provided by Autolycus' adventures, his successful gulling of the Clown, Shepherd and some of the guests at the sheep-shearing feast. Later, he is

to turn up in Sicily himself, where his and the Shepherd's and Clown's comic reversal in fortune concludes the subplot (20).

The action around Perdita and Florizel is one of romantic comedy, that of the subplot is realistic low comedy. Autolycus' object is money, and he procures it with tricks and with trifles. When he arrives at the sheep-shearing feast, he is fitted out with a whole case full of them, "For my lads to give their dears" (IV, iv, 222), which delight the Clown, Dorcas, Mopsa and their like. By contrast, Florizel woos a maiden below his birth, in the disguise of a shepherd, of which Perdita remarks: "How would he [Polixenes] look, to see his work, so noble, vilely bound up?" (IV, iv, 21-2). And when the still disguised Polixenes humorously takes him to task for not ransacking "the pedlar's silken treasury" and loading his "She with knacks" (lines 341-2), he answers:

Old sir, I know  
She prizes not such trifles as these are:  
The gifts she looks from me are pack'd and lock'd  
Up in my heart, which I have given already,  
But not deliver'd.

(IV, iv, 348-52)

Thus it is seen that Autolycus' actions and behaviour represent a kind of foil to Florizel's.

The effect of this skilful and intricate intermingling of romantic high comedy and realistic low comedy is to imbue the ideal world of romance with the vigour of life. We accept the idyllic scenes of Florizel's wooing of the incomparable Perdita more easily as "real", and not just a product of fancy, because they are set against a background of ordinary realistic, and to the Elizabethans even contemporary life. But even more



than that is achieved: the realistic characterization of Autolycus, the Shepherd and the Clown contributes in a vital way to the play as a whole which unfolds a view of life where the idyllic as well as fantastic happenings of romance, of a world of dreams or the imagination, are set side by side with the ordinary actions and desires of realistic people. The world of The Winter's Tale is neither purely that of romance, nor that of surface reality; but in it, both dreams and ordinary deeds contribute to the complex web of the action.

As was stated earlier, the imagery in these scenes is much richer than in the previous acts. The language seems to be packed with an exuberance of suggestion for its own sake, adding to the prevailing impression of healthy vigour, set against the atmosphere of disease and destructive passion in the play's first part. That alone would be a sufficient justification for it, but some of the imagery exercises more particular functions as well. And by this is not merely meant that in each case it is fitted both in subject matter and form to the particular character's outlook and general form of speech. To refer to Florizel's father and his pursuit as the "clog at his heels" suits Autolycus' prosaic mentality. Florizel speaks in the imagery of late Elizabethan love poetry; as when he calls Perdita's hand

As soft as dove's down and as white as it,  
Or Ethiopian's tooth, or the fann'd snow that's bolted  
By th' northern blasts twice o'er.

(IV, iv, 355-7)

Many of this long scene's images, like the string of similes just quoted, are directly associated with Perdita,

whose idealized characterization they further extend. They are mainly taken from nature, but a fair number has for its subject royalty. Florizel describes the festival "as a meeting of the petty gods And you the queen on't" (IV, iv, 4-5). His beautiful speech beginning, "What you do Still betters what is done", ends in a sentence which contains two royal metaphors:

each your doing,  
.....  
Crowns what you are doing in the present deeds,  
That all your acts are queens.  
(IV, iv, 143-6)

Camillo describes her as "the queen of curds and cream" (161); and Perdita herself says, after Polixenes' intervention: "this dream of mine, - Being now awake, I'll queen it no inch farther" (440-1) (21). These images emphasize still more what may be called Perdita's inward royalty of nature, those basic features in her of mind and body which make her stand out among her companions. As Polixenes remarks, before he assumes his tyrannical mood: "Nothing she does or seems But smacks of something greater than herself, Too noble for this place". This quality of inward dignity she shares with the two princes in Cymbeline (22).

But while in one sense Perdita seems "too noble for this place", in another she is the very embodiment of her pastoral surroundings. It is to her primarily, that many of the nature images, comparing her at one time to a bird, at another to a landscape of sifted snow or, in a well-known passage, to a wave, are directed (23). Here again, as at so many other points of the play, the imagery and certain incidents in the action

combine to fulfil a similar or identical purpose. In the first image of the scene, Florizel calls her "no shepherdess, but Flora Peering in April's front" (IV, iv, 2-3). Soon after, as Mistress of the Feast, she bestows wreaths of flowers upon her guests, suiting as best as she can in each case the flower's season to the guest's age. Upon Camillo and Polixenes, who are old men, she bestows rosemary and rue which "keep Seeming and savour all the winter long"; those of middle age receive flowers of summer; for her lover, she wishes she had flowers of spring - daffodils, violets and primroses.

Florizel's personification of Perdita as "Flora" is indeed more than a piece of momentary, rapturous description. In a very real sense, Perdita is the Flora of The Winter's Tale. Her activity and general characterization resemble those of other flower-maidens in literature, such as Matilda in Dante's Divine Comedy (24). Thus much of the nature imagery associated with her, beginning with Antigonus' description of her as a "blossom", takes on a heightened significance bordering on the symbolic.

The season of the pastoral scenes harmonizes with the setting and the characterization of Perdita, their central figure. Perdita and Florizel are in the spring of their lives, at the time when vegetation reappears. Perdita's and Florizel's sympathies, in fact their habits of thinking, are all with life, as appears crystallized in the conceit, when Perdita wishes she had flowers of spring "to strew him o'er and o'er", and Florizel playfully interjects, "What, like a corse?", to which Perdita

responds:

No, like a bank for love to lie and play on;  
Not like a corse; or if, not to be buried,  
But quick and in mine arms.

(IV, iv, 130-32)

Just as the prevailing atmosphere of the earlier acts had been that of infection, barrenness and death, so the pastoral scenes, and more especially Perdita herself, represent the forces of youth, health, vegetation and life.

Only one image in the scene echoes back directly to the winter of the earlier action, namely when Perdita says to Camillo: "You'd be so lean, that blasts of January Would blow you through and through" (IV, iv, 111-2). In the two other references to winter, that season is not regarded as the one of barrenness and death; the flowers which Perdita bestows upon Polixenes and Camillo "keep Seeming and savour all the winter long"; in the other image, already quoted, the snow and the blasts of winter result in something beautiful (25). But only occasionally, the minds of the characters of the pastoral scenes drift back to memories of winter (26). Their season is the one when vegetation flowers forth at its richest.

That, in fact, is the only way in which one can describe the total impression of the season which reigns during the pastoral scenes. If one allowed oneself to be guided only by direct statements, one would have to decide that the season is late summer or early autumn, the time of sheep-shearing; the year is "Not yet on summer's death nor on the birth Of trembling winter". But the imagery establishes a dominant impression of spring. Autolycus opens his song with:

When daffodils begin to peer,  
With, heigh! the doxy over the dale,  
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year;  
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.  
(IV, iii, 1-4)

To the spectator who has just seen the trial and the storm with Antigonus' death, the song represents an announcement of spring after a terrible winter season. At the beginning of the fourth scene, Perdita is described as "Flora Peering in April's front", and later she says: "Methinks I play as I have seen them do In Whitsun-pastorals". To anticipate a little, when she arrives with Florizel in Sicily, Leontes welcomes them, "As is the spring to th'earth". Thus in a sense, imagery modifies the message of direct statement: the season of the pastoral scenes, and in fact the whole second part of the play, is that of both the renewal and the fruition of vegetation and of life, which occurs during spring and summer time, during, as it were, a combined spring and harvest.

The personification of Perdita as Flora represents only one of a considerable number of mythological images in the long pastoral scene. This in itself is of no special significance, for it is in the tradition of pastoral poetry to be embroidered with manifold allusions to mythology. Among these allusions, two passages stand out. In the first, Florizel justifies his disguise in clothes below his station by citing the example of the gods. The passage is an adaptation from Greene:

the gods themselves,  
| Humbling their deities to love, have taken  
| The shapes of beasts upon them: Jupiter  
| Became a bull, and bellow'd; the green Neptune  
/ A ram, and bleated; and the fire-robed god,  
| Golden Apollo, a poor humble swain,  
/ As I seem now.

(IV, iv, 25-31)

It may well be that Shakespeare wrote this passage without a wider purpose in mind, but it seems significant that the last and at the same time closest precedent Florizel cites refers to Apollo, the sun-god, and the god of the play, who punished Leontes' family with barrenness during his "winter". Perhaps, therefore, this passage, as well as its context, is to be partly understood as a foreshadowing not only of the renewal of life, but more especially of the return and, so to speak the good will, of the sun. For that Apollo ultimately forgives Leontes his disobedience is made clear by the ending.

The other extended mythological passage forms part of Perdita's speech to Florizel on the flowers of spring:

O Proserpina,  
For the flowers now, that frighted thou let'st fall  
From Dis's waggon! daffodils,  
That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,  
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes  
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,  
That die unmarried, ere they can behold  
Bright Phoebus in his strength . . .  
(IV, iv, 116-24)

The whole speech is so striking, that it stands out even among the rich poetic language of the pastoral scene. Its echoes are, I believe, particularly significant. It furnishes a close parallel to the description of Dante's flower-maiden Matilda, part of which runs:

"Beholding thee and this fair place, methinks,  
I call to mind where wandered and how looked  
Proserpine, in that season, when her child  
The mother lost, and she the bloomy spring" . . .  
her eyes she deigned to raise,  
That shot such splendour on me, as I ween  
Ne'er glanced from Cytherea's . . . (27)

The close resemblance of the two passages suggests that

Shakespeare made use of a tradition linking the pictorial representation of the flower-maiden to the myth of Demeter, Proserpina, and her rape by Pluto, god of the nether world. But what is far more relevant to the purpose of this thesis is the fact that this myth represents in allegorical form the eternal rhythm of the changing seasons. That does seem relevant because, as we have seen, the action of the play takes us through a change of seasons. In the myth, Proserpina's return to the underworld each year represents the death of vegetation which comes with winter. But each succeeding year, she is restored for six months to her mother, just as is vegetation to the earth. The nature imagery, at this point of the play corroborated by an extended mythological reminiscence, combined with the general development of the action, suggests symbolic implications of meaning, in the light of which both the play's form and significance can be interpreted. I am not asserting that the Persephone passage supplies a clue to the meaning of the play; but it helps us to see a meaning, and some of the purpose of the play's structure. The significance I have attributed to it is in harmony with the play's season-imagery. An additional, though tiny piece of evidence in support of the argument is the name Hermione, which in some versions of the Persephone myth appears as an extra name of either the mother or daughter (28).

So much for certain symbolical implications in the action and imagery of the pastoral scene. We have yet to consider a particular episode, where the action is arrested for a short while, so as to include the well-known debate between

Perdita and Polixenes on art and nature. It is the only set piece of its kind to be found in Shakespeare's last plays. Its abstract character differentiates it from the remainder of the scene, and arouses curiosity as to its significance, dramatic and otherwise. When Polixenes asks Perdita to explain her aversion to carnations and gillyflowers "which some call Nature's bastards", she answers:

For I have heard it said  
There is an Art which in their piedness shares  
With great creating Nature.

(IV, iv, 86-8)

Polixenes, not satisfied with this reasoning, argues ably that art itself is derived from nature, and moreover of great use to man:

You see, sweet maid, we marry  
A gentler scion to the wildest stock,  
And make conceive a bark of baser kind  
By bud of nobler race: this is an art  
Which does mend Nature, change it rather, but  
The art itself is Nature.

(IV, iv, 92-7)

Though Perdita seems to accept Polixenes' argument - she answers, "So it is" - when urged by Polixenes to take the consequence and plant gillyflowers, she persists in her aversion to them:

No more than were I painted I would wish  
This youth should say 'twere well, and only therefore  
Desire to breed by me.

(IV, iv, 101-3)

Hardly any critic has furnished a satisfactory explanation, in terms of dramatic purpose, of this famous debate. Its significance is usually minimized, and as it appears inessential to its immediate dramatic context, it is sometimes cut in stage productions. It has been argued, that Shakespeare's



reason for including the debate was merely that of engaging in a bit of light satirical play on a contemporary theme, for the literature of the time is full of discussion of the ambiguity of the terms "nature" and "art" and their relationship, and, what is not always recognized, it was largely suggested to Shakespeare by Montaigne (29). At the same time, it has been rightly pointed out, that the debate serves an ironic purpose, for Polixenes' denunciation of his son's courtship to a shepherdess contradicts his theory, so persuasively argued, of the wisdom of marrying "A gentler scion to the wildest stock". But I do not believe that, in a late work by Shakespeare, the purpose of a passage as prominent as the debate on art and nature can be adequately explained by reference to ironical implications or satirical echoes to a common contemporary argument. Its emphasis suggests a wider dramatic function within The Winter's Tale.

If we study the debate more closely, taking into consideration the character of the two speakers, Perdita and Polixenes, and the action of the play as a whole, we can, in fact, discover such a wider dramatic function (30). The reason why Perdita does not follow Polixenes' advice is significant: she will have nothing to do with artificiality. Man can share with great creating Nature by faking her, by making a bastard flower almost look like a natural one. But any art she would be willing to accept cannot operate in this way. If she were "painted", not real, she would not want Florizel's courtship. Polixenes, in her eyes at any rate, means by art artificiality,

a process that mimics nature or, as he says, "mends" nature. His is not the truly creative art which grows out of nature as part of its very manifestation.

The misunderstanding between Perdita and Polixenes arises from the fact that both artificiality and real art can be regarded to derive originally from nature. That is why Perdita answers Polixenes' discourse with, "so it is". She disagrees with him in practice, however, because though she too could defend the intricate relation between art and nature, she means by art something fundamentally opposed to Polixenes' view. The difference of their conception of art, which has been described as essentially that between artificiality and truly creative art, reflects their general difference in outlook and character. Polixenes is a fairly old man, disguised moreover, and about to play the tyrant. He still represents fallen man, and like Leontes, even if his story is much less developed in the play, he has to become reconciled. He thus speaks for purely material human civilization, which, by its very nature, is partly decadent or "artificial". Not so Perdita, who represents the principle of fertility heightened by the robe she wears of which she herself says that "it does change my disposition", reminding us of Cleopatra in her last act, and of the magic mantle of Prospero.

But, as crystallized by the two movements of the play's action, nature itself comprises the two contradictory processes of creation and destruction. Every winter, much of the glory of creation is destroyed, after some time to give way to a new

flowering forth in the spring. Nature produces the jealousy, or inward winter, of Leontes, and the innocence and love of Perdita, even the paradisial reconciliation of Hermione and Leontes in the end. In the field of art, nature is the source both of decadence and of creation. An actor on the stage can mimic the character he portrays and make a fairly convincing job of it. But he will never satisfy fully unless he becomes the person for whom he stands on the stage. Then only will he fulfil himself, and be convincing, real, and creative. Perdita's objection, therefore, is against decadent art, against that aspect of civilization which runs counter to the true creative process of nature, and belongs solely to fallen man. For this kind of art is in the long run clearly self-destructive, and man loses faith in it, just as Polixenes ironically goes against his own counsel.

#### Section v

That the theme of art and its relation to nature is important in The Winter's Tale, and that consequently the debate just discussed is a pivot in its design, is borne out by the development of this theme in the final act. For Hermione's return to life and her restoration to Leontes are represented through the medium of the art of sculpture. After the play is over, one may wonder whether Paulina somehow secretly nursed Hermione, while all others at Leontes' court were convinced that she was dead. But the alert and sensitive spectator is not affected by the episode of her revival in this way, whatever his reflections later. Shakespeare handles the action in such

a way that the immediate impact of Hermione's sudden revival moves the spectator as it does Leontes, Polixenes and Perdita: with the surprise of a miracle. Contrary to his method in Pericles, Shakespeare encourages the audience to believe that Hermione is dead and buried, after Paulina's emotional announcement of her death, and her appearance as a ghostly spirit in the dream of Antigonus. Furthermore, the audience is prepared by the third Gentleman's account in the scene preceding that of the revival for a statue,

a piece many years in doing and now newly performed by that rare Italian master, Julio Romano, who, had he himself eternity and could put breath into his work, would beguile Nature of her custom, so perfectly he is her ape.

(V, ii, 92-6)

Though strictly speaking, the third Gentleman presents no evidence to prove that Julio Romano in fact made such a statue, the audience infers that he did, and moreover, that others have seen it. In this way, Shakespeare guides our response towards the events in the final scene.

The phrases in the third Gentleman's description most relevant to my argument are, "could put breath into his work" and "would beguile Nature of her custom". In themselves, they represent nothing extraordinary as expression but merely reflect conventional eulogies of works of art by men of the caliber of the third Gentleman (31). But in the context of the play they assume a special significance and purpose; they complete, as it were, Perdita's conception of art. For the art attributed to Julio Romano is creative even like Perdita's "great creating Nature"; it can "beguile Nature of her custom". This kind of

art stands in a relation to nature very different from the one Polixenes speaks of. It does not "mend" Nature, but extends it. To see such a process in operation must affect the onlooker like a wonder. And so Paulina speaks of "lawful" magic, when she makes Hermione move. If not an equivalent, a close modern analogy in meaning to "lawful" magic would be "creative imagination". It is the power of the kind of magic which goes with love, or the creative imagination, to "put breath into" the artist's work.

The main functions of the earlier parts of the final act - and more especially of its first scene - are subtly to foreshadow the mood of reverent wonder of the final scene, and to acquaint us with Leontes' changed character which prepares him for restoration and reconciliation. Intimations of some kind of happy issue of the action, with a restoration at least of the "promise" to Sicily and Leontes' family, abound. Significantly enough, the scene opens with a conversation on the desirability that Leontes should remarry, for the sake of his country. As it proceeds, increasingly strongly, memories of Hermione are evoked, until the very possibility of her reappearance in the flesh is momentarily conceived; rejecting the very thought of another wife, Leontes says:

One worse,  
And better used, would make her sainted spirit  
Again possess her corpse, and on this stage  
Where we offenders now, appear soul-vex'd,  
And begin, 'Why to me?'

(V, 1, 56-9) (32)

Paulina answers: "Had she such power, She had just cause", and the conversation continues for a while on the same subject

until Paulina says, in lines strongly anticipating the ending:

Unless another,  
As like Hermione as is her picture,  
Affront this eye,  
(V, i, 73-5)

and again, referring to Leontes' thoughts of remarriage: "That shall be when your first queen's again in breath" (line 84). Soon after, Perdita and Florizel arrive, and Perdita recalls to Leontes most powerfully the memory of Hermione (lines 227-8). Already Paulina's words,

Besides, the gods  
Will have fulfilled their secret purposes;  
For has not the divine Apollo said,  
Is't not the tenor of the oracle,  
That King Leontes shall not have an heir  
Till his lost child be found?  
(V, i, 35-40)

have met with an answer. This speech and her actions in the final scene intimate strongly that Paulina has become Apollo's human instrument. Earlier in the play, she had described herself as Leontes' "physician". Her place in The Winter's Tale is closely akin to that of Cerimon in Pericles, who is Diana's instrument, with the difference of course, that her part is larger and her individuality more fully realized for its own sake. Here, too, Shakespeare develops a trait in The Winter's Tale already present, though in less artistic form, in Pericles.

Occasionally in the final act, an image will echo back strongly to the earlier parts of the play and yet denote a change, as when Leontes welcomes Florizel with the words: "The blessed Gods Purge all infection from our air, whilst you do climate here" (V, i, 168-70) (33). But the ideas most strongly suggested by the language, especially in the first part of V, i,

are those of penitence and holiness. Shakespeare was careful to prepare for the change in Leontes by alluding twice during the fourth act to his grief, solitude, and long years of penitence. When Leontes reappears in the fifth act, not only his sorrow and grief, but also his holiness are stressed. The mood is no longer one of comfortless self-accusation bordering on despair, as at the end of the scene of the trial, but, it seems, the long years of suffering have transformed Leontes' inward character; the very accents of his speech have become quiet and reverent. Cleomenes opens the scene with a significant image:

Sir, you have done enough, and have perform'd  
A saint-like sorrow.

A few speeches later, Leontes refers to Hermione as "a sainted spirit" (V, i, 57). And Dion, when urging Leontes to take pity on the state, and marry again, pleads:

What were more holy  
Than to rejoice the former queen is well?  
What holier than, for royalty's repair,  
For present comfort and for future good,  
To bless the bed of majesty again  
With a sweet fellow to't?

(V, i, 29-34)

As Paulina answers Dion, the gods will only consent to his counsel when the lost child is found. But the repeated references to holiness or holy actions (34) in association with Leontes in this scene are highly significant, because they at one and the same time echo back to the religious language used in Hermione's characterization earlier in the play and anticipate the atmosphere of reverent wonder in the final scene. Earlier, the word which seemed to describe her nature best, and which

she herself had used, was "grace". This same word appears several times near the ending. Referring to Paulina's house, the First Gentleman says in words full of anticipation: "every wink of an eye some new grace will be born" (V, ii, 107-8). At the beginning of the final scene, "grace" occurs twice again; Paulina welcomes the visiting Leontes with the words: "It is a surplus of your grace, which never My life may last to answer" (V, iii, 7-8); and Leontes applies the same word to Hermione, when upon the revelation of the stone he remarks:

or rather, thou art she  
In thy not chiding, for she was tender  
As infancy and grace.  
(V, iii, 25-7)

"Grace", with its religious implication, is obviously a key-word to the meaning of The Winter's Tale. Among the other phrases of religious connotation in the final scene, Paulina's "It is requir'd You do awake your faith" (V, iii, 94-5), and her words upon Hermione's revival from death, "for from him Dear life redeems you", are especially striking. Enough has been said to show that here, just as near the beginning of the play, Shakespeare prepares for an incident not by direct dramatic means, but by repeated suggestion through the poetry and imagery.

### C. Concluding Remarks on Function of Structure and Imagery.

This account of The Winter's Tale has shown that it is a play both dramatically effective and profound in its implications. By a greater simplicity in its overall design, which makes for dramatic concentration, and by reverting in large parts of the play to a more direct and realistic manner



of characterization, which conduces to a more intimate contact between actors and audience, Shakespeare was able to write for the first time a truly successful play in the new mode of tragicomic romance. He reconstructed the plot of Greene's Pandosto in such a way as to make it conform more closely, especially in the ending, to the pattern of the action of Pericles; but he avoided the double change in the protagonist's fortune, greatly humanized the characters, introduced scenes of pure comedy, and above all made his hero the instrument of evil, rather than attributing its effects purely to the whimsical will of fortune or the gods. There is hardly a hint in Pericles of the hero's need for repentance of which so much is made in The Winter's Tale.

As a result, the vision manifested by the play's design is clearer than that in either Cymbeline or Pericles, and it strikes us as more essentially human. Implicit in the nature of the action itself, this vision at moments is more directly suggested by the imagery. As has been shown, some of the images in The Winter's Tale are dramatic not merely within their immediate context, but in the sense of developing or extending the action of the play as a whole. As one studies the play, one becomes more and more impressed by the extent to which action and poetry in it are interfused (35). Sometimes, as especially near the beginning of the play and in the opening scene of Act V, the imagery and related features of the language serve to anticipate the action. At other moments, it defines its basic character, as do the disease-metaphors in the second scene. Sometimes it evokes symbolic implications, as in the Persephone

passage in Act IV.

On the other hand, the action can be spoken of as taking on some of the character of imagery itself. This is true not only in certain scenes, such as that of the storm, but applies to the play as a whole. The action of The Winter's Tale is of such a nature and is so designed that it can be said in large measure to image Leontes' inward development. The play's main characters, except for those of the subplot, are organized around its central figure, Leontes. Though Shakespeare develops the scene of Florizel's courtship of Perdita, and humanizes Hermione to such an extent that she assumes tragic stature in the trial scene, the central interest remains in their relation to Leontes and in the development of his character and fortunes. He is at once the head of a family and the master on whose fate the future of his country depends.

This development is pictured through the eyes of Time, the chorus and presenter of The Winter's Tale. Unlike the great tragedies, but like Pericles and Cymbeline, the action does not concentrate alone on a brief critical episode in the hero's life, but the tragic event is shown as part of a longer process, at the end of which what was lost is restored. In the play, the crucial stages of Leontes' life-history are unfolded. The earlier of these, the stage of innocence and the time of his courtship of Hermione, are recalled near the beginning of the play. We are furthermore told of Leontes' continuing friendship to Polixenes, and of the fruit of his marriage and promise of his country, Mamillius. The action of the play's first movement presents

death-bringing jealousy in the first part corresponds to the background of winter, storm and barrenness; the renewal of his mind and the growth of new life, personified by Perdita and Florizel, are presented in the seasons of spring and summer, when vegetation returns and shepherds celebrate the feast of sheep-shearing. When Perdita returns to Sicily, she brings, as it were, the spring with her, and in that sense she is welcomed by Leontes (36). He himself is prepared for this happening by his inward development during years of solitary grief. Then, too, Apollo, the sun-god, who had brought barrenness upon Sicily during winter, restores the life-giving power of the sun, and Hermione returns to Leontes.

The process of restoration is presented as a development in which art and nature combine - nature in the shape of Perdita who represents "Flora" or "spring", and art in that of Hermione's statue, which so beguiles "Nature of her custom" as to take on life. The inward process of Leontes' fall and restoration to grace, which corresponds to nature's eternal cyclic process of creation, destruction and renewed creation, also suggests the analogy of the artistic process. For the artist, too, experiences the barrenness of a mental winter, but sometimes, if he is truly creative and does not merely try to "mend" nature, he may experience the fruition of his imagination. Then his conception will take on life. The Winter's Tale is so constructed as to suggest these or similar analogies of the changing creative process, which operates in life just as it does in art.

One can of course enjoy The Winter's Tale without drawing

such analogies. But the very fact that they are suggested by it reflects upon the essential character of this play. Seen in this particular light - which is only one way but a fruitful one of looking at them - the characters surrounding Leontes take on a certain symbolic significance in relation to his own inward development. Mamillius' sickness and death have already been referred to as symbolizing the disease and temporary death of that power in Leontes which enabled him to be creative. With Hermione's death, Leontes is deprived of grace. From then on, for a long time, there seems only winter and desolation. But unknown to him, nature has renewed herself. After many years, his new child, Perdita, who represents the same power of renewal or fertility in Leontes as did Mamillius, returns to him. Soon after, Grace is restored. Then there is only reverence, humility, and joy.

This action of inward growth, which passes from winter to a renewed creativeness and grace, is presented in the form of a romantic tragi-comedy. Any large view of man's life which takes account of suffering and wrongdoing on the one hand, and of the possibility of a return to joy with god's help on the other, must adopt a tragi-comic pattern. And romance is the fit medium for such a view and theme, for its realm does not merely include the fantastic and unusual but, when employed to a deeper purpose, the inward life of man. Realistic comedy, on the other hand, by its very nature must concentrate on certain outward manifestations of life, such as humours or manners. In The Winter's Tale, Shakespeare fused the two modes in a <sup>way</sup> ~~manner~~.

CHAPTER 7

THE TEMPEST

Show or Vision?

For this and other reasons mentioned in my introduction, my treatment of the play will be rather brief. I shall only consider some major features of the play's action, concentrating on those which other critics have tended to neglect. My main purpose is to describe how the structure, and particularly its function, of The Tempest is related to that of the other Romances which immediately preceded it in the order of composition. We shall find that the general view of life expressed in the other Romances appears in a new and clear form in The Tempest.

The plot of the action in The Tempest reveals some considerable departures from Shakespeare's usual practice in the other

Chapter 7

Though not a universal favourite, The Tempest has always been one of Shakespeare's most popular plays; far more popular, at any rate, than Pericles or Cymbeline. It has also received ample attention from critics ever since the beginning of the eighteenth century (1). The reason for this is threefold: the play's success in the theatre, the fact that it is generally accepted as the last play written by Shakespeare alone (and therefore as perhaps embodying his final vision of life), and the boldness of its imaginative conception. On the last point critics of such different views about the nature of the faculty of imagination as Dr. Johnson and Coleridge are agreed. The modern Shakespearean critic therefore does not have to rise in defence of the general merits of The Tempest as he may feel obliged to do when writing on The Winter's Tale. For this and other reasons mentioned in my introduction, my own treatment of the play will be rather brief. I shall merely consider some major features of the play's design, concentrating on those which other critics have tended to neglect. My main purpose is to describe how the structure, and particularly its function, of The Tempest is related to that of the other Romances which immediately preceded it in the order of composition. We shall find that the general view of life expressed in the other Romances appears in a new and clear form in The Tempest.

The plan of the action in The Tempest reveals some considerable departures from Shakespeare's method in the other

Romances. At once the most obvious and astonishing of these is the close observance of the Unities, contrary to Shakespeare's usual practice, and especially striking in a play immediately following upon The Winter's Tale. All the action of The Tempest takes place on or near an imaginary island somewhere between Italy and Tunis. Not merely is the unity of time observed, but Shakespeare goes out of his way to indicate the progress of time; twice during the final scene we are told that three hours have passed, hardly more than are required to produce the play. One can dismiss, I think, the contention sometimes held that the main reason for this observance of the unities of time and place was Shakespeare's desire to disprove certain academic critics and "Jonsonians" of his day who had cast doubt on his ability to write a tightly constructed play according to classical model. Instead of being superimposed, the observance of the unities is in keeping with the nature of the play's action. It is only one facet of the clarity and simplicity of the structure of The Tempest, and its real justification lies in the fact that it helps to embody the play's vision. Since the broad pattern followed by the action has often been described before, I shall here content myself with a brief outline.

After the dramatic opening of the storm, the long second scene serves a double purpose: that of introducing some of the main characters, namely, Prospero, Miranda, Ariel, Caliban, and, near the end, Ferdinand; and that of supplying a rather large body of antecedent action essential to the reader's understanding. Near the close of this scene the action proper is resumed when

Ferdinand encounters Miranda. During the next three acts the action follows a circular pattern, moving around among three groups of characters: first to Alonso and his retinue; from them to Caliban, who finds confederates in Stephano and Trinculo; then on to Ferdinand, Miranda, and Prospero; a second scene of the subplot follows; the action returns again to Alonso and his courtiers, and so on. As the modern spectator watches the play or hears it on the Third Programme, he is almost inevitably reminded, by this circular pattern, of the technique of the film, where the camera often shifts in a similar way. Gradually Alonso, Caliban and their companions move towards the meeting-place preordained for them by Prospero. Each of these actions works up to a minor climax or crisis: the punishment of Alonso and his courtiers in III, iii, the wedding masque after Ferdinand's trial in IV, i, and, in the same scene, the comic punishment of Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo. But the play's real climax occurs in the final act where all the groups meet, punishment ceases, and parents, children and courtiers become reconciled.

Also true to the classical manner is Shakespeare's large use of parallelism and contrast both in the characters and in the situations of The Tempest. This particular aspect is discussed thoroughly in an article by A. H. Gilbert (2), and as it must be clear to most readers of The Tempest, I shall merely list some of Gilbert's main points: the frequent appearance of types of character in groups of two (there are two magicians, Prospero and Sycorax, two conspirators, two



clowns, two lords, two principal goddesses in the masque, above all two daemonic servants of Prospero); two conspiracies in the play (that of Stephano, Caliban and Trinculo against Prospero, and that of Antonio and Sebastian against Alonso), which moreover receive similar treatment (Stephano like Sebastian wants to be king, and Caliban expects freedom, just as Antonio expects to be freed from tribute to Naples); Caliban and Ferdinand are sharply contrasted, especially in their attitude to hard physical service, and in their behaviour towards Miranda (each is given a long speech on the island's music); lastly, Caliban and Miranda are contrasted, for Prospero teaches both but with opposite results. There will be occasion further on in the discussion to go more thoroughly into the nature and purpose of some of these juxtapositions; at present they will serve as a further illustration of the play's classical construction. ✓

Shakespeare was able to follow a classical pattern in the play's construction largely because of the character of its central figure, an old man endowed with the gifts of magic. The conception of his character is so intimately involved with the play's structure that I shall dwell on it at some length. Prospero has no counterpart in Shakespeare's other romances. He reminds us rather of the Duke in Measure for Measure. Both direct an elaborate intrigue for a benevolent purpose; but Prospero's function in The Tempest is different and even more important. No character in Pericles, Cymbeline, or The Winter's Tale creates and directs the action in the sense in which

Prospero does. Cerimon and Paulina, who exercise the gift of "lawful" magic (WT, V, iii, 105), anticipate Prospero somewhat in conception, but both are relatively minor figures.

Seen in the light of the preceding plays, Shakespeare in The Tempest endows Prospero with the power of those divine forces which in Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale from time to time interfere in human affairs. The supernatural powers in these plays seem at first destructive but their main victims are raised up high in the end. In a similar way, Prospero punishes, forgives and restores to joy his former enemies. The magician in The Tempest clearly takes the place of the divine powers in the other Romances. The supernatural element, however, reappears in a different shape, in the form of Caliban, a demi-devil; of Ariel, a spirit or daemon; of minor spirits; and of the pagan goddesses who at Prospero's bidding enact the Wedding Masque. All are subject to Prospero's art. Of these the characters of the Masque seem merely to be conjured up by magic; Prospero spoke of them as "some vanity of my art" (IV, i, 41). Caliban and Ariel are endowed with a greater degree of reality.

Prospero is therefore a figure thoroughly unlike the leading characters of the earlier plays. Leontes commits wrong, is humbled, and asks for pardon; Prospero first punishes and then forgives. Thus even if, as has been suggested, The Tempest was originally conceived as a play in two sections, somewhat like The Winter's Tale, what is now the second scene in The Tempest providing the core of the material for the first part,

it would have been a play considerably different from The Winter's Tale. But there is yet a stronger reason for supposing that Shakespeare when laying the plans for The Tempest never so much as thought of a structure analogous to that of The Winter's Tale. For the protagonist of his new play is an older man who, in the course of the action, executes his life's final mission. At the end of their respective plays, Pericles, Leontes and even Cymbeline (who shows some of the senility of old age) all look forward to years of happy and peaceful government in a united world. Not so Prospero, who, when he is assured of the union of his house with that of Naples, refers only to his retirement:

and so to Naples,  
Where I have hope to see the nuptial  
Of these our dear-belov'd solemnized;  
And thence retire me to my Milan, where  
Every third thought shall be my grave.  
(V, 1, 306-11)

Like the protagonists of the other Romances, Prospero sees his daughter married to a worthy son-in-law; but unlike them, he also foresees his own life's end.

His character is presented first in the play's second scene. On the extensive narration of the antecedent action in this scene critics have heaped much praise and much blame. It is less often realized that, as a dramatic device, it represents nothing unusual in Renaissance drama. Sixty years before The Tempest, Giraldi Cinthio, whom we have heard of before in these pages, advocated, as well as applied, a theory of dramatic construction in which the idea of extensive narration of antecedent action had a large part (3). Giraldi was only one of many Renaissance dramatists who experimented with plots on an

epic scale, and it was natural for him, especially since he was also strongly influenced by classical criticism, to take over this particular device from epic itself. As to Shakespeare, we need only recall the final scene in The Comedy of Errors and Belarius' long account in Cymbeline to be aware that the second scene in The Tempest does not represent in terms of construction a new departure in Shakespeare. Whether one considers it wholly satisfactory or not, everyone is agreed that artistically the scene in The Tempest is superior to those in the earlier plays.

That the function of the second scene is to supply the antecedent action and at the same time to introduce a number of the play's main characters is obvious. What seems to have been noticed less is that it also establishes the play's dominant perspective. Only Prospero could narrate the antecedent action, and, as it involves him more deeply than any other character, the manner in which he relates it is highly significant. Not only is it essential that he should inform Miranda of their lives' history, but it is natural that, at the very moment when he has begun to execute his master-plan of punishment and reconciliation, memories of his main experiences - the ungrateful treatment on the part of his brother, Gonzago's act of kindness, his first encounter with Ariel and Caliban - should crowd vividly upon his consciousness.

Shakespeare so plans the action that the reader sees the past mainly through Prospero's eyes. Seen in this perspective, the events of the present, of the action proper, take on a special significance which no other character in the

action can grasp. Thus, as the play advances, Prospero's reactions are again and again contrasted with those of other characters: his view of the storm is juxtaposed with Miranda's; his treatment of Ferdinand to her seems highly unjust, and so on. Prospero's view of the events remains the dominant one, however emotionally the play's other characters at times respond to them. Moreover, Shakespeare is careful to indicate certain traits of the character of the man who provides this view. Not merely is it the view of a benevolent intriguing magician, but markedly it is that of an old man. The lovers of The Tempest, as Dover Wilson has pointed out, are mainly presented through his eyes:

In Romeo and Juliet, the play, which is full of old people, we watch them, the Capulets and the Montagues, through the eyes of the young. In The Tempest, we contemplate the young through an elder's eyes, contemplate them pityingly ('Poor worm, thou art infected' or 'This new to thee!'), lovingly, and with anxiety. (4)

What applies to the lovers applies, to a high degree, to the play's other important characters. In The Winter's Tale the action is presented objectively, in the present, rapidly flowing on over a large stretch of time, during which some men die, others are born, and others again renew themselves. In The Tempest, we are encouraged, with Prospero and, later on, with his enemies, when under the spell of rebuking conscience, to wander back into the past. And past and present are given meaning through Prospero's action in accordance with divine providence.

Not to take account of Prospero's mental processes is, I think, to misunderstand the guiding principle of the play's structure. In the second scene Prospero does not merely narrate

the past: he relives it. Emotions are by him recollected in anything but tranquillity. But, at the end, he is a different man, his anger having given way to quietude, the spirit of consolation -

There, sir, stop,  
Let us not burthen our remembrance with  
A heaviness that's gone -  
(V, i, 198-200)

and forgiveness. Critics have dwelt much on the problem of Prospero's angry moods, for several times in the play he seems unnecessarily harsh, not merely with his enemies, but with the innocent Ferdinand, with Ariel (5) and with his own daughter. This irascibility of Prospero's seems to subside only in the final act. Some have been content with attributing these outbursts mainly to his unsympathetic "schoolmasterish" character (6); others have tried to justify him by pointing out his anxiety that his careful plan should develop without obstacle; and Dover Wilson has expounded the thesis that Prospero is a tyrant until the beginning of Act V, where he is suddenly converted to mercy by Ariel (7).

Dover Wilson's explanation can be dismissed at once. From the very beginning of the action proper Prospero not merely planned to punish but also to forgive; for what other reason should he bring Ferdinand and Miranda together? Yet Prospero is willing to become reconciled only after the punishment and humiliation of his enemies: they must be worthy of the happy future he has in store for them. Again and again in the play, the idea of a happy misfortune, a blessed wrong, or suffering for the sake of joy is given expression.

Referring to Ferdinand immediately after his encounter with Miranda, Prospero remarks:

But this swift business  
I must uneasy make, lest too light winning  
Make the prize light.  
(I, ii, 449-51)

These words recall those of Jupiter to Posthumus' parents in Cymbeline (8). When yielding Miranda to Ferdinand, shortly before the wedding-masque, Prospero explains his action:

If I have too austerely punish'd you,  
Your compensation makes amends.  
(IV, i, 1-2) (9)

As Gonzago suggests in the final scene, the purpose of the sufferings of all is that "all of us [should have found] ourselves When no man was his own" (V, i, 212-3). The paradoxical idea of a blessed wrong is manifested by the nature and structure of the action in The Tempest, as by those of the other Romances. It is only to be expected that Prospero in the act of punishing should appear less merciful or sympathetic than in the act of reconciliation.

Nevertheless, Dover Wilson is right when he refers to a marked change of character in Prospero between the beginning and the end of the play, to which Ariel's expression of sympathy for his victims, early in the final act, contributes. The explanation for this is, I believe, that Shakespeare made Prospero partly re-enact, in the course of the three hours of the action proper, the basic change in his mind, from the spirit of vengeance to that of "virtue", which he had slowly undergone since his expulsion from Milan. This must have been a long and painful inward battle; as the action unfolds itself, Prospero

is shown, though of course only to a degree, to fight this battle over again. Battles of this kind cannot be won once for all; they involve, at least, many rear-guard actions. Like Posthumus in Cymbeline, Prospero is ready for reconciliation and the exercise of forgiveness towards his wrongdoers only when he has overcome his anger. But Prospero's anger is that of an old man, as he himself, after his outburst upon recalling Caliban's plot, ("Never till this day Saw I him touch'd with anger so distemper'd"), explains:

Sir, 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.

(IV, i, 158-63)

Ferdinand and Miranda answer together: "We wish you peace." This sense of "peace", after vexation, is reflected in Prospero's words and manner in the final act. Thus even while preparing his enemies for reconciliation, Prospero himself undergoes a similar process.

The Tempest, which opens with a storm, ends with the promise of "calm seas" (V, i, 314). Just as in King Lear and in The Winter's Tale, the movement from storm to peace in the outward action reflects a similar development in the minds of men. Alonso and his followers undergo a terrible tempest of the mind, when the forces of conscience unleash themselves upon them; for a time the effect is similar to that in King Lear: utter distraction (10). At the same time, Prospero undergoes a kind of inward tempest. The sense of ingratitude



which he suffered at the hands of his brother and king Alonso, and, later on, of Caliban whom he had failed to civilize, crowds once more upon Prospero's mind and finds expression in his anger. So liable is he to extreme irritation that at the one moment in the action which indicates the limitations of his power, when he temporarily forgets Caliban's conspiracy, Ariel explains:

When I presented Ceres,  
I thought to have told thee of it, but I fear'd  
Lest I might anger thee.

(IV, 1, 167-9)

How much Prospero's mind has been perturbed by the wrong done to him, he recalls once more, in the famous lines which answer Ariel's pleading that he put an end to the severity of his punishment:

Though with their high wrongs I am struck to the 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.

(V, 1, 25-30)

The inward action of The Tempest, which corresponds to the outward movement from storm to calm seas, is similar to that of Cymbeline: the movement of a mind from the spirit of vengeance to that of virtue and forgiveness. The classical economy and tightness of the play's construction and the conception of its central character, Prospero, who combines some of the qualities of Posthumus and Belarius, enables Shakespeare to express this action more clearly in the later play.

Adopting this classical structure and concentrating on the final phase of the action only, Shakespeare had to face

the problem of how to make the evil forces with which his protagonist has to become reconciled, sufficiently real. Unlike Leontes' injustice towards Hermione, or the Queen's scheming against Imogen and Posthumus, Antonio's plot against Prospero had to be presented indirectly, through Prospero's recollection. Partly for the sake of endowing the evil characters with a greater reality, Shakespeare added the two intrigues of Antonio and Sebastian against Alonso, and Caliban and his companions against Prospero. Sebastian hopes to get the crown of Italy, Stephano to become king of the island. Antonio hopes to be freed from the duty to pay tribute to Naples; Caliban likewise expects freedom, though his servile behaviour would not suggest that (11). But the real significance of these intrigues, more especially that of Antonio and Sebastian, is that they parallel the events which caused Prospero's exile, and which he is about to answer. Antonio can be said to re-enact his past evil deed. Thus, to a degree, the past and present are combined not only in the characterization of Prospero, but also in that of his enemies. One should further note that in Sebastian and Antonio evil assumes a particularly sinister form. At the end they show no clear sign of repentance. Even Prospero's magic power, which "pinches" their conscience, is not equipped to cure their form of evil (12).

But Shakespeare uses Antonio and Sebastian for a still further purpose. Though unrepentant, they do not return to Italy unchanged. Their minds work rather like Iachimo's, always intent on selfish profit (13). But their response to the strange

happenings on the island is not the same at the beginning as at the end. Their scoffing comments at the opening of the second scene, when Adrian and Gonzago refer to the miracle of their escape from the waves, and<sup>to</sup> the strangeness of the island, are contrasted with Sebastian's exclamation upon beholding Ferdinand and Miranda, in the final scene: "A most high miracle!" (V, i, 177). The impact of the miraculous upon reality forms one of the central themes of The Tempest, and Sebastian is the one who, in this respect, undergoes the greatest transformation. At the beginning of the second act he can, like Iachimo in Cymbeline, only speak of a wager (II, i, 33), and he ridicules Gonzago's ideal commonwealth. His comment upon Gonzago's remark that his garments are strangely fresh, "which is indeed almost beyond credit", is derogatory (II, i, 60). But he is to learn better. This must have frequently been the experience of the sceptical man of the Renaissance, when he heard tales of strange continents and creatures he had never seen. In Shakespeare's day, romance was much closer to reality than it is in ours. And The Tempest is Shakespeare's final testimony of a view of life which directs us to a core of reality behind romance, and which reveals to us that miracle has a place in life. In the play, it is Gonzago who expresses this view again and again. Even at the sight of the banquet, which terrifies Alonso, he is unafraid. He reassures his king:

Faith, sir, you need not fear. When we were boys,  
Who would believe that there were mountaineers  
Dew-lapp'd like bulls, whose throats had hanging at 'em  
Wallets of flesh? or that there were such men  
Whose heads stood in their breasts? which now we find  
Each putter-out of five for one will bring us  
Good warrant of.

(III, iii, 43-9)

most developed of the spectacular incidents in this play. Much further stage-business is involved in the farcical scenes devoted to Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban. This subplot, as we noticed, is in several ways carefully linked to the other actions. Nevertheless it is, I think, in some measure unfortunate. For, unlike the scenes of Autolycus, which are skilfully intermingled with the romantic plot in the pastoral section of The Winter's Tale, and which endow the whole with vigour, the scenes of Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano, with their crude fun, tend to become the chief source of appeal in The Tempest for the audience in the theatre and to distract from the play's core of thought. This is all the more likely to happen because the main characters of The Tempest, notably Ferdinand and Miranda, unlike those of The Winter's Tale, lack vitality, which is probably partly accounted for by the former play's different scheme of structure. Ferdinand and Miranda, as I have shown, are in large measure presented indirectly and almost as a necessary consequence, less vitally than are Perdita and Florizel. Shakespeare seems to have been less successful in The Tempest than in The Winter's Tale in overcoming one of the main difficulties which confront the playwright who dramatizes romance: the inherent stiffness, the unlikeliness, of most of its characters. By developing the characters of the subplot as much as he did, Shakespeare succeeded in giving the play liveliness on the stage, but this entailed a sacrifice of emphasis upon the play's underlying meaning. It is not difficult to see what aspects of the play furnished Dryden and Shadwell with the inspiration for their entirely farcical

version of The Tempest (14), more like a "music-hall show" than a play. To be sure, the spectator whose ears are attuned to poetry will not be left in any doubt for long that, far from being merely a show that is half romance and half farce, The Tempest is informed by a body of thought that points to a deeper meaning. Its structure provides the shape for Shakespeare's final vision of life, a vision at once serious and comic.

XX

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Now I will believe  
That there are unicorns.  
(Tempest, III, iii, 20-1)

Chapter 8

The argument of this thesis has been that the structure and, to a less marked degree, the imagery of Shakespeare's romances show certain characteristics peculiar to them alone in the Shakespearean canon and almost unique in the English drama of Shakespeare's time; and that these distinct qualities find their explanation largely in the peculiar vision of life these plays contain, a vision different from, but as profound as, that in Shakespeare's other mature plays. At first it was shown that the structure of the plot, or outward structure, of three of the Romances, Pericles, Cymbeline, and The Winter's Tale, reveals certain features common to them all but not found in Shakespeare's earlier work. The action of each involves events over a period of many years. Each of them has a double-threaded plot of two generations who after long separation are reunited near the end; in each, divine powers intervene at crucial moments in the action; and each introduces near the middle of the play a sudden and startling change in time or in place which qualifies our perspective of the entire action. No such change occurs in The Tempest where the unities of time and place are strictly observed. But the nature of the action is nevertheless closely similar. In The Tempest too, Alonso, a royal father, is separated, even if only for a few hours, from his child Ferdinand; Alonso believes him lost but is reunited with him in the end. The Tempest is also a play of two generations, in which the central figure, Prospero, is a father. Its surface action concludes a chain of events which began with

of the play's plot and significance are instead introduced by the device of extended reminiscence, in Cymbeline most conspicuously in the Gentleman's account in the opening scene and in Belarius' monologues, and in The Tempest in Prospero's narrative to Miranda. While all the wrongs in Pericles and The Winter's Tale are thus physically enacted on the stage, some grave wrongs in Cymbeline and The Tempest are presented merely by recollection; and in the two latter plays, the sense of injustice festering in the mind of the victim is stronger. In The Tempest and Cymbeline, too, the arrangement of the characters differs strikingly from that in the other two Romances. In these plays, the final reunion includes only one woman, a daughter. They contain no Thaisa or Hermione, but include instead a sinister stepmother or witch, who is either the open or hidden enemy of the protagonist. She is the mother of a clownish but vicious son who has designs on the chastity of the heroine. The roles of the Queen and Cloten in Cymbeline correspond roughly to those of Sycorax (never present on the stage but vividly recollected) and Caliban in The Tempest. This parallelism in the two plays extends even further: for the general mental attitude encountered in Antonio and Sebastian closely resembles that of Iachimo, with the difference that, to serve their ends, Antonio and Sebastian are prepared to murder their king and brother, Iachimo merely to pervert the honour of a princess. All three reveal the kind of materialistic mind that can only scoff at the idea of miracle; but all three learn that miracles are possible. Having light-heartedly



the basic structural pattern of Pericles, in The Tempest that of Cymbeline. In each case the second play is unquestionably superior as a work of dramatic art. How Shakespeare avoided some of the most obvious structural weaknesses of Pericles in The Winter's Tale has been described in the opening pages to Chapter 5. The general effect of The Winter's Tale is less episodic, more concentrated, than that of Pericles. In suspense The Winter's Tale is superior. Its use of contrast is at once more economical and dramatically more effective. The climax in it is reserved until the final scene. And the pastoral scenes, where comic mood is heightened by the figures of Autolycus and the Clown, serve to make Perdita a far more attractive character than is Marina, who defends her chastity in the half-sinister, half-grotesque scenes in the brothel.

In The Tempest, likewise, Shakespeare evidently sought to avoid some of the basic mistakes he had made in Cymbeline. Cymbeline, as has been shown, is constructed on the pattern of Heliiodorian romance. But though Shakespeare simplified this pattern and changed the all-important character of his heroine, the result is nevertheless a play smothered by its very complexity. This defect of the play is most evident in the final scene, which, though constructed with immense ingenuity, falls flat on the stage because it is simply not possible for the audience to follow, until all the threads have been finally unravelled, the long and complex series of swift developments. The action, moreover, especially if we include that part which is recollected by several characters, is too vast to be

effective as drama. Consequently, the function of some of the major characters does not appear clearly. In The Tempest Shakespeare devised a much simpler and more tightly unified structure, in which the action is clear from beginning to end.

But it is not only from the strictly dramatic point of view that the structures of The Winter's Tale and The Tempest represent a great improvement upon those of the two earlier plays; they also fulfil more adequately the deeper function of giving shape to Shakespeare's final vision of life. In The Winter's Tale and The Tempest this vision receives at once clearer and more effective expression. And one is justified in speaking of a vision in the final plays, for, though not identical, its general nature is closely similar in them all.

In Pericles this vision does not appear very clearly, whether because Shakespeare still lacked a firm grasp of it, or because a large part of the play is not by Shakespeare. But it can be recognized sufficiently on closer reading of the play to allow description in general terms. This vision directs us beyond tragedy. A good man, after patiently enduring a series of misfortunes which leave him for a time in a state of inward darkness and passive despair, is finally uplifted to joy. His misfortunes for a long time seem to be the work of whimsical gods to whom men are merely playthings, but near the end are revealed to be part of the design of Providence. Marina, who, as his daughter, represents the hope of renewal in man and nature, is restored to Pericles; and shortly after, the action of Grace appears more directly in the form of the vision of

Diana. Some creative principle in the world, Gower invites us to infer, finally enables man to look beyond tragedy. Why he must first endure a long period of suffering is not explained; but he is taught by it humility, sympathy and wisdom which prepare him for his final joy. This vision of life, it was shown, is akin to that of the Book of Tobit and the Book of Job and also resembles that of some non-cyclical miracle plays, which is of special interest since the structure of Pericles seems to have been largely inspired by them. But there are many signs that Shakespeare did not free himself sufficiently from the pattern of his sources: patches of alien structure interfere with the clear presentation of his peculiar vision.

In his next experiment with tragi-comic romance, Shakespeare devised a far more complex structure to convey more clearly a vision of similar nature. This time his model was not the simple one of the Saint's play but the highly elaborate one of the Heliodian romance of fortune. He made, however, some important adjustments in the interest both of his vision and of dramatic effectiveness. Some of the imagery, by virtue of its subject matter and general nature, reinforces the complex pattern as well as the purpose of the action, and thus illuminates the function of the play's structure. Life is viewed from a greater distance than in the Tragedies. The view in this play comprehends both parents and children, error and crime as well as truth and forgiveness, both corruption and regeneration.

In Cymbeline, tragi-comic romance provides the basic

structure for the dramatization of inward processes and inward truths. Truth and inward value are in time revealed by Providence. But, as in Pericles, revelation and reunion take place only after a long period of suffering and testing. This essentially inward process is traced most fully in Posthumus. After his unjust accusation and cruel treatment of Imogen, following his successful deception by Iachimo, he goes through a painful period of repentance and self-accusation which prepares him inwardly for his reunion with Imogen and his forgiveness of Iachimo. As in Pericles, Providence in Cymbeline acts partly by direct revelation, and partly through man. Marina's almost miraculous defence of her chastity in the brothel of Mitylene corresponds in this play to the saving valour of Posthumus, Belarius and the two royal princes, who "work" miracles, ensuring a British victory even after the field seemed irrecoverably lost. Nature performs an important part in this process of regeneration. This theme, anticipated by a number of images, is developed in the action of Belarius and the two royal sons. It is Guiderius, the royal son of true princely nature fostered in the pure surroundings of nature, who slays Cloten, the unworthy prince raised at a corrupt court by a false Queen, and whose return to the court ensures honourable succession for Britain's royal house. However, the design of Cymbeline did not prove an entirely happy one to convey this vision clearly. In the subtlety and overcomplexity of this work, one is in danger of losing sight of the vision.

In The Winter's Tale the structure is at once simpler

and fulfils its ultimate purpose better: the vision reveals itself with greater clarity and emphasis. Imagery in this play is even more closely integrated with structure, sometimes anticipating the action, as in the opening scene and in the first scene of Act V, sometimes defining its essential character, as in the important second scene, sometimes pointing to symbolic implications, as in Perdita's recollection of the story of Persephone and in the repeated identification of Hermione with Grace. At the same time, we noticed that the action takes over some of the functions more usually performed by imagery. The importance of the storm, for instance, cannot be defined in terms merely of an outward happening. To a large extent, the action can be said to image Leontes' inward development.

The main stages of Leontes' inward development are presented at once more clearly and more dramatically than those of Pericles. This Shakespeare achieves mainly by placing the power of evil within the protagonist. In Pericles, the hero can in no sense be spoken of as responsible for his misfortunes. In Cymbeline, Posthumus is partly responsible and thus has to atone for his guilt (2). In The Winter's Tale, Leontes' sudden, insane jealousy and his irreverent dismissal of the oracle are the direct causes of Apollo's anger, who sends punishment upon him in the form of Mamillius' death and Hermione's apparent death. But only some of the most dramatic moments of this inward development are revealed to us by direct dramatic means. His innocence during childhood and his fall are recalled early in the second scene in a passage of half-frivolous dialogue, while,

after his immediate repentance following Hermione's death, he is absent from the stage until he returns again after fifteen years, at the beginning of Act V, now transformed into a saint-like figure, though still very conscious of his crime.

That the children in the play stand for the power and hope of renewal of life is also made clearer in The Winter's Tale than in the two preceding plays. The dominant impression of the first part of the play is that of disease, corruption, irreverence and death: that of the second part is of new growth, purity, reverence and return to life. This process is enacted annually by nature in the form of changing seasons. The Winter's Tale moves from the season of winter to the season of spring-summer. The nature-symbolism of the play appears most strikingly when Antigonus places the baby Perdita upon the shore of Bohemia and addresses her as a "blossom". Later, in the pastoral scenes, she becomes "Flora". But while nature enacts every spring the renewal of life before our eyes, the artist can, with the help of his creative power, effect an even greater miracle giving new life to the dead, or even to stone. This process is fundamentally different from the one Polixenes defends in his debate with Perdita on art and nature, a view which Perdita rejects indignantly as a "fake". Shakespeare in The Winter's Tale set forth his vision of the possibility, after an act of error or sin with tragic consequences, of miraculous inward renewal with the help of grace, having recourse to two suggestive analogies: the creative process of nature and that of the artist's imagination. And he did so in a manner dramatically effective.

The structure of The Tempest embodies a vision similar in kind to that in the other Romances, though it shows some important variations. This play, too, is essentially concerned with inward growth, with the relation between fathers and children, and with the place of miracle in life. Again, the process of growth is revealed as one which after many years of misfortune and suffering on the part of a good man concludes in peace and joy. These ideas receive their clearest statement in The Tempest, though that work may be regarded as dramatically less effective than The Winter's Tale.

Only the final stage of the story of The Tempest is presented in the surface action. Yet the earlier events as well as the anguish they caused are not merely recalled: they are partly re-enacted in the mind of Prospero. Prospero is an enigmatic figure. He executes part of the designs of Providence, reminding us in some of his actions of the gods in the other Romances. But he is nevertheless very human, not without weakness. The most important part of the action is presented through his eyes. Miranda and Ferdinand especially are seen as he sees them. The central symbol is provided by the storm, which dominates most of the play, not only the opening scene. Prospero, endowed as he is with magic gifts, conjures up in his enemies the storm of guilty conscience until they lie as distraught as Lear in the mad scenes. At the same time, he himself has to battle against the waves in his mind roused by the storm of his resurgent anger at the recollection of the injustices he has suffered. But finally, like Posthumus, he conquers his wrath.

Moved by Ariel and by his own "virtue", he ceases with punishment. The end is peace and the promise of "auspicious gales".

Thus, in this play, both the Italian party and Prospero undergo a deep searching of the soul. Antonio and Sebastian, essentially hard-headed though they remain, learn that miracles are possible; and Prospero completes a task which he has prepared for many years and which finally overcomes the rancour in him, when, together with his former enemies, he watches the love of Miranda and Ferdinand. Many characters in this play prosper in the end. (We recall how Pericles is restored to prosperity in the play that bears his name.) But Prospero prospers in a peculiar sense: not so much outwardly, though he has achieved his material purpose and regained his dukedom, as inwardly, which he intimates most clearly in the play's final scene:

And thence retire me to my Milan, where  
Every third thought shall be my grave.

To him, life is only a short interlude. Now that he has practised the maxim, "the rarer action is In virtue than in vengeance", and is assured that his child will be Milan's new duchess, his task has been fulfilled, and he can calmly and contentedly await life's end. If Shakespeare is Prospero, as has so often been suggested, he returned to Stratford after writing The Tempest in a serene state of mind. With consummate art, he had set forth his final vision of life, a vision which not only reflects on noble action, but which reveals "that there are unicorns".



## APPENDICES

Though the plays of both Giraldi and Guarini were influential in their time, they do not even approximate the quality of Beaumont and Fletcher's best works, not to speak of Shakespeare's. Nor can they be counted among the clearest or most far-sighted of dramatic theorists of their age. And the logic of Giraldi's writings, at any rate, is in many respects deficient. For these and other reasons the argument advanced

APPENDIX A

Giraldi and Guarini on Tragi-Comedy.

It is perhaps a matter of interest that the differences in structure between Shakespeare's last plays and those of Beaumont and Fletcher, which have been defined in Chapter 2, can be said to have a history. They are, at all events, partly anticipated in the critical defences of tragi-comedy or the *tragedia di lieto fin* by two of the leading Italian dramatists of the Renaissance, Giraldi Cinthio and Guarini. Their discussion throws considerable light on dramatic practice in the Renaissance, not only in Italy, but also in France and England. This debate can hardly have gone unnoticed in Elizabethan England, and may incidentally help to explain why the editors of Shakespeare's first Folio listed Cymbeline as a tragedy (1). The main purpose of the critical writings of Giraldi and Guarini was to defend their own practice against the onslaught of conservative critics. They regarded themselves as innovators working for a good cause, though they were reluctant to depart from the precepts of Aristotle and his Italian commentators.

Though the plays of both Giraldi and Guarini were influential in their time, they do not even approximate to the quality of Beaumont and Fletcher's best works, not to speak of Shakespeare's. Nor can they be counted among the clearest or most far-sighted of dramatic theorists of their era. And the logic of Giraldi's writings, at any rate, is in many matters deficient. For these and other reasons the argument advanced

in the following pages does not claim to be absolute. Most of the points made will be open to some query. But a fair amount of support can be advanced for the view, which seems to me of some significance, that with regard to structure understood in the narrow, purely outward sense, the critical views and practice of Giraldi anticipate Shakespeare's practice in his last plays, while those of Guarini anticipate that of Beaumont and Fletcher.

That Beaumont and Fletcher were influenced by Guarini has for some time been a recognized fact. The definition of tragi-comedy in the well-known address "To the Reader" prefacing Fletcher's The Faithful Shepherdess directly echoes Guarini (2). On the other hand, no specific evidence of a direct influence of Guarini upon Shakespeare has been pointed out, though in all probability he was acquainted with as popular a play as his Pastor Fido (3). We do know for certain, however, that Shakespeare was acquainted with Giraldi Cinthio's collection of novelles, the Ecatommiti, from which he drew the inspiration for the plots of Othello and Measure for Measure (4). Whether he also knew either his plays or his writings on tragi-comedy is, grantedly, a matter of doubt. What matters for our purpose is that Giraldi's views on and experiments in dramatic structure in some respects anticipate that practised in his last plays by his much greater successor.

A Renaissance defence of tragi-comedy usually began with abundant reference to classical precedent, with special stress on Plautus' Amphitrio, several plays by Euripides, Rinthion's

satyr plays, and a passage in Aristotle's Poetics; and, in case the classical references should not be regarded as adequate, it continued with some assertion of the freedom of the modern playwright to develop a form of drama greater than the extremes of "tragedy" and "comedy". For our purpose, the most interesting parts of these discussions are their comments on a passage in the Poetics:

In the second rank comes the kind of tragedy which some place first. Like the Odyssey, it has a double thread of plot, and also an opposite catastrophe for the good and for the bad. It is accounted the best because of the weakness of the spectators; for the poet is guided in what he writes by the wishes of his audience. The pleasure, however, thence derived is not the true tragic pleasure. It is proper rather to Comedy, where those who, in the piece, are the deadliest enemies - like Orestes and Aegistus - quit the stage as friends at the close, and no one slays or is slain. (5)

What of course troubles the Italian critics most in this passage is that Aristotle places the tragedy of happy ending in the second rank. Giraldi Cinthio overcomes this difficulty partly by pointing to the praiseworthy double structure in the comedies of Terence, who, it is clearly implied though not stated, might have made Aristotle change his mind. From the structure of Terence's comedies, Giraldi deduces, though not altogether logically:

And I believe that if this should be well imitated in tragedy, and the knot so arranged that its solution will not bring confusion, double structure in Tragedy will not be less pleasing (always remembering the reverence due to Aristotle) than it is in Comedy. If there have been those who have favoured this method and held an opinion unlike that of Aristotle, they are not, I think, to be blamed, especially if the tragedy has a happy end, for this kind of end is much like that of comedy . . . (6)

Later on in the same treatise, he writes:

The relevance of Giraldi's handling of the antecedent action, the use he made of what he termed "l'antefatto della favola", in his tragi-comedies to Shakespeare's practice in some of his last plays is less clear. We have noted that one of the most conspicuous and peculiar features of both Cymbeline and The Tempest is the long narrative passages in which important events essential to our understanding of the plot, but previous in time to the opening of the play, are related. However, antecedent action assumes an important role also in some of Beaumont and Fletcher's tragi-comedies, notably in A King and No King. There, however, unlike in Cymbeline and The Tempest, it is delayed until the last possible moment of the play, and then introduced in such manner as to provide at once surprise and a resolution of the complex and seemingly hopeless entanglement in which the main characters have become involved. This technique is alien to Cymbeline and The Tempest, in which we find no similar use of surprise and are informed considerably earlier of essential antecedent events.

As to Giraldi, his handling of the antecedent action usually, though not always, foreshadows Shakespeare more closely than Beaumont and Fletcher. His great inspiration for experimentation in this field was apparently Oedipus Rex (11). In his plays he thus usually departed from the manner of most of his novelles on which they were based, where events are narrated in chronological order, and instead advocated beginning in medias res. He starts in the middle, and then relates the rest as background. Bincale's description of his manner is

accurate:

Gli argomenti dei suoi drammi hanno tutti qualcosa di troppo simile; oltrechè peccano d'un difetto capitale che, cioè, la parte dell'azione che il poeta sceneggia è, come valore tragico, uguale a quelle che lascia raccontare dai personaggi e che costituisce l'antefatto. (12)

As a result, Giraldi's heroes usually do not produce most of the action; it arises mainly from the antefatto, much of the play being occupied with discussion or soliloquies concerning it. Though dramatically, his plays are far from adequate, they thus strongly recall Shakespeare's manner in some scenes in The Tempest. The most marked structural difference is that Giraldi's antefatti are usually far too complex, as for instance in L'Euphemia (13). Sometimes, moreover, Giraldi delays the revelation of antecedent action until near the end, in the manner of A King and No King. In l'Altile, for instance, Norrino's noble background, which is to make an all-important difference to his and the heroine's fortunes, is revealed only during the final act, in a long narrative passage. But his manner of introducing the antecedent action more often approximates to Shakespeare's (14).

Another noteworthy feature of the fifth act of Giraldi's l'Altile is the use of Venus as a deus ex machina. In his Ragionamenti estetici (15), he defends this crude technique of unravelling a complex plot by referring to the example of Euripides' Io. In this feature, Giraldi of course again departs from Aristotelian precept; as in his revaluation of the tragedy of happy ending, his argument can hardly be called profound, though it is pertinent in the present context:

Aristotle blames the introduction on the stage of gods who through their sole power and authority bring about the solution of the plot. This solution should come from the nature of the subject and the resourcefulness of the poet, and when both of these are lacking and the machine that carries the god is introduced to end the plot, as in the Iphigenia among the Taurians and in the Andromache and the other similar plays, and in the Philoctetes of Sophocles, it merits no praise at all. . . . Thence it appears that he does not condemn the introduction of the gods in the beginning and in the other parts of a tragedy, but only in the solution, if it is brought about merely by the intervention of a god. . . . But, returning to Aristotle, if he had so blamed the introduction of the gods in the beginning (as is seen in Sophocles and Euripides), he would not have said that Euripides tied the knot ingeniously and would not (as I have said) have blamed merely the solution but the beginning also and the other parts, since in the tying of the knot gods appear in many dramas. Besides that, it seems to me it can reasonably be said that when the solution necessarily requires a god, it is not merely not unfitting not to introduce him but it would be an error to leave him out. In the Io, for example, Minerva was suitably brought in to make known that Io was a child of Apollo; in this way the knot is easily untied, as Mercury had suggested at the beginning. (16)

To most of his readers, Giraldi's use of Venus in the Altile will appear much more like a deus ex machina than it did to himself. But his debate is of some interest to us considering Shakespeare's use of gods in Pericles, Cymbeline and, though less directly, The Winter's Tale: there, as was argued in this thesis, they are virtually part of the fable and the vision, not mere technical devices for a clumsy ending of a complex plot. On the other hand, as was noted earlier, gods are introduced into only one of Fletcher's earlier plays (17).

A number of minor points in which Giraldi anticipates Shakespeare should also be noted here. One reason for Giraldi's preference for the tragedy of happy ending was his great liking of comic recognition in plays which likewise appeal to our horror and compassion:

It [the "mixed" type of tragedy] is in its nature more pleasing to the spectators because it ends in happiness. In this kind of tragedy the recognition or, as we prefer to call it, the identification of persons is especially in place; through this identification those for whom we feel horror and compassion are taken from perils and from death. Among all the identifications of which Aristotle teaches us that one is praiseworthy more than the others by means of which there is a change of fortune from miserable to happy . . . (18)

In other contexts, Giraldi speaks of the sense of peace in such plays, after our emotions of horror and compassion have been fully aroused (19). These remarks are surely relevant to Shakespeare's use of identification and his theme of peace-making in the last plays, notably in Cymbeline.

Giraldi in his treatise dwells likewise at some length on the use of death behind the scene, which, as we have noted, is practised in Cymbeline and, though in a different way, in The Winter's Tale. As Giraldi remarks, "These deaths, however, come about behind the scenes, because they are not introduced for commiseration but for the sake of justice" (20). This is exactly what happens in Cymbeline (21). Lastly, Giraldi's comments on the use of chorus in tragedy or tragi-comedy are of interest, in the light of Pericles. Giraldi advocates the occasional use of choruses to add the element of Melody, in the Aristotelian sense, to drama. For the speeches or songs of the chorus, he advocates a more suave and rhyming type of verse than for the rest of the drama, and also discusses the pros and cons of static and moving choruses. As pointed out in Chapter 4, the chorus in Pericles owes far more to mediaeval than to Greek or Senecan drama. But some of Giraldi's comments anticipate the practice of Pericles; for instance, he prefers the chorus not



to be on the stage all the time, as in Greek drama, but only to serve as a kind of link, with musical accompaniment, between acts (22). His own Didon furnishes an example of this modern method.

All in all, Giraldi's theory and practice thus anticipate Shakespeare's last plays in a number of noteworthy respects, though of course in many of them, Shakespeare may well have depended on models closer to hand, or experimented independently. It remains for us to note that on most of the particular points relevant to structure listed in the previous discussion, Guarini is either silent or differs notably from his countryman.

Guarini's main motives for his treatises on drama were similar to Giraldi's: to justify the untraditional form of his play, the Pastor Fido, and generally to proclaim a new and nobler form of drama which might supercede the contemporary vogues of sterile neo-Senecan tragedy and low comedy. His argument assumed an even more confident tone, though, especially when dwelling on Aristotle, it proves hardly more convincing than does Giraldi's. Pretending to be a good Ancient, he was in fact even more Modern than his predecessor, and, for that matter, more successfully so, since he was a superior dramatist. The Pastor Fido, he argued, combines many of the better elements of tragedy and of comedy to form a new organic whole, a tragi-comedy; many new literary forms have appeared since Aristotle, notable examples of which are Dante's Divina Comedia, Petrarch's Trionfi, and Ariosto's Orlando; so why should he not venture on a new form of drama?

Guarini was thus prepared to venture further away from Aristotle than Giraldi had done. In Il Pastor Fido, he tells us - and we do not find it difficult to agree with him -, he did not adopt the structural principles of Aristotle's second form of tragedy, to which he refers as tragedy of "doppia costituzione". But then he continues, in self-defence, that his play is nevertheless closely related to it. We are not persuaded. Both forms, he describes rightly, mingle tragic and comic parts, but do so in different ways. The Aristotelian tragedy of "doppia costituzione" has a double outcome, while the Pastor Fido has a single one. In the former, both kinds of character, good and bad, are equally important: in the latter, the bad are only incidentally admitted (23). We note in passing that his description of the outcome of the Pastor Fido fits that of The Winter's Tale, where all major characters participate in the joyful conclusion. But his comments on the place of good and evil characters reveal a much closer kinship to Beaumont and Fletcher than to Shakespeare in his romances. Neither in the Pastor Fido nor in Philaster is evil developed to anything like the extent met with in Shakespeare's last plays.

Later, in his Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry (1601) (24), he describes his Pastor Fido as a "grafted" play, because it has more than one subject, like most of the comedies of Terence. In it, he does not present first an entire tragic plot and then an entire comic one, nor a tragic story vitiated with the lowliness of comedy, but he shapes from the two a third thing that will be perfect in its kind, and may take from the others the parts that

of the more obvious, outward differences are clearly anticipated, even if the two Italian writers are by no means always consistent in their thinking. Once the deeper levels of structure are considered, however, neither Giraldi nor Guarini can give us any guidance.

- i) a predominantly heroic action which ends happily; evil is either crushed miraculously, or without the preparation it deserves in Shakespeare's tragedies; death does occur, but off-stage;
- ii) a double thread of plot, the protagonists of which are a king and his daughter or wife; the action concerning the father receives more extensive treatment than that concerning his daughter or wife;
- iii) supernatural forces contribute to the action; a sudden shift in perspective occurs about half-way through or later in the play; thus the action is seen first on the purely human level, later in the light of divine Providence;
- iv) the action contains multiple levels or subplots which are freely mixed with the main plot; it includes either a great shift in time or changes of scene.

APPENDIX B

The Odyssey and Shakespeare's Last Plays.  
A Structural Comparison.

Since the Odyssey furnished one of the main models, if not the main model, for the writers of the Greek romances of fortune, it does not come wholly as a surprise that its structure of plot reveals some remarkable parallels to those of Shakespeare's last plays, more notably of Pericles, Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale. Other reasons, involving the function of structure of these works, might perhaps also be advanced to account for this similarity, but such speculation would take us beyond the scope of this thesis. Here I shall merely indicate briefly some of the more obvious parallels, with particular reference to Chapter 2.

The common structural characteristics of Pericles, Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale there described can briefly be summarized under seven headings:

- i) a predominantly serious action which ends happily; evil is either treated episodically, or without the preparation it receives in Shakespeare's tragedies; deaths do occur, but off-stage;
- ii) a double thread of plot, the protagonists of which are a king and his daughter or sons; the action concerning the father receives more extensive treatment than that concerning his daughter or children;
- iii) supernatural forces contribute to the action: a sudden shift in perspective occurs about half-way through or later in the play; thus the action is seen first on the purely human level, later in the light of divine Providence;
- iv) the action contains multiple incidents or adventures; it freely shifts from place to place; it includes either a great shift in time or passages of extensive

reminiscence; happenings over a number of years are thus involved;

- v) the plot leads up to an elaborately prepared scene of recognition between parents and children;
- vi) a private and a public action are combined, greater emphasis being laid on the former; as the play proceeds, a divine action is revealed;
- vii) the protagonists do not engage in any plot of intrigue, as often in Shakespeare's earlier comedies.

Of these, ii, iii, and vi were defined as distinguishing characteristics.

A brief glance at the Odyssey will reveal that it shares most of these characteristics, notably ii and vi. Yet the analogy does not apply throughout. No parallel can be found in Shakespeare's last plays to the extended incident of the slaughter of the suitors in Book XXIII of the Odyssey, though one should note Gower's narration of the burning of Cleon and Dionyza by their enraged people at the end of Pericles. In point iii, the Odyssey differs notably from the last plays, since in the epic supernatural forces participate from the beginning of the action: the work opens in Olympus; Minerva guides the heroes throughout. Thus no sudden shift in perspective, so characteristic of Pericles, Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale, occurs. The recognition between father and son, moreover, is handled differently. In the Odyssey it occurs relatively early in the action. And here, it is not a child who is recognized by his father or parents, but Odysseus deliberately reveals himself to his son, upon whose co-operation he depends in his plot against the suitors. Thus, the double thread of plot is found only in the early parts of the Homeric

epic. Lastly, Odysseus, guided by Pallas and helped by Telemachus, develops a careful scheme of intrigue against his enemies, for which action no parallel can be discovered in the three last plays described. But in this respect, the Odyssey resembles more closely The Tempest, with whose structure it otherwise shares little, where Prospero unfolds an elaborate scheme designed for the punishment of his enemies, before he becomes reconciled to them.

But important as these differences are, the parallels in the structure of plot between the Odyssey and the three of Shakespeare's last plays remain striking. They are most pronounced with Pericles. Both works portray a wandering hero who is for many years separated from his family, buffeted by many blows of Fortune or the sea. Both Odysseus and Pericles lose all their mates and belongings. And in both works, the later years of the protagonist's life are presented only in sketchy form - in a final chapter or chorus.

the author but represents his company of actors, who, aware of the limitations of their stage and the impossibility of presenting the events of the play in lifelike grandeur, use him as a spokesman to ensure the imaginative appeal of their acting. His contribution to the play thus differs markedly from Gower's. An interplay between the action and his personality is not even faintly suggested.

For the immediate prototypes of Gower, however, one has to look at Elizabethan drama outside Shakespeare's own work. Two plays by minor contemporaries of Shakespeare, which, moreover, in all probability were staged only shortly before Pericles itself, seem especially pertinent in this connection: Barnabe Barnes' The Divils Charter, performed and printed in 1607, and The Travailles of the Three English Brothers, of the same date, by John Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins (5).

The chorus in Barnabe Barnes' The Divils Charter is handled more like Gower in Pericles than any other Elizabethan chorus that has come to my attention. Barnes' source was Guicciardini's Historie of Italie, which he knew through Fenton's translation (6). He took from it not merely the main incidents for his "Life and Death of Pope Alexander the Sixth", the subject of his play, but also recreated its original author as chorus. Guicciardini is employed in exactly the same manner as Gower: he narrates intervening action, he points to spectacular incidents, commenting on the poetic justice of the course of events, indicates frequent shifts in time and place, occasionally employs a dumbshow to abbreviate the action, and in his Epilogue

carries the story to its conclusion. Except for the fact that he is less romantic, since he speaks in the idiom of the Renaissance, Guicciardine is Gower's exact prototype. If The Divils Charter did precede Pericles, it seems therefore likely that Shakespeare or his collaborator modelled his Gower upon Barnes' Guicciardine. The fact that The Divils Charter was performed at court at the end of a Christmas season of plays which began with King Lear (7) makes it likely that Shakespeare was at least dimly acquainted with it.

The treatment of the chorus in The Travailes of the Three English Brother also resembles closely that of Gower and thus of Barnes' Guicciardine. In The Travailes, he assumes the form of the allegorical figure of Fame, anticipating, though in part only, the chorus of Time in The Winter's Tale (8). Thus his contribution to the play is less personal than Gower's, but this represents the only important difference. In construction, The Travailes is even freer than The Divils Charter, not to speak of Pericles. Hence the immense responsibility placed on the shoulders of Fame to explain the action to the audience, who without his assistance would have been hopelessly confused. The extension of this function of the chorus in The Travailes is illustrated by the final scene, where Fame urges us to think of the stage as divided into three parts, one third representing Robert in Persia, the centre Sir Anthony in Spain, and the last third Sir Thomas in England with his father. They all embrace, seeing one another through "a prospective glass". Yet, such extravaganza apart, Fame reminds us of Gower closely.



Of other contemporary plays which include a chorus, three of Heywood's plays which form a series deserve brief consideration here: The Golden Age, The Silver Age, and The Brazen Age (9). In them Heywood employs the chorus of Homer to present, narrate, and partly interpret what are indeed multifold actions. Homer resembles Gower in so far as he acts as Prologue and Epilogue and provides the link between the acts. Furthermore, he interests us particularly since, apart from Gower in Pericles, he represents the only known use of the poet as chorus in the English drama of the early seventeenth century. Yet there is an all-important difference in their artistic function: Gower performs his duties in a biographical play of unified action; Homer, at any rate in the second and third plays of the series, merely acts as a link between loosely connected or completely unconnected episodes taken from the lives of the gods or of mythological heroes. Moreover, Heywood frequently makes his chorus anticipate the action itself, the ensuing spectacle merely repeating or elaborating upon the drift of his words (10). Consequently suspense, achieved only occasionally in Pericles, is almost wholly neglected in Heywood's three plays.

It is not likely that these three plays of Heywood's exercised any influence upon Shakespeare. It is probable that they were written later, at any rate, than Pericles (11). But I have included them in this discussion because they provide further evidence for a convention involving a certain kind of chorus in the drama of the first decade of the seventeenth century: a chorus who presents and partly narrates an action

(occasionally employing dumbshow) which involves a considerable span of time and moves from country to country, if not from continent to continent or planet to planet. Though the success of Pericles may have popularized this convention, the play was probably not the first instance of its use (12). One explanation for its invention and repeated appearance lies close at hand: the desire of several dramatists of the early seventeenth century to adapt to the stage actions of epic scale and thereby to prove that their stage and forms of drama were suitable for the presentation of any action, no matter how vast.

It appears, however, that this Elizabethan dramatic convention of a chorus represents an adaptation of a device handed down through the main literary tradition other than classical drama which strongly affected the evolution of Elizabethan plays - the native popular religious drama of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, of miracle plays, moralities and interludes. As is well known, a considerable number of these early religious plays made use of a "doctor", a Messenger or Expositor, who usually appeared as Prologue and Epilogue. The manner of speech and general function of these "doctors" were by no means tied to a strict and consistent formula. But most of them were similar to the Messenger in Everyman or the Expositor in the Chester Pageant of Abraham, Melchisedic and Isaac, in fulfilling mainly four straightforward functions: to ask at the beginning for the audience's attention; to inform them briefly of the general subject matter of the play, emphasizing its seriousness and timeliness; and, in the epilogue, to point

out the play's moral application and to conclude the play by a brief prayer on the audience's behalf. These didactic epilogues were usually brief and simple; in the Chester play of Abraham, Melchisedic and Isaac, for instance, the expositor simply draws attention to the parallel between the story of Abraham and Isaac and the relation of God the Father to Christ the Son. But occasionally, as in the Epilogue to God's Promises, John Bale's rather extended religious interlude, it could develop into a short sermon.

These simple expositors or doctors of miracle plays and and moralities would perhaps not have attracted our attention, were it not that in some instances they reveal a development, both in conception and in the dramatic use made of them, which is clearly in the direction of the chorus of Pericles. In certain miracle plays, for instance in The Conversion of St. Paul and in Herod's Killing of the Children, both of which are Digby plays (13), the Prologue and Epilogue introduce themselves as "The Poet". In God's Promises John Bale went a step further by taking over the part in person: "enter Baleus Prolocutor". Even more noteworthy, however, is the elaborate role given to the presenter or "Poet" in the Digby Conversion of St. Paul, where he appears not merely as Prologue and Epilogue, but in the intervals between the three acts or "stations" as well. His manner of presentation is, to be sure, inartistic. He apologizes too much for the author's lack of learning and for any possible inaccuracies in the play. But at the same time he does provide a link between the play's acts or larger episodes and carries

the action to its conclusion in the epilogue, where he narrates how St. Paul, after being warned by an angel, escapes over the walls of Damascus in a basket, assisted by the Disciples. To develop a "poet" of this kind into a choric presenter like Guicciardine or Gower would not have required any unusual gift of artistic invention.

It is therefore feasible to assume that the figure of Gower in Pericles was modelled according to a dramatic convention popular in the early seventeenth century, which in turn represented a revival and adaptation of a device often employed in the popular religious drama with which Shakespeare's generation was probably the last to have direct acquaintance. Though the design of Gower probably owes more to Guicciardine in The Divils Charter or to a similar chorus in some other contemporary drama, Shakespeare may well have been aware of its ultimate ancestry in mediaeval drama. The fact that the chorus of Pericles is himself a mediaeval poet, conceived as a personality with an outlook of two hundred years earlier, at least encourages such a speculation.

## II. Other Links with Vernacular Religious Drama.

Considering the mediaeval origins of its story, the reincarnation of the poet Gower, and the technical similarity between the chorus in Pericles and that in some of the religious plays of the late Middle Ages, one is greatly tempted to look for the general formal origins of Pericles somewhere in the tradition of vernacular religious drama, which was still alive

in some parts of England towards the end of the sixteenth century.

Between miracle plays in general and Pericles certain broad similarities emerge immediately. Like Pericles, many miracle plays were designed to appeal not only as drama, but also as spectacle. That they were often referred to as "pageants" is in itself significant. The nature of their action, moreover, tended to be tragi-comic, serious but ending happily. The demonstration of triumphant righteousness was essential to their didactic purpose. Their tragi-comic pattern was largely conditioned by the conservative Christian view current in the Middle Ages which underlies them (14). In a certain number of early plays, such as the pageants dealing with Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac or the revival of Lazarus, this tragi-comic pattern emerges with particular clarity. Death often plays a part in miracle plays; but it always takes a form appropriate to the tragi-comic pattern: either a wicked person is punished or, if death comes to a good man, it is conceived as the threshold to the spiritual reward which awaits him in heaven, as, for instance, in the York pageant on the death of Mary. Especially interesting in this connection is the Chester play of Antichrist, where Michael restoring the prophets to life performs the part of deus ex machina. In the moralities, likewise, the direction of the action is usually tragi-comic. In The Castle of Perseverance, for instance, catastrophe is averted only after a long conflict between the forces of good and evil. In Everyman the protagonist undergoes acute suffering,

most of his friends abandoning him at the crucial moment, and severe inward punishment accompanied by a complete change of heart being necessary before he can joyfully face the ordeal of death.

Two counter-arguments against a formal link between Pericles and the miracle play are easily answered. The first is that the majority of miracle plays are very brief, confining themselves to a single, or at most to a small number, of biblical episodes, as, for instance, in the plays on the Nativity, on Christ's temptation by Satan, or on His trial before Pilate. However, most miracle plays are to be regarded rather as sections of a collective scheme than as units complete in themselves. And if Pericles is compared with a group of plays, each setting forth an episode of a larger subject, as for instance the plays representing the life of Christ in a cycle, it will be at once apparent that the function of the individual pageant in the cycle is not unlike that of the individual scene or "adventure" in Pericles; the connection between the various pageants or scenes is similarly loose. A second objection which might be raised is that Pericles is anything but a religious play; that its material is derived from romance, not from the Bible. For an answer, one need only point to the manifold interplay of secular and religious material in the vernacular religious drama of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Not the least common of the forms the interplay took was the absorption of material from romance into some miracle plays. This process was in all probability further encouraged

by the development of non-cyclic plays and by their often considerable extension in length and structural complexity. It is in plays of this latter type, if anywhere, that we may expect to find evidence for the hypothesis that the structure of Pericles is in part derived from the miracle play.

Among the longer and more complex types of the miracle play, the saint-plays should, by the biographical nature of their subject matter - the life and deeds of a religious hero - prove especially relevant to this enquiry. Unfortunately, however, only very few saint-plays in English have survived (15). As my analysis will therefore have to confine itself to scant material, my conclusions will necessarily be tentative. That such an analysis, however, may be worth undertaking was implied fifty years ago (though never, to my knowledge, taken up) by no less a scholar of early English drama than C. M. Gayley:

I have little doubt that the romantic combination of tragic, marvellous, and comic later noticeable upon the Elizabethan stage was in some degree due to the ancient and continuous dramatization of the irrational adventures, blood-curdling tortures, and dissonant emotions afforded by the legends of the saints. These 'marvels', moreover, must, because of their early emancipation from ecclesiastical restraints and their adoption by the folk, have contributed to the development of the freely invented, surprising and amusing fable which is congenial to comedy. (16)

The purpose of the following paragraphs is to assemble some specific evidence of such an influence upon one later tragic-comedy, Pericles.

It so happens that the most elaborate of the dramatized legends of the saints in English which has come down to us, the Digby play of Mary Magdalene (17), provides us with direct support for this thesis. This play was probably based on the

version of the life of Mary Magdalene in Caxton's translation of The Golden Legend. Its length is 2144 lines; not much shorter, that is to say, than a full-size Elizabethan play. But far from anticipating the five-act structure, it seems to divide naturally into two parts, each of which consists of a large number of brief scenes (18). That the story of Apollonius of Tyre and the action of Pericles also divide clearly into two parts seems a matter of pure coincidence.

At the start of the main action of the first part of the Digby play, Mary Magdalene mourns the death of Cyrus, her father. Soon, however, she is seen enjoying herself in a tavern in Jerusalem, in the company of Gallant Curiosity. Yet before Satan has had much time to celebrate his victory, the good Angel appears to Mary Magdalene in her sleep and advises her to cast off evil ways and to implore Jesus' mercy. After she has contritely followed Him and washed His feet, her sins are forgiven by Jesus. She rejoins her sister Martha and her brother Lazarus. The final scenes of this part are taken up with Lazarus' death and his revival by Jesus.

This brief summary, however, hardly does justice to the variety, or rather the utter lack of concentration or unity, of the action. Several of the opening scenes supply the political background for the action, showing us the emperor Tiberius and Herod worshipping Belial. Once the central plot has got under way, it is frequently interrupted by spectacular or farcical scenes presenting Satan surrounded by some of the seven deadly sins. The audience must have derived some real amusement from



the scene where Satan, furious over the loss of Mary's soul, sets fire to the houses of two minor devils. But though the play lacks in co-ordination of scenes, the action was probably followed easily by the audience.

The action of the second part is better integrated. It is mainly devoted to the role played by Mary Magdalene in the conversion of the King of Marcyll (Marseilles). The final six scenes carry her life to its conclusion. They show briefly her years of abstinence in the desert, where she was sustained by food from heaven; her death; the burial of her body and the ascension of her soul. But the more interesting part tells, in several hundred lines, the story of the King of Marcyll's conversion. While the King is engaged in worship (farcically presented) of Mahomet, Christ appears to Magdalene in a vision and asks her to prepare herself for a special mission. Through Raphael He commands her to go by ship to Marcyll and try to convert its king. There, after much prayer and exhortation and some demonstration of the inefficacy of heathen gods, she persuades the King and the Queen to cast off their allegiance to them. When in fulfilment of her desire the Queen becomes miraculously with child, the King and she prepare for a voyage to the Holy Land. But on the way a violent storm overtakes them, during which the Queen dies even while giving birth to her child. Upon the demand of the ship's crew they are both set out on a rock. The King himself safely reaches the Holy Land where he is baptized by Peter. On his return voyage he rediscovers his baby unharmed on the rock, and his wife suddenly

returns to life as if awakening from a trance. They return joyfully, their goods are restored to them, and they bless Mary Magdalene, who exhorts them to lead a steadfast Christian life.

A number of resemblances in the nature as well as in the construction of the two plays are at once apparent. The action of both Pericles and the Digby pageant of Mary Magdalene can be broadly described as biographical. They both present, by means of a rather large number of episodes, a series of extraordinary adventures and turns in fortune on the part of the protagonist (19), ending, in the case of Pericles, in his joyful reunion with his wife and daughter, in the case of Mary Magdalene, in the ascension of her soul to heaven. In both plays, moreover, the episodes are presented in a loosely co-ordinated sequence. Some of the adventures in both are of a highly spectacular nature, such as, for instance, the setting on fire of Mahomet's temple in Mary Magdalene. Remarkable also is the specific resemblance of the contribution made to both actions by violent storms at sea, especially considering the rather small number of plays which employ this type of incident. In both plays a storm causes the death in travail of a queen who later on is miraculously revived. Here the similarity of the two plays is in fact so close, that one is driven to conclude that both authors drew ultimately on the same source (20).

In the strictly literal sense of the term, to continue the comparison, Pericles is as much a "miracle" play as Mary Magdalene. In both plays miraculous deeds and divine visions

make a vital contribution to the action. In neither play would one be justified in defining the function of the supernatural powers as merely that of deus ex machina. That the participation of Christ in the action of Mary Magdalene is essential to its underlying vision is obvious; the pagan gods in Pericles perform, as has been shown (21), a function similarly large (though of course not identical). The part assigned to Christ and the angels in the structure of Mary Magdalene corresponds to that of Diana, Jupiter, and Neptune in Pericles. If one considers that in the sixteenth century it was fairly common to address the Christian god as Jupiter or Apollo and to understand the pagan gods in general Christian terms (22), this correspondence in structure will perhaps appear both less surprising and more significant.

We have seen that the resemblance in structure between the Digby play of Mary Magdalene and Pericles is considerable. In their manner of presenting a biographical action through loosely connected episodes, in their use of spectacular effects, in the importance given in both actions to a storm at sea, and in the role accorded to divine forces, the two plays are closely similar. Considering the mediaeval features of Pericles described earlier, this high degree of resemblance in structure with at least one late representative of the miracle play is added reason, limited though the direct evidence at our disposal is, in support of the view that some of the important structural roots of Pericles lie in the saint-plays and related forms of late mediaeval religious drama. Pericles may be regarded as a

kind of saint-play, in which a story from romance has taken the place of holy legend.

One further qualification to this view need, however, be stated. It is highly unlikely that the double plot of two generations, a basic structural characteristic of Pericles, was in any direct or indirect manner taken over from the vernacular religious drama. We know that it is derived from the play's source, whose genre is narrative romance. Few miracle plays treat at length of the relation between children and parents, and if they do so, as in the dramatizations of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, the action hardly ever bears any resemblance to that of Pericles. In Mary Magdalene, of which so much has been made earlier in this discussion, several members of Mary's family, including Cyrus her father, are introduced. But they are all treated as strictly subordinate to Mary herself and appear only briefly. In the second part the theme of loss and restoration is briefly developed in the story of the King of Marcyll's voyage to the Holy Land, but unlike Marina or Perdita, his baby never grows up, and thus plays only a passive and insignificant role in the action.

If one biblical story, dramatized a number of times in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and probably known in at least one version to Shakespeare, provides, in its structural feature of a double plot of two generations, a much closer analogue to Pericles, this fact in no way warrants a modification of our conclusions concerning the formal origins of Shakespeare's double plot. Yet a good cause will be served by examining one

of these plays in some detail, if only because they provide further evidence for the contention that some of the later miracle plays structurally resemble certain Renaissance tragi-comedies rather closely.

These plays present the apocryphal story of Tobit, a story popular all over Western Europe during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, which Caxton had translated into the vernacular as part of The Golden Legend. We know of at least one English miracle play on this story (23), and a play entitled Tobias probably appeared on the Elizabethan stage as late as 1602 (24).

Unfortunately, however, neither of these English versions has survived, and we are compelled to turn to indirect evidence. Two extant versions in French are of an earlier date than Shakespeare's romances: an early miracle play and Acte de la Tragi-comedie by M'lle de Roches (25), the latter of which I propose to discuss in some detail. In this play the development from miracle play to Renaissance tragi-comedy has proceeded more than half-way, much further than in the Digby pageant of Mary Magdalene. It is a full-length drama, adopting the familiar plot from the Apocrypha, but adding to it a love story, and preaching its lesson of divine Providence in such a manner as to suit a bourgeois audience (26). Some of the characters too, especially Anne, Tobit's wife, are clearly endowed with qualities especially appealing to the new middle class. But the play as a whole is by no means a masterpiece, and its plot is utterly lacking in unity.

Two stories or plots are combined: that of Tobit le père, who is suddenly blinded when burying a body near his home, and only cured when his son applies some strange fishgall to his eyes; and that of his son's wooing of Sarra, daughter of Tobit's friend Raguel. This courtship requires some courage, since Sarra has already lost seven husbands, all slain mysteriously during the wedding night. But with the help of the magic properties of the fish, which young Thobie is advised to apply by Azarie, the companion of his journey, he overcomes the evil spell. Near the end of the play Azarie reveals himself as an angelic protector, and in the final scene young Thobie gives thanks to God.

The main structural differences between this *mystère* and Pericles are easily perceived: in the *mystère*, the son is at least as important a figure as the father, who is lost sight of during most of Acts III and IV. In Pericles, on the other hand, most of the space is devoted to the father's manifold adventures. Secondly, Father Tobit's sufferings are caused by his sudden loss of sight, Pericles' by the loss of his wife and daughter. But we note that in both plays the loss is unmotivated - at any rate Thaisa's loss in Pericles, which is incurred without visible cause. Nor is there the slightest indication of guilt in the behaviour of either Pericles or Old Tobit. The suffering in each case is similarly unexplained, caused by some arbitrary-seeming power in the world, beyond human comprehension. Yet both plays seem to be informed by a similar unifying idea, which Gower expresses thus:

I'll show you those in troubles reign  
Losing a mite, a mountain gain.  
(II, Gower, 7-8)

Furthermore, both plays end in restoration, when the child returns, accompanied by a mate; and this restoration is followed by thanksgiving to the benevolent god:

Pericles. Pure Dian! bless thee for thy vision. I  
will offer night-oblations to thee.  
(V, iii, 69-70)

These similarities will impress us as significant, once we recall that they involve those basic features which distinguish Shakespeare's last plays from his earlier works: the double plot of two generations, with loss and restoration; the participation of divine forces in the action, in a manner more important than that of a mere stage device to help resolve a complicated plot near the end; and the portrayal of evil as a mysterious, arbitrary-seeming, half natural, half supernatural force. In both the *mystère* of Tobit and in Pericles, a central character undergoes severe and apparently undeserved suffering and bears it with great patience (27). Yet I am convinced that no direct relation exists between Pericles and any possible lost English play on the story of Tobit. In both cases the features described were largely taken over from their respective sources, which happen to tell stories of partly similar organization and import. And Shakespeare added new significance to an old story (28), which can hardly be said of M'lle de Roches. But the existence of a *mystère* so closely similar in outward structure to Shakespeare's play provides strong support for my general contention, that, in form, Pericles owes a substantial debt to the miracle play.

APPENDIX D

John Day and Barnabe Barnes.

Many possible collaborators have been suggested by critics for Shakespeare's Pericles, including Wilkins, Heywood, and William Rowley. And peculiarities in the organization and style of Cymbeline have been blamed on Beaumont and Fletcher and other contemporary dramatists. If in the following pages, I suggest some degree of connection between the last plays and the works of two other of Shakespeare's contemporaries, it is not with a view to adding further to the vast literature of wild speculation. The facts I am about to present are insufficient to permit of any broad deduction or hypothesis, though they seem to me of sufficient significance to warrant their listing in the context of the present thesis, in the hope that they may prove useful as a basis for further scholarly investigation. They concern a number of specific structural resemblances and textual echoes, some of which might be called minor "sources", between Barnes' The Divils Charter, certain plays by John Day, and Shakespeare's romances (1).

One of these resemblances has already received ample discussion, and need therefore be only briefly recalled here: the handling of the chorus in The Divils Charter and in Day's The Travailes of the Three English Brothers closely parallels that of Gower in Pericles (2). Since these three plays were first staged within a short period of one another, a mutual influence in this particular respect seems almost certain. Of



other echoes, those in the plays of John Day are more numerous. As they also appear more significant, they will be listed first.

In general tone, Law-Trickes, first published in the same year as Pericles, 1608, has little in common with the last plays. It is altogether a more light-hearted work, with ample emphasis on bawdry. Its plot, moreover, is predominantly one of intrigue, more like that of Measure for Measure than that of any of the Romances. But the complexity of the resolution anticipates that of Cymbeline, and, what is more important, its central issue is that of the restoration of a lost daughter. At the end of the play, the reunion of two generations, the Duke and Emilia, is celebrated. The action of the play is expressly tragi-comic, as conveyed in the Duke's final words: "Lastly, thy merit is not triviall That turned to mirth a Sceane so tragicall". The handling of the tragi-comic theme, however, is far more farcical than Shakespeare's, even in Cymbeline. And in the course of the play, Day makes use of the whole gamut of stock devices of Elizabethan drama, culled from Greene and Jonson, Shakespeare's earlier plays and a dozen other sources.

Much more remarkable is a specific and extended echo in this play to a scene in Pericles, pointed out long ago by A. H. Bullen (3). The dialogue of the fishermen in Pericles is closely anticipated by the following passages in I, ii and II, i of Law-Trickes:

Joculo. - But, Madam, doe you remember what a multitude of fishes we saw at Sea? and I doe wonder how they can all live by one another.

Emilia. Why, foole, as men do on the land; the great ones eate up the little ones. -

. . .

Adam. I knew one of that facultie in one terme eate up  
a hole Towne, Church, Steeple and all.

Julio. I wonder the Bels rung not all in his belly.

Day's Humour Out Of Breath (1608), a better play mainly on account of its lucid construction, seems to me of special interest to the student of Shakespeare's romances. This is truly a romantic tragi-comedy of two generations. The central characters are eight in number: Octavio, Duke of Venice, and Antonio, Duke of Mantua, each of whom has three children; Octavio two sons, Hippolito and Francisco, and one daughter, Florimel; Antonio two daughters, Hermia and Lucida, and one son, Aspero. When the play opens, Octavio has just usurped the dukedom of Mantua, and banished Antonio to the woods. Antonio's son Aspero is planning open revenge, but on his way meets Florimel and falls in love with her at first sight. Several scenes of the play are taken up with his witty wooing which, owing to Florimel's whimsicality, leads to numerous comic complications, until Aspero hits on the desperate but successful device of a mock-death, upon which Florimel reveals her true feelings. Meanwhile, Hippolito and Francisco, disguised as shepherds, woo Antonio's daughters, Hermia and Lucida. Their father, who, also in disguise, has followed them, urges them in vain to desist from such an uneven match, and, when he fails, reveals his identity and severely rebukes his runagate sons. Before Octavio returns, Aspero and Florimel escape after having made a fool of Hortensio, Octavio's deputy, in a drawn-out farcical scene. Soon after, the Mantuans rebel and restore Antonio to the throne. Aspero and Florimel join him.

Preparations for war are made, but a last minute parley saves the day. The love of the youths reveals itself too strong for any ill feelings on the part of Octavio. As Octavio remarks, the love of the young "make my proud heart ashamed". He banishes his hatred.

In a number of ways, the structure of the action of this play differs manifestly from that of the three last plays mainly discussed in this thesis. The events in Humour Out Of Breath embrace at most a few weeks. There is no sudden break in the action near the middle. No supernatural forces intervene. The wooing of Aspero and Florimel, carried on on a level of wit and trickery, recalls rather that of Benedick and Beatrice than that of any lovers in the last plays. As to content, the play does not treat of lost and found children, nor of forgiveness, even though it is Octavio's daughters and sons, and their power of love, which cures him of his ill will and injustice. Generally speaking, the mood of the play is much less serious than that of the last plays, though less light than that of Law-Trickes. Evil forces, ill fortune and suffering are however sufficiently emphasized to make this play decisively tragi-comic; far more so, at any rate, than As You Like It, with which play and The Winter's Tale it shares the movement in the action from city to country and back to the city.

The play would, however, hardly deserve our attention here, were its minor resemblances in structure with the last plays not accompanied by a number of close textual echoes. These echoes are undoubtedly in part due to similarity in

material, both Day and Shakespeare adopting conventional phrases or images from romance. Yet they are striking enough to be listed here:

- i) If that her breath do not perfume the air,  
Say, it is sweet, but sweeter sweets content you;  
If that her cheek, compared to the lily,  
Make not the lily black with whiter whiteness,  
(I, i) (4)

reminds us of Iachimo's words in Cymbeline, II, ii, 15-9:

fresh lily!  
And whiter than the sheets! . . .  
. . . 'Tis her breathing that  
Perfumes the chamber thus;

- ii) So is the sun of Heaven, yet he smiles on the bramble  
as well as the lily; kisses the cheek of a beggar as  
lovingly as a gentlewoman, and 'tis good to imitate  
him, 'tis good.  
(II, ii) (5)

recalls in sentiment Perdita's far more poetic

The selfsame sun that shines upon his court  
Hides not his visage from our cottage, but  
Looks on alike.

(WT, IV, iv, 441-3)

iii) The sentiments expressed in the following passage  
remind us of the interview between Cloten and Imogen in the  
second act of Cymbeline:

Aspero. . . . I ask no mends but a kiss, kindly,  
come: shall I ha't?  
Florimel. I'll kiss a toad first.  
Aspero. You will remember this another time; a toad!  
you will: I know thou lov'st me, and I see the  
pride of thy humour; I do, and thou shalt know  
I do; half an hour . . . a toad!  
I'll make thee creep on thy knees for a kiss.  
(III, i) (6)

iv) Much more closely, the episode of Polixenes' casting off  
his disguise in The Winter's Tale is paralleled in that where  
the incensed Octavio rebukes his sons:

Forgetful boys! but most audacious traitor  
That durst in thought consent to wrong thy prince,  
Out of my sight; no land that calls thee lord  
Shall bear a weight so hateful as thyself:  
Live ever banished. If (three days expired)  
Thou or these lustful strumpets . . .  
(IV, i) (7)

- v) A first Lord in Humour Out Of Breath addresses Antonio  
in a manner reminiscent of Helicanus in Pericles:

We, like inferior lights,  
Take life from your reflection, for like stars  
Unto the sun are counsellors to kings:  
He feeds their orbs with fire, and their shine  
Contend to make his glory more divine.  
(V, ii) (8)

These parallels in situation - for the imagery closely resembles Shakespeare's only in the first quotation cited - are strengthened by a number of echoes to the typical wording of Shakespeare's last plays, some of which are listed in the footnotes (9). It is they mainly, which account for the fact that the reader of Humour Out Of Breath is reminded frequently of the atmosphere in Shakespeare's last plays; the resemblance in structure and tone is inconsiderable.

The relevance of Barnes' The Divils Charter to Shakespeare's last plays can be summarized more briefly. The most striking resemblance is that of its construction to Pericles, which has already been mentioned. Time in Barnes' play is handled with similar freedom, and the chorus of Guicciardine is essential, not merely as prologue and epilogue, but also as a link tying together its extremely loose structure. The fact that at least three of the names of the characters of The Tempest - Gonzago, Alphonzo and Ferdinand (10) - are mentioned in The Divils Charter is of little interest, as the same names occur

together in other works of the time, and we can be fairly sure that Shakespeare for them depended on a different source (11). More relevant, however, is the following passage clearly echoing forward to Cymbeline, though I am at a loss to account for its presence here. It may suggest some minor source common to Barnes and Cymbeline not as yet discovered. In Act IV of The Divils Charter, Katherine exclaims:

If thou wert here thou shouldst be Posthumus,  
And ript out of my sides with soldiers swords,  
Before I would yeeld up thine heritage.  
(IV, iv, 2344-6)

This passage echoes forward to Cymbeline V, iv, 43-5. We know that The Divils Charter was performed soon after King Lear, as one of a series during Candlemas of 1606-7 (12), and thus it presumably precedes Cymbeline by at least two years.

APPENDIX E

The Popularity of the Story of Apollonius of Tyre  
in Shakespeare's Time.

a) The Popularity of Pericles.

Considering its lack of dramatic concentration, one would think that Pericles was not much of a success in its day. Today, it is only rarely produced, and if so, only because the magic name of Shakespeare is attached to it. But even the most daring and experiment-minded of contemporary producers usually finds it necessary to dabble extensively with the text or arrangement of scenes, so as to make the work palatable and comprehensible to a modern audience (1).

Yet there is good reason to believe that Pericles was in fact one of the more popular attractions in the years following its first production, which was probably in 1608 (2). For hardly any other Shakespearean play was reprinted as often as Pericles during the first half of the seventeenth century. No fewer than six Quartos had appeared by 1635 (3). We learn moreover from the title page of Q1 that it had by then (1609) been "divers and sundry times acted by his Maiesties Servants, at the Globe on the Banck-side". We know that it was revived at Court on May 20, 1619, in honour of the French ambassador (4), and was again presented on June 10, 1631, at the Globe theatre, "upon the cessation of the plague" (5). Most scholars concur with A. R. Bellinger and other recent editors of the play that there were probably "many successful performances of which there is no record" (6). Two early allusions provide additional evidence in support of the view that Pericles was a popular play. It is

referred to by the anonymous author of Pimlyco or Runne Red-Cap, 1609 (7); and Jonson after the failure of his own The New Inn in 1629 bitterly lashed out against the many playgoers who prefer "some mouldy tale like Pericles" in the Ode to Himselfe (8). Jonson was obviously not prepared to take the chorus Gower's advice and read Pericles "for restoratives".

b) Other Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Versions.

Jonson's is the only negative comment on the play in the early seventeenth century which has come down to us. But as regards the "tale" itself, there is every reason to believe that most literary men in Europe at the time thought far more highly of it. This may be of some interest to the student of Shakespeare, because if the old story of Apollonius exercised a widespread appeal in sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century Europe, it may in some measure account for the great popularity of Pericles in the years immediately following its first production. Though the widespread dissemination of the story in manifold popular and less popular versions and their complex interrelation has been ably and fully treated by Krebs, A. H. Smyth (9) and other critics, these studies have not drawn special attention to the fact that around 1600 the story seems to have experienced a special vogue of appeal. All over Europe, it then appeared in a number of new versions, in the form of prose, verse or play, several authors informing us in their preface or dedication that they came across the story in some old manuscript, which reveals itself almost invariably to have been a version of the Gesta Romanorum. The manner of



F. de Belleforest: Histoire Troisième in Le Septiesme Tome des Histoires Tragiques . . ., Lyon, 1595; reprinted at Rouen in 1604 etc; based on the Gesta Romanorum.

Anon.: La Storia di Apollonio di Tiro in ottava rima, Venice, 1486, 1489, . . ., 1598, 1610, . . .; a popular version in Italian.

Juan de Timoneda: eleventh story in Patrañuelo; based on the Gesta Romanorum, and not on the mediaeval Spanish poem on the story; the fact that this version appeared in the same year as Twine's appears to be purely coincidental.

Apart from these adapted versions or new works, it is perhaps of some interest that the second edition of the Latin text appeared within our period, in 1595, by Marward Welser, better known as Marcus Velserius (10).

The relation of Wilkins' and Twine's versions to Shakespeare's has been frequently discussed and need not be touched upon here. Of the other works listed, three may be of special interest. The prose version by Belleforest may well have been known by Shakespeare, or at any rate by some of his literary colleagues; for Belleforest enjoyed great prestige, and his version of the story of Hamlet was at least one of the sources for Shakespeare's play. However, I can discover no special link with Pericles. Two other versions, which are listed in Appendix F (11), are of special interest, for they demonstrate that in the early seventeenth century, Shakespeare was not alone in attempting to dramatize the story of Apollonius of Tyre, and because they are both written as companion plays in two parts; such a division, as pointed out in Chapter 4 (12), is directly suggested by the source, and also affected the structure of Pericles.

APPENDIX F

Notes on Sources and Analogues.

In the course of this study, a few sources and analogues to Shakespeare's last plays came to my attention, which have either not been recognized before or which seem to have been neglected by most editors. Several of these works or passages have already been discussed in this thesis, and will therefore be mentioned here only in the footnotes. Some others are discussed or listed below.

i) Dramatic Analogues.

By 1640, a fairly large number of plays had appeared on the continent which can be regarded as analogues to the last plays. In all probability, none of them was known to Shakespeare, and none of them represents an adaptation of Shakespeare's drama. Several of them, however, made use of sources either the same as or closely related to Shakespeare's. Most of these plays are listed more fully in the bibliography. The following three are analogues to Pericles:

- Gil Vicente: Comedia de Rubena, a fifteenth-century Portuguese play, probably based on Gower;  
J. Bernier de la Brousse: Les Heureuses Infortunes, 1618, a French play in two parts based on the Gesta Romanorum;  
Pieter Bor: Twee Tragi-comedien in prosa, 1617, two Dutch plays, based on the Gesta Romanorum.

Four dramatic analogues of Cymbeline are known to me:

- Lope de Rueda: Eufemia, 1567, a Spanish play on Boccaccio's story of the wager;  
J. Ayrrer: Comedia von zweyen Fuerstlichen Raethen, published 1618 but written before 1610, a German play, probably based on a popular German prose version of Boccaccio.

B. Locatello (compiler of MS): La Innocentia Rivenduta, 1618 or earlier, a commedia dell'arte based probably on Boccaccio's tale.

Verucci: Il Dispettoso Marito, 1612, an Italian play with plebeian setting based on Boccaccio's tale.

The following three analogues of The Winter's Tale are all based on Greene's romance:

A. Hardy: Pandoste, a lost French play.

Puget de la Serre: Pandoste, 1631, a French play.

M. Voskuyl: Pandostos, Treuer-spel and Dorastus en Fauniaas, 1637, a Dutch play in two "journées".

The only known dramatic analogue to The Tempest is Ayrer's Die Schoene Sidea, ca. 1605.

ii) Sources and Analogues of Specific Passages or Episodes.

Some minor sources of Pericles have already been discussed (1). As Dobell pointed out many years ago, the fifth scene of the anonymous The Partiall Law, probably written later than Pericles, closely resembles that of the lists (II, ii) in Pericles.

As to Cymbeline (2), some clear, though limited, echoes point to a link between this play and Much Ado; Shakespeare seems to have had Much Ado as well as its source, a novelle by Bandello, in mind while working on Cymbeline. These plays resemble each other by virtue of a plot in which the heroine's honour is subjected to slander. But the similarity also involves particulars, which, to my knowledge, have never before been pointed out. Much Ado, like Cymbeline, contains a character named Leonato (Leonatus in Cymbeline), who is moreover married to an Innogen. Many modern editors omit the Innogen of Much Ado, since she is a mute character, but she is listed in both F and Q. This parallel between the two plays, incidentally, further

supports the view that in Shakespeare's original version of the play, the heroine's name was Innogen, not Imogen (3).

More remarkable still is a strong echo in Cymbeline to the tale by Bandello which is the main source of Much Ado. In the first scene of Cymbeline, we are given a conspicuous account of Posthumus' family, more particularly of his father Sicilius, "who gain'd the sur-addition Leonatus" (I, 1, 33), and before the battle Posthumus invokes the gods for "the strength o' the Leonati" (V, 1, 31). In Bandello's tale, the name of the father of Fenicia, the heroine (who corresponds to Hero in Much Ado), is Lionato de' Lionati. In her long speech of defence after the slanderous accusation, Fenicia states that though by birth she may not be equal in status to her fiancé Don Timbreo, her family is a noble one of ancient fame:

Ma per nobiltà & antichità di sangue, si sa quello che sono i Lionati, come quelli che sono i più antichi e nobili di tutta questa Isola; essendo noi discesi da nobilissima Famiglia Romana prima che il Signor nostro Giesu Christo incarnasse, come per antichissime scritture si fa fede. Hora si come per le poche ricchezze, dico che io no era degna di tanto Cavaliero, dico altresì che iudguissimamente sono rifiutata . . . . (4)

Common to Shakespeare and to Bandello is thus the notion of a family, by the name of Lionati or Leonati, of great fame but not of noble degree. Considering the fact that Iachimo refers to Imogen as the "Arabian bird", it may also be of interest that the name of Bandello's heroine is based on "fenice", the Italian word for "phoenix". This connection is made explicit in the story:

Onde chi Fenicia la disse non si discostò punto dal vero, perciò che ella era una Fenice. (5)

takes Cloten's body, dressed up in Posthumus' clothes, for that of her husband. Lastly, as in Shakespeare but not in Boccaccio or Frederike of Jennen, the slanderer in this commedia dell'arte meets with generous forgiveness in the final scene. Since actors of the commedia dell'arte visited London more than once in Shakespeare's day, it is possible that he saw a dramatized version of Boccaccio's novelle closer in some respects to Cymbeline than the novelle itself. It seems likely, at any rate, that Shakespeare was acquainted with other versions of this tale than has so far been recognized.

As to The Winter's Tale, evidence has been provided that Shakespeare was not the first to employ a Chorus of Time (6). Interestingly enough, the Dutch playwright Bredero was to introduce a Chorus of Time in a manner similar to Shakespeare's only two years after the first performance of The Winter's Tale, in 1612 in his play Griane (7). Griane is a dramatization of Palmerin d'Oliva, a popular chivalric romance of Spanish origin. Time ("De Tydt") enters in the middle of Act IV, and makes a speech far too long to quote here, in which he explains happenings in the years following Prymaleion's death, especially those concerning Palmerin during his early youth. But he dwells for half his speech on his own nature and function. No time or end existed before Adam's fall, he says. Now Time both humiliates the proud and uplifts the humble. Much that is dark is brought to light by Time. But Time also causes us to forget many great feats of the past. He concludes (my translation): "But like heaven will all creation end; so surely will the course of Time."

FOOTNOTES

- 3. The ...
- 4. The ...
- 5. The ...

6. The ...

7. The ...

## FOOTNOTES

### General Note on Abbreviations.

The abbreviations of the titles of Shakespeare's plays used in the footnotes follow those of E. K. Chambers in William Shakespeare; note especially: P. = Pericles, Cy. = Cymbeline, W.T. = The Winter's Tale, Tr. = The Tempest, M.M. = Measure for Measure.

Other abbreviations employed are those listed in the introductory note to the Bibliography, and the following:

W.S. = E. K. Chambers: William Shakespeare  
E.S. = E. K. Chambers: The Elizabethan Stage  
Sh. = Shakespeare  
ed. = edition, or edited  
App. = Appendix

### Introduction

1. in "The Criticism of Sh.'s Last Plays . . . ."
2. Rajan: "It seems to me that what matters in a literary 'explanation' is not so much its consistency with the facts - there are other explanations which fit the facts as well and for some readers fit them more readily - as the standard of poetic achievement it implies" (p. 51).
3. see Bibliography, section 5.
4. The (New) Arden edition.
5. U.T.Q., XX, No. 1.

### Chapter 1

1. The translation of Aristotle's Poetics I have used is that by Butcher, corrected and edited by Nahm. In some instances, however, it has seemed wise to provide Bywater's translation as an alternative. The quotation is taken from Section VI; Bywater's version: "the combination of the incidents, or things done in the story" (p. 19).
2. Ibid., Sections VII, VIII, and XXV.
3. Ibid., Section VI; Bywater: "We maintain, therefore, that the first essential, the life and soul, so to speak, of Tragedy, is the Plot" (p. 21).

4. Ibid., Bywater: "The most important of the six is the combination of the incidents of the story. Tragedy is essentially an imitation not of persons but of action and life, of happiness and misery. All human happiness or misery takes the form of action; the end for which we live is a certain kind of activity, not a quality . . . . So that it is the action in it, i.e. its Fable or Plot, that is the end and purpose of the tragedy; and the end is everywhere the chiefest thing" (p. 19).
5. When he tries to reach deeper as in his essay on Othello (in Art and Artifice in Sh.), he resorts to psychological analysis though not admitting it.
6. Greek Tragedy, p. 112 etc.
7. Poetics, Section VI.
8. Aristotle understands "Thought" in a very limited sense, it appears, referring merely to what is directly expressed in speech.
9. in "Shakespeare und kein Ende", Beutler, XIV, p. 766.
10. see especially Sh.'s Imagery, pp. 213-16 and 291-308.
11. In justice to Miss Spurgeon, it should however be said, that she was of course aware of the one-sidedness of her study.
12. e.g. Danby, Sh.'s Doctrine of Nature.
13. Granville-Barker, On Poetry in Drama.
14. in The Wheel of Fire, p. 5 ff.
15. Ellis-Fermor, The Frontiers of Drama, p. 83.  
Cf. Traversi, "King Lear", p. 43, who takes a somewhat extreme view on this matter:

"The tragedies of Shakespeare's maturity, from Macbeth onward, are characterized by a consistent progress towards the development of dramatic symbolism. This symbolism, which derives originally from an extension of the scope and purpose of the poetic image in the dramatic scheme, implies logically a new conception of plot. The poetic image, expanding by a continually growing number of contacts with the surrounding verse, becomes more intimately and more variously related to the exigencies of story and character, until the very possibility of a sharp distinction between the action and the poetry through which its meaning in emotional and spiritual terms is conveyed, becomes inconceivable. The plot, thus conveyed less in terms of common realism than as an



extension of the poetry, becomes in effect itself an expanded image . . . ."

Traversi, however, seems to me to emphasize the poetry at the expense of the action, though our views are very close.

16. In a thesis like the present one, one is strongly tempted to approach the matter of a play's construction from an a priori ground. If we could arrive at some safe conclusion as to how one or other of the last plays formed itself in Sh.'s mind, what, above all, Sh. started with when preparing these plays, we could allow ourselves to be so much more confident as well as definite in our conclusions regarding their function of structure. But only Corneille, Racine, and some nineteenth-century playwrights have left us with some direct evidence as to how they composed - not Sh. And they do not help us much; the process of dramatic art is far too complex to permit of generalization. We may be able to say negatively, with assurance, that Sh. was not merely a hack-writer or slapdash entertainer like many of his associates. But if we would dare to conjecture on the process of construction in his plays, the only possible way of arguing is a posteriori.

## Chapter 2

1. Hero's simulation of death in Much Ado to hasten Claudio's repentance for his slander anticipates similar incidents in the last plays. In R.J. Juliet's apparent death is of tragic consequence.
2. In Cy. Arviragus and Guiderius show reverence over the grave of their supposed mother and are drawn to Imogen (disguised as Fidele) as if she were their brother. Negatively, in his speech denouncing all women Posthumus includes his mother. Marina in P. several times laments her orphanhood. In W.T. this theme is particularly pronounced. Polixenes and Leontes are in a very special sense attached to their sons, and Hermione thinks of her father, "the emperor of Russia", during the scene of her trial.
3. see below, p. 254.
4. The political action in Tr. is evident.
5. see Appendix A.
6. It is difficult to find any justification for Shaw's "simplified" resolution, for it is neither skilful nor simplified. It demonstrates rather too blatantly Shaw's limitations.

of Beaumont and Fletcher" (p. 173). In the earlier pages of this chapter, plentiful evidence was furnished to disprove part of this contention. P. was based on material from romance, and is a dramatic romance.

13. Philaster, Four Plays in One, Theirry and Theoderet, The Maid's Tragedy, Cupid's Revenge, A King and No King.
14. Thorndike dates Philaster 1608, Cy. 1610. Chambers, who dates Cy. 1609-10, comments (in W.S., I, p. 485): "The plot has a close resemblance to Beaumont and Fletcher's Philaster, but it is impossible to say with which play the priority rests. Philaster cannot be shown to have existed before 8 October 1610, when John Davies of Hereford's Scourge of Folly, which contains a mention of it, was registered". Since then, no further evidence on this matter has come to light.
15. see above, p. 12.
16. with the exception of Four Plays in One.
17. Harbage, in Annals of English Drama, suggests 1612 as the most likely date for Four Plays in One, but gives as limits 1608-13.

An episode in "The Triumph of Time", the last section of Four Plays in One, reminds one of Cy. Anthropos prays thus to Jupiter:

O! Jupiter, if I have ever offer'd  
Upon thy burning Altars but one Sacrifice  
Thou and thy fair ey'd Juno smil'd upon;  
If ever, to thine honour, bounteous feasts,  
Where all thy statu[e]s sweet with wine and incense,  
Have by the Son of earth been celebrated:  
Hear me (the child of shame now) hear thou helper,  
And take my wrongs into thy hands, thou justice  
Done by unmindful man, unmerciful,  
Against his master done, against thy order;  
And raise again, thou father of all honour,  
The poor despis'd, but yet thy noblest creature.  
Raise from his ruins once more this sunk Cedar  
That all may fear thy power, and I proclaim it;  
(Works, X, p. 359)

Upon these words, Jupiter and Mercury descend. Cymbeline at the end of Sh.'s play offers sacrifice on Jupiter's altar. He is moreover referred to as a "cedar". But the scenes of Jupiter's entry have little in common.

18. The Comedies of Chapman, p. 759.

19. Coleridge, in his famous catalogue of distinctions between Sh.'s plays and those of "all other dramatic poets", lists first: "Expectation in reference to surprise" (Essays and Lectures, pp. 52-3).
20. see The Jacobean Drama, p. 268, where Ellis-Fermor, while briefly discussing Sh.'s last plays and their relation to Beaumont and Fletcher, writes:

"He, like Romelio, had 'taken out' that lesson of death and was concerned with the basis, not of death, but of life. And so, by one of those paradoxes which the drama continually offers us, Shakespeare used for the culminating expression of his faith in reality that form which its inventors had devised as a means of escape. The fairy tale with him becomes charged with those implications which the more immediate types of story could not present, becomes the vehicle of imaginative experience and interprets the real world more truly than do the records of actuality."
21. This play was published only in 1661, by Francis Kirkman. Chambers dates it c. 1600 (E.S., IV, p. 49) and Harbage ca. 1598. But neither of them state reasons. It may just as likely have appeared in 1605 or 1610.
22. Francis Kirkman attributed its authorship to John Webster and William Rowley. He was probably led to this absurd assumption by the similarity of the play's plot to that of William Webster's Curan and Argentile, 1617. But, as Chambers says rightly, William Webster took the story from Warner's Albion's England, IV, xx, not from Greene. His manner of telling the story, moreover, shows even less resemblance to Sh.'s last plays than does The Thracian Wonder.
23. Both plays are based on similar romances by Greene, Menaphon being the source of The Thracian Wonder. It may be well here to supply a full list of incidents and passages resembling those in W.T. (page references are to Hazlitt's Webster, IV):
  - i) in I, i, Pheander sets his daughter and her baby afloat on the main (p. 126);
  - ii) I, ii introduces an old shepherd with his clownish son. They refer to a storm, which is directly presented in I, iii. Palemon, another shepherd, encounters Serena, the princess, and offers to make her "the shepherds' queen" (p. 134);
  - iii) in II, i, the angry gods cause a deadly infection in Pheander's kingdom. Pheander's tyranny, however, continues, though a letter to Sophos, his brother, seems to prove the innocence and chastity of his daughter. Finally, he sends messengers to Delphos;
  - iv) II, ii introduces a shepherd festival. The disguised princess is, like Perdita, the shepherds' queen. Tityrus proclaims that her beauty  
"like the sun,

Melts all my frost away;  
And now, instead of winter,  
Behold a youthful May."

(p. 150)

v) in II, iii, the oracle of Apollo is revealed, but, like Leontes, Pheander rejects it in III, i;  
vi) finally, we note the phrase, "This would put life in statues carv'd with hands", occurring in III, ii (p. 163).  
The time of the action of The Thracian Wonder is twenty years, sufficient for Pheander's grand-daughter to grow up.

24. For Day's Humour Out Of Breath and its possible relation to the last plays, see App. D. The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, a play first printed in 1589, has been recently suggested, in spite of its crude structure, as an important source for Cy. (by Nosworthy, intro. to New Arden ed.). The two lovers in the play, prince Hermione and Fidelia, may have supplied respectively the names for Leontes' wife in W.T. and for the disguised Imogen in Cy. Hermione's presentation, moreover, reminds us somewhat of Posthumus' in Act I of Cy. The play also contains an exiled courtier, Bomelia. Disguised as a hermit, he lives in a cave and studies books of magic. He is, like Belarius, introduced only in Act III. But his resemblance to Prospero or Belarius is slim. The play ends in forgiveness and reconciliation. But this forgiveness is mainly the result of the intervention by Venus and Fortune, members of a frame-plot of a type without parallel in Sh.

As serious tragi-comedy, The Gentleman Usher, first published in 1606 (recorded in The Stationer's Register in 1605), precedes both Beaumont and Fletcher's plays and Sh.'s romances by several years. But it differs notably from both. In this play, father and son are presented as rivals in love. There is no motif of lost and found children, and if we can speak of a plot of two generations at all, it is handled differently from that in the last plays. Of great interest, however, is the use of miracle in this play - Strozza is cured by Christian patience and faith; Vicentio and Margaret are restored to health and beauty by a doctor who reminds one of Cerimon in P. - and the stress on the Duke's repentance and the pardon he receives near the end. The main weakness of the play is its too great diversity of interests.

### Chapter 3

1. The main sources of P. are various versions of the story of the old Latin romance (whose lost original was possibly in Greek) of Apollonius of Tyre, especially those by Gower (in Confessio Amantis, VIII) and Laurence Twine; there may also have been an earlier play on the story. The source of W.T. is Greene's Pandosto; those of Cy. are Boccaccio's Decameron II, ix, Holinshed, and (as argued convincingly by Nosworthy in his ed. of Cy.) Frederyke of Jennen.

2. Frederike of Jennen may be described as a folk-tale rather than a novelle. It has been clearly established, however, that Shakespeare knew Boccaccio.
3. Pettet's study is useful in a number of ways but singularly disappointing in its survey of romance. The writers of the Greek romances, which were translated in Sh.'s day, are not even mentioned in the index; thus Pettet's summary of the characteristics of the genre contains several inaccuracies. Wolff's study, though severely limited, is very helpful.
4. I hope to engage on a more systematic study of this subject at some later date.
5. Wolff, in The Greek Romances . . ., cites numerous and convincing evidence.
6. A defence of this statement would have to be elaborate, and is not included here as it would take us beyond the scope of this thesis. I am aware that such a defence might also entail important qualification.
7. Wolff's account of Daphnis and Chloë is useful.
8. Wolff, op. cit., p. 199.
9. see also the story of Argente and Curan in Warner's Albion's England, IV, xx. Guarini's Pastor Fido, however, contains no urban framework.
10. see Craig's comment on Pandosto: "The first part is, roughly speaking, in the vein of Theagenes and Chariclea, and the second part in that of Daphnis and Chloë" (in An Interpretation of Sh., p. 337).
11. The translations are by Underdowne, 1587, and by William Burton, 1597. Sh. may have been acquainted with some of their subject matter through painting. Julio Romano, who is mentioned in W.T., collaborated with Raphael in at least two paintings suggested by Achilles Tatius. Other Gk. romances, such as Chariton's Chaereas and Callirhoe, had not been printed by Sh.'s time.  
Sh. refers directly to Heliodorus only once, in T.N., V, i, 111-4. Some textual evidence of Sh.'s direct indebtedness to Greek romance has been listed by Cowl (Sources of the Text of Henry the Fourth, pp. 42-3) and by Perrott (Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift 3). Perrott thinks that seven passages in the final scene of C.E. are directly influenced by the last two books of Achilles Tatius.
12. see below, p. 149.

13. The following statement in Adlington's translation of Apuleius' Golden Ass is typical of the spirit of Gk. romance:  
"Howbeit, fortune, or the fatal disposition of the divine providence, which neither can be avoided by wise counsell, neither yet by any wholesome remedie, invented a new torment . . ." (pp. 143-4).
14. see P., V, Gower, 17; see also below, p. 88.
15. not in Heliodorus or Achilles Tattius. In mediaeval versions of Apollonius of Tyre, Apollonius is partly conceived as a knight; thus the scene of the lists in P.
16. Heliodorus, pp. 160-1.
17. For a discussion of notable exceptions to this rule, especially of Melitta, see Wolff and Todd.

#### Chapter 4

1. Knight advocates in The Crown of Life that the play is by Sh. alone. Though disagreeing with him, I am indebted to his stimulating analysis of the play.
2. W.S., I, pp. 518-28.
3. Instances in the time of James I of printers' attributing a drama falsely to a well-established playwright are many; thus A Yorkshire Tragedy came to be thought of as Sh.'s.
4. see App. D.
5. Craig, "P. and The Painfull Aduentures" and Muir, "The Problem of P." Both argue independently that Wilkins' novel was not based on P. as we know it, but on an earlier version of the play, which Muir calls "Ur-Pericles". Craig points out important revisions in the fourth act of the play, by comparison with the novel; the treatment of Lysimachus, ruler of Mitylene, differs considerably. He also cites evidence that the fifth act was revised. Muir, who accepts, though not in every detail, Sykes' thesis, expressed in Sidelights on Sh., believes that P. and Wilkins' novel are independently based on an older form of the play, which was probably by Wilkins. He concludes: "Shakespeare's play was based on the Ur-Pericles; but he doubtless knew Gower, and had possibly read Twine" (p. 81). We are, of course, in possession of no record from the period to prove that an Ur-Pericles existed. But the contentions of both authors are convincing. Muir's article, incidentally, reveals blatantly how extremely complicated the whole problem is.

6. e.g. Bor, Twee Tragi-comedien . . ., 1617, and Bernier de la Brousse, Les Heureuses Infortunes, 1618. Both plays are based on versions of the Gesta Romanorum. Vicente's Comedia de Rubena, of much earlier date, is based on Gower's version.
7. see Halliwell, A Copy of a Letter . . .: "In the Kinges greate chamber they went to see the play of Pirraeles, Prince of Tyre, which lasted till two a clocke. After two actes, the playeres ceased till the French all refreshed them with Sweetmeates brought in chynay voiders, and wyne and ale in bottelles. After, the players began anewe" (p. 11).
8. Edwards, "An Approach to the Problem of P."
9. Liber Octavus, 271-2028.
10. see below, p. 105.
11. P. was probably first acted in 1607 or early in 1608. The first known performances of W.T. and Tp. were in 1611. P. was entered in The Stationer's Register on June 20, 1608. Lorzi Giustinian, Venetian ambassador in London from 1606-8, saw the play. The title-page of Q1, published in 1609, informs us that by then it had been "sundry times" acted. Wilkins, in his prose-version entitled The Painfull Aduentures, 1608, also refers to the play. Cf. discussion of the date of P. in W.S., I, p. 521 ff.
12. see below, p. 201 ff.
13. see below, pp. 94-5.
14. Cf. pp. 68-9 above, and fn. 7 to this chapter, below.
15. Cf. Chapter 3: "The Material of the Last Plays".
16. In Gower, Apollonius teaches his bride-to-be the harp, and after long wooing she reveals her love for Apollonius to her father in a letter. In Twine, almost three chapters are devoted to Apollonius' wooing of Lucina. Wilkins elaborates similarly.
17. Nor can any parallel use of the chorus be found in Senecan tragedy or in Plautine or Terentian comedy. See, however, part i of App. C.
18. I, Gower, 8.
19. II, Gower, 7-8.
20. The Painfull Aduentures, 1608.
21. see the different handling of the double recognition at the end of W.T., which is discussed in Chapter 6.

22. It is, however, not necessary in this context to pass judgment on the quality of spectacle in this play; the emphasis upon it is what matters.
23. The Crown of Life, pp. 32-75. Nothing whatever in the text supports the notion that Pericles' own virtue is affected by his experience at Antioch, and Knight is therefore wrong in ascribing to Pericles a "fall".
24. "Pericles II, v", N and Q. Muir argues that in the faulty Q1, part of II, v has been lost. He argues that Diana causes the storm which brings death to Thaisa at sea, enraged by her breaking of the vow to "weare Dianas liverie" for another twelve months. Such an interpolation, as Muir states, would bring P. more in line with W.T. I do not accept Muir's view.
25. see below, p. 103 ff. and App. C.
26. II, Gower, 7-8.
27. This contrast has recently been pointed out by Tompkins in "Why Pericles?". Her argument to a large extent parallels mine. But the point that Pericles endures suffering calmly was surely made long ago. Tompkins does not develop this idea, as is done in the following pages. But her article contains valuable suggestions, and she quotes a pertinent passage from Cor., which in sentiment anticipates P.:  
Fortunes's blows,  
When most struck home, being gentle wounded, craves  
A noble cunning.  
(IV, 1, 7-9)
28. While it would be difficult to prove that all the storms in P. are endowed with symbolic meaning, one can hardly help reading into this particular passage some significance concerning Pericles' state of mind. Though in an extremely perturbed condition, Pericles retains some inward strength, which enables him to "ride out" this storm. This, however, is a risky reading.
29. The Crown of Life, p. 65.
30. It is however anticipated in some brief passages, such as the one quoted in fn. 27 above.
31. in Obras Espirituales, first published in 1618. As is well known, T. S. Eliot drew heavily on this work for his Ash Wednesday, which contains a similar passive treatment of the process of purgation in the soul.
32. Muir, in "The Problem of P.", has cast doubt on the general assumption that Sh. used Twine. His argument is fairly convincing, though it depends largely on another assumption, the existence of an Ur-Pericles.



33. Confessio Amantis, VIII, 1999-2015.
34. Sh. probably knew the story in the Gesta Romanorum, though this cannot be proven. It forms the 153rd story. Its title, "Of Temporary Tribulation", suggests a purpose closer to that of the play itself than does either Gower's or Twine's version. The Gesta Romanorum was known by several of Sh.'s contemporaries who rewrote the story of Apollonius of Tyre; see App. E.
35. Confessio Amantis, VIII, 1066-80.
36. I am quoting Swan's modernized English version. Twine describes this incident as follows: ". . . like a madman distracted he tare his cloths, and rent his haire" (p. E3<sup>v</sup> in undated [1594?] ed.).
37. Neither Cy. nor W.T. can be said to be free of melodramatic incidents. But the thesis could, I believe, be defended that in his last plays, Sh. reduced considerably the number of melodramatic incidents inherent in or suggested by his sources, while the practice of Beaumont and Fletcher was rather in the opposite direction. But this would necessitate a book of its own; one which would leave little of Thorndike's dissertation standing.
38. see App. B.
39. In App. C, especially part ii, the evidence for the argument of the following two pages is presented in greater detail.
40. Cf. App. C, part i.
41. Chettle's Tobias was printed and probably performed in 1602; see E.S., II, p. 179.
42. Harbage, in Annals, lists the following plays, all lost, based on biblical subjects between 1590 and 1610: Abraham and Lot, Hester and Ahasuerus (both revived by one of Henslowe's companies in 1590), Nebuchadnezzar (1596), Pontius Pilate (1597, possibly by Dekker), Judas (1602, by Haughton, Bird and S. Rowley), Tobias (1602, by Chettle), Jepthah (1602, by Dekker and Munday), Joshua (1602, by S. Rowley), Three [or Two] Brothers [Absolom] (1602, by W. Smith), Samson (1602). Probably all of these plays were performed in London.
43. see fn. 34, above.
44. Seznek presents a wealth of evidence in support of this contention.
45. Everyman, line 407.

46. I have been told, however, that two recent revivals of P. have proven, that the play can be successful on the stage. Nugent Monck produced it at Stratford in 1948, and the group of Players under Thirty, with Paul Scofield in the title-role, in London during 1950.

#### Chapter 5

1. Raleigh, Johnson on Sh., p. 183.
2. see Lives of the Poets, I, p. 14.
3. see below, pp. 128-9.
4. Masefield, Sh., pp. 223-4.
5. This mistake is even repeated by Nosworthy in his intro. to Cy. (The New Arden Shakespeare).
6. Gower's introduction to Act II prepares us for a happy resolution in P.:  
"I'll show you those in troubles reign,  
Losing a mite, a mountain gain".
7. particularly by Giralaldi (Cinthio), on whose technique Biancale comments (p. 142):  
"Gli argomenti dei suoi drammi hanno tutti qualcosa di troppo simile; oltrechè peccano d'un difetto capitale che, cioè, la parte dell'azione che il poeta sceneggia è, come valore tragico, uguale a quella que lascia raccontare dai personaggi e che costituisce l'antefatto".  
In Discorsi, p. 208, Giralaldi discusses the problem, with special reference to Oedipus Rex, at what point of the action the poet should decide to begin his play.
8. For a discussion of the authorship of the Vision, see below, pp. 141-3.
9. Decamerone, II, 9. The same story is told in Frederyke of Jennen, the first English version of which appeared in 1518. A convincing case has recently been made for Fréderyke as a direct source; see Thrall, "'Cymbeline', Boccaccio, and the wager story in England", and Nosworthy's intro. to Cy.  
The historical scenes are derived from Holinshed, yet with considerable alterations. No convincing source has as yet been suggested for the scenes of Belarius and the two royal princes. Nosworthy also advances some considerable evidence for The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune as a source.
10. Notes and Lectures upon Sh., p. 209; quoted by Furness, New Variorum ed. of Cy., p. 7.

11. As suggested in fn. 7 above, some structural characteristics of Cy. closely fit Giraldi's theory of tragi-comedy; see App. A.
12. Sh.'s Problem Plays, p. 140; see his discussion, pp. 140-2.
13. We should not forget Imogen's silent forgiveness of Posthumus' crime, which precedes his forgiveness of Iachimo's.
14. Note that the Roman emperor often stands for God or Christ in the Gesta Romanorum.
15. see Granville-Barker's attack on Belarius' monologue in Prefaces to Sh., 2nd series, p. 242.
16. see below, p. 126 ff. and p. 144.
17. see below, p. 155 ff.
18. see above, p. 124.
19. a phrase used by E. J. Pratt in a lecture recital on his narrative poem, The Titanic.
20. An earlier instance of grotesque irony applied to a situation of intense pathos is Gloucester's attempted suicide in K.L.
21. The discussion of the problematic Vision in this scene, however, will be deferred until p. 141.
22. For other discussions of the Vision, see Dowden's intro. to Cy., pp. xxxviii-xl and W.S., I, p. 486.
23. in TLS, p. 958.
24. On the other hand, even the greatest tragic drama is liable to fail in its appeal as entertainment towards some individuals, namely those few whose personal experience by some freak of circumstance happens to be closely related to the basic situation of the play. A negro who marries a white woman in a partly hostile society may find it difficult to sit through Othello; so may his wife.
25. see Alexander's simple but convincing refutation of those critics who stress the influence of the Blackfriars' stage, in A Shakespeare Primer, p. 126. As Simon Forman saw Cy. at the Globe in 1611, and we do not know of any earlier performances of the play at Blackfriars, it is better to leave Blackfriars out of account when discussing the form of Cy.

26. e.g. Why did you suffer Iachimo,  
Slight thing of Italy,  
To taint his nobler heart and brain  
With needless jealousy;  
And to become the geck and scorn  
O' the other's villany?  
(V, iv, 63-8)

27. Jupiter, however, is conceived more comically than Jehovah in the Book of Job.

28. Books and Characters, pp. 49-50.

29. Wilson, The Meaning of The Tempest; Alexander, op. cit., pp. 123 and 131-2.

30. Since writing these pages, I have however learned that independently, Nosworthy in his intro. to Cy. is laying similar stress on the play as a romance.

31. Characters of Sh.'s Plays, p. 1.

32. For further evidence that Sh. was acquainted with these romances, see fn. 11 to Chapter 3.

33. as it has been recently discussed by Knight in The Crown of Life.

34. As pointed out in Chapter 2, however, Sh. devised a similarly complex ending for M.M.

35. see below, pp. 159-60.

36. see also III, v, 157-9. Note, however, that Imogen, too, comments on her dishonesty, however slight, when taken into Lucius' service as Fidele:

If I do lie and do  
No harm by it, though the gods hear, I hope  
They'll pardon it.

(IV, ii, 378-80)

Yet the heroines of Greek romance seem little troubled, when causing harm to their captors in order to get out of their clutches.

37. In some versions of the story of Apollonius of Tyre, Apollonius strikes his daughter in a similar way, immediately before the recognition. Sh. may well have derived the similar incident in Cy. from there.

38. Book 8 of The most delectable . . . historye of Clitophon and Leucippe, pp. 132-3 in the reprint of 1923.

39. I am indebted to Nosworthy for this piece of evidence.

40. Hazlitt here provides a satisfactory reason for the long explanatory monologues, against which Granville-Barker has raised objections.
41. John Gough's The Strange Discovery, 1640, is the earliest extant English dramatization of Heliodorus. See, however, Hardy, Les Chastes Amours de Théagène et Cariclée, probably written c. 1600-10.
42. Note the contrast, consciously designed or not, between Imogen's imaginative speed and the "fool's speed" of Cloten, emphasized especially in III, v and vi.
43. see for instance Posthumus' strikingly vivid description of the battle in V, iii, to which attention was recently drawn by Leavis in "The Criticism of Sh.'s Last Plays . . .".
44. The Development of Sh.'s Imagery.
45. The Language of Sh.'s Plays.
46. Generalizing or aphoristic statements, like the one quoted, abound in Cy.; e.g. Imogen's "To lapse in fulness Is sorer than to lie in need" (III, vi, 12-3), and Lucius' "Some falls are means the happier to arise" (IV, ii, 406).
47. see above, section C of this chapter.
48. The image, "melted . . . (in)to air", occurs three times in the last plays; cf. Tr. IV, i, 150 and W.T., III, iii, 37.
49. For other instances in the final scene, see lines 11, 29, 31, 104, 120, 126-8 etc.
50. In his intro. to Cy., Nosworthy dwells at some length on the theme of unification.
51. "sear" in this passage may either mean "cere" (wax) or be a corruption from "seal".
52. Sh.'s Imagery, pp. 292-6.
53. As Nosworthy has pointed out in his introduction, the images referring to birds in the play are numerous and may have a special significance connected with the myth of the phoenix; this contention is made all the more likely by the references in the play to the "cedar" tree, one of the traditional seats of the phoenix. In that case, much of the imagery I have termed "natural" would in fact be "supernatural". I intend to study this aspect further, but so far have not been able to discover any clear pattern in the imagery of birds and trees which would prove an underlying significance different from and beyond the one I am suggesting in these pages.

54. Perdita's character in W.T., IV, iv is developed along similar lines. She, too, acts like a princess or queen. The pastoral convention of royal children who are brought up in pastoral or "mean" surroundings ignorant of their birth, and who yet betray in physical beauty, speech, and action their true origin, is ably discussed by Kenmore in his intro. to Tp. (The New Arden Sh.).
55. see above, p. 176.
56. in "The Significance of 'Cymbeline'" and Sh.'s Imagery respectively.
57. see also above, fn. 53.
58. see above, pp. 143-7 and 159-62.
59. This problem I hope to investigate in some later study. Giraldi and other Italian critics of the sixteenth century have pertinent comments to make on the form of verse and other aspects of style best suited to tragi-comedy. The considerable freedom in the metre of the verse in the last plays is usually explained in terms of Sh.'s development as a dramatic poet. But Sh. may have depended in this respect more on tradition than is commonly believed; there may, in other words, be an explanation in terms of the form of his last plays.  
Another aspect of the diction of Cy. is its frequent "metaphysical" character, reminding one of Donne, as in Posthumus' monologue in prison and in Imogen's comment when Pisanio returns from Posthumus who has just embarked for Italy:  
I would have broke mine eye-strings, crack'd them, but  
To look upon him, till the diminution  
Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle;  
(I, iii, 17-9)
60. Pandosto (ed. Thomas), pp. 42-3.

#### Chapter 6

1. Wolff, in The Greek Romances, pp. 454-5, argues convincingly that Sh. drew the incident of the Shepherd's hunt in III, iii from Day's version of Daphnis and Chloë. In Pandosto the shepherd discovers the child on a walk across his fields.
2. For full title, see bibliography. In its first ed. of 1588, the romance is entitled Pandosto, The Triumph of Time . . .; in the reprint of 1607, it is called The Historie of Dorastus and Fawnia . . .
3. For dramatic analogues of P. and W.T., see App. E and F respectively.

4. Cerimon revives Thaisa, Paulina revives Hermione. Cerimon is in charge of the temple of Diana on the island of Ephesus; Paulina restrains Leontes from remarrying before the oracle has been fulfilled (W.T., V, i, 35-46), and it is in her "house" that the reunion between Leontes and Hermione takes place.
5. When Beaumont and Fletcher introduce surprising incidents, they usually do not employ poetic preparation, as Sh. does for the scene of the statue during V, i; see below, p. 253 ff.
6. In P., the scenes portraying the three storms and the scene of restoration (V, i); in Cy., the opening and final scenes and III, iii.
7. see the discussion of Perdita in section B iv of this chapter, below.
8. Bullard and Fox, in a recent letter to T.L.S. (March 14, 52) contend that the ending of W.T. in a hypothetical earlier version was considerably different from that in F. In support of this theory, they argue that "the elaborate stage business" of Autolycus' change of clothes with Florizel suggests that in the original version, Autolycus was directly associated with the recognition of Perdita. I can see no ground for such an assumption. The present and following paragraphs in my text furnish a partial answer to this theory.
9. This matter is further discussed in section B v and C of this chapter.
10. The Development of Sh.'s Imagery, pp. 195-6.
11. At the Phoenix Theatre, London, in the autumn of 1951. No general criticism is intended of this impressive production.
12. Recently, Stewart has advanced a fairly convincing interpretation of Leontes' jealousy with the help of Freudian psychology. He points out that Leontes' behaviour fits the "paranoic pattern". This interpretation differs from mine essentially only in one respect: it locates the cause of the disease in Leontes' mind; see Character and Motive in Sh., pp. 33-7.
13. Approach to Sh., p. 130.
14. The animal imagery in the following passage also serves to characterize Leontes' state of mind. Speaking to Mamillius, he says:

Come, captain,  
We must be neat; not neat, but cleanly, captain:

And yet the steer, the heifer and the calf  
Are all call'd neat. - Still virginalling  
Upon his palm! - How now, you wanton calf!  
Art thou my calf?

(I, ii, 122-7)

Dr. Johnson comments thus on this passage: "Leontes, seeing his son's nose smutch'd, cries, 'We must be neat'; then recollecting that 'neat' is the ancient term for horned cattle, he says, 'not neat, but cleanly!'" To Leontes, the term can hardly have been "ancient"! But the real point of the passage is that it shows Leontes' mind wandering back, almost inevitably it seems, to the subject of animals, so enslaved already is his mind by his jealous obsession.

15. Mucedorus, an extremely popular play in its day, was revived in 1610, probably to satisfy the increasing demand for tragic-comic romance. Close to the beginning of the play, the heroine is pursued by a bear. Shortly later, Mouse, the play's clown, tumbles over it. The bear is killed off-stage by Mucedorus, who re-enters carrying the beast's head.
16. for instance Hermione's brief aside, in which she refers to her father, the Emperor of Russia (III, ii, 120-4). Her manner throughout the scene is simple and direct, as well as dignified. Another instance of the kind of human touch rarely found in Elizabethan drama outside of Sh. are Paulina's words when, after her denunciation of Leontes' tyranny, upon seeing his grieved expression, she says: "Alas! I have show'd too much The rashness of a woman; he is touch'd To the noble heart" (III, ii, 221-3).
17. I am referring to the passage of censorious import in Conversations with William Drummond, quoted in W.S., II, p. 207, which runs: "Shakespeare in a play brought in a number of men saying they had suffered shipwreck in Bohemia, wher ther is no Sea near by some 100 Miles."
18. see above, pp. 145-6 etc.
19. That a chorus of Time appeared in an Elizabethan play antedating W.T. can be deduced from the following entry in Henslowe's Diary (I, p. 120):  
"Lent vnto Robart Shaw the 2 of aprell 1600 for to } xxxxs.  
by a Robe for tyme some of . . . ."

A chorus of Time very similar to Shakespeare's occurs in Bredero's Griane, a Dutch play on the romance of Palmerin d'Oliva, which was acted in 1612; see App. F. Den Hertog, in "De bronnen van Breeroc's romantische spelen", voices the belief, since repeated by other Dutch scholars, that Bredero modelled his chorus directly on that of W.T., which may have been acted by a company of comedians in Amsterdam.





12. Kenmore in his intro. to Tp. (The New Arden Sh.) thus comments on Antonio:  
"A world without Antonio is a world without freedom; Prospero's shipwreck cannot restore him if he desires not to be restored, to life. The gods chalk out a tragicomic way, but enforce only disaster. The rest is voluntary."
13. see below, pp. 282-3.
14. The Tempest, or The Enchanted Island, 1670; see also Duffett's Mock-Tempest, 1675.

### Chapter 8

1. The proneness to anger of both Prospero and Posthumus is stressed several times in Tp. and Cy.; see, for instance, Tp., IV, i and Cy., II, v and V, iii.  
Other parallels between the two plays are as follows:
  - i) in IV, i of Tp., Stephano and Trinculo are distracted from their purpose by a clothes-line; cf. the importance garment have for Cloten;
  - ii) Ferdinand's opening speech in Tp., III, i on the meanness of his task, especially the words "some kinds of baseness Are nobly undergone, and most poor matters Point to rich ends", remind us of the Posthumus of "beggarly looks" in Act V of Cy.;
  - iii) Prospero mentions that his "zenith doth depend upon A most auspicious star" (Tp., I, ii, 181-2); cf. Jupiter in Cy., referring to Posthumus: "Our Jovial star reign'd at his birth" (V, iv, 105);
  - iv) compare: Whom best I love I cross; to make my gift,  
The more delay'd, delighted  
(Cy., V, iv, 101-2)  
with: If I have too austerely punish'd you,  
Your compensation makes amends; for I  
Have given you here a third of mine own life,  
. . . ;  
(Tp., IV, i, 150)
  - v) as mentioned before, the image "melted (in)to air" occurs in both plays (Cy., I, iii, 20-1 and Tp., IV, i, 150).
2. Cymbeline also undergoes a change of character, but the process is not carefully traced.

### Appendix A

1. It was fairly common during the Renaissance to describe a play of serious action with a happy ending as a tragedy, for Aristotle's definition of tragedy makes no mention of an unhappy ending. At the same time, one should bear in mind

that the same Renaissance play which was called a comedy in one edition, might be announced as a tragedy in another. There was little consistency, generally, in the use of the terms "comedy", "tragedy", "history", "tragi-comedy", etc. Interestingly enough, however, Strozzi wrote in his dedication to the Erotilla, 1615:

"I do not wish that others christen it a tragi-commedia, because that would show a misunderstanding of the meaning of the word, and ignorance of the sense in which the ancients have used it" (translation by Ristine, p. 33 ). He presumably refers to Horace, Ars Poetica, 221-9, and to the prologue to Plautus' Amphitruo.

2. see below, p. 302.
3. Il Pastor Fido was received with immense acclaim all over Europe. It was translated into English in 1602 by an anonymous author.
4. For the story of M.M. Sh. depended mainly on Whetstone's Heptameron. But Sh. was probably also indebted to either or both versions of the story by Giraldi (Hecatommithi, VIII, 5 and Epitia).
5. Poetics, XIII.
6. My own translation from the Discorsi, p. 214.
7. in Gilbert, p. 258; Gilbert translated only part of Giraldi's treatise. The original of this quotation occurs in Discorsi, p. 224.
8. i.e. in 1548; however, G. Trissino's Poetica, which was written early in the century (though its final sections were printed only in 1563) reveals that he had studied the Poetics in MS.
9. Gilbert, pp. 258-9.
10. Considerable duplication of character and incident also occurs in Ip.; see pp. 265-6, above.
11. see Discorsi, p. 208.
12. Biancale, p. 142.
13. first published in 1554.
14. Discorsi, p. 221.
15. see Biancale, pp. 140-1.
16. from The Apology for Dido, as translated in Gilbert, p. 248; the original is to be found in Le Tragedie, p. 138.

17. see above, Chapter 2, p. 47; a god is introduced in Four Plays in One.
18. Gilbert, p. 255; from Discorsi, p. 219.
19. e.g. Discorsi, pp. 242-3, particularly: ". . . per opra delle quali anco spesso si acquetano esse turbe, & si riducono a pace & a quiete".
20. Gilbert, p. 257; from Discorsi, p. 222.
21. Nowhere in Giraldi, however, is the grotesque handling of Cloten's death anticipated.
22. see Discorsi, pp. 229-34; he refers especially to Seneca's Troades.
23. Guarini, Il Verato Secondo, 1593, 4th division; discussed by Ristine, p. 39.
24. Il Compendio della Poesia Tragi-comica; partly translated by Gilbert, pp. 514-33.
25. Ibid., Section V.
26. Ibid., Section LI.

#### Appendix C

1. see above, p. 80.
2. A chorus is also used in R.J., where, however, it appears only twice, as a prologue and at the opening of the second act. Its functions are clearly to prepare the audience at the beginning for the tragic mood of the play, and to provide a smooth transition between Acts I and II.
3. Opening Chorus, 29-30.
4. V, Gower, 3-6.
5. For full title pages of these plays, see bibliography. App. D is devoted to a closer study of the possible relation between Barnes, Day and Shakespeare.
6. Fenton, The Historie of Guicciardin.
7. K.L. was performed on Dec. 26, 1606, The Divils Charter on Feb. 2, 1607; see E.S., IV, 121-2.

8. The chorus of The Travailes does not assume one rigid allegorical shape; at least once, he comes close to representing Time itself (p. C3). But I doubt whether Sh. found here a hint for his chorus of Time in W.T.
9. The plays were first published in 1611, 12, and 13 respectively but may have been acted earlier.
10. This statement applies least to The Golden Age among the three plays.
11. see fn. 8, above.
12. The Divils Charter and The Travailes both probably precede P. in date. Choruses also are employed in Lochrine, The Life and Death of Thomas Lord Cromwell, and Lodge's A Looking Glasse, for London and England, all of which appeared much earlier than P. But in none of these plays does the use of the chorus anticipate that of Gower closely. In Lochrine Ate enters as a chorus before each act and at the close. In a primitive manner, she points out the general moral of each act, in most instances presenting an allegorical dumbshow with moral bearing on the scenes which follow. She does not narrate any part of the action.  
A chorus enters three times during the play of Thomas Lord Cromwell, before II, i, III, iii, and IV, i (scenes as in Hazlitt's ed., The Doubtful Plays of W. Sh.). This chorus obviously speaks for the poet and the players, and though its speeches are much briefer, they resemble in tenour those of the chorus in Hen.V. Lodge's A Looking Glasse combines three actions and is altogether a very disjointed play. Two choruses are employed, the prophet Oseas in the first half, Jonas in the second. Both pass moral comment on the action. The device is obviously awkward. Individual scenes in this play, however, are well handled, and remarkable for the quality of both verse and prose.
13. edited by Furnivall in The Digby Mysteries.
14. For a good discussion of this point, see Ristine, English Tragicomedy, Ch. 1.
15. The only pure saint-play in English which has survived is The Conversion of St. Paul, a Digby play. Extant also is a Cornish play on St. Meriasek or Mereadocus, known as Beunans Meriasek (ed. by Stokes), whose construction, apart from its extreme looseness, differs considerably from that of Mary Magdalene. Chambers speaks of Mary Magdalene, Ashton's Julian the Apostate, and Smith's Destruction of Jerusalem as standing half-way between cycle plays and saint-plays (Mediaeval Stage, II, 132-3). But, as he tells us, numerous other saint-plays were performed in different parts of England. In French, a considerable number of saint-plays have survived; see de Julleville, Les Mystères.

16. in Representative English Comedies, I, p. xxxviii.
17. not strictly a saint-play; see note 15. Yet it approximates closely enough to the saint-play to serve our purpose. Harbage, Annals, lists it as a "miracle-morality", because it contains several allegorical figures. As limits of its date, he gives 1480-1520. Lewis Wager's The Life and Repentance of Mary Magdalene is a pure morality; no miracle is presented.
18. Furnivall divides the play into two parts, with fifty-two scenes; such a division was presumably suggested to him by the MS.
19. Yet Mary's adventures are not measured by the scale of fortune, but rather by that of efficacy of faith. The King of Marcyll of this Digby pageant, however, undergoes a reversal of fortune, much as Pericles does.
20. In Mary Magdalene, Part II, scene 41, the storm increases after the Queen's death and the King prays to God to save his child. Then the sailor enters:

navta. benedicite, benedicite!  
qwat wethyr may þis be?  
ower mast woll all a-sondyr.

boy. Master, I þer-to ley myn ere:  
it is for þis ded body þat we bere;  
cast hyr owt, or elles we synke ond [ yr].  
(make redy for to cast hyr owt)

Rex. nay, for goddes sake, do natt so!  
& 3e wyll hyr in-to þe se cast,  
gyntyll seres, for my love do.  
3ender is a roch in þe west,  
as ley hyr þer-on all a-bove,  
and my chyld hyr by.

(lines 1776-87)

So they do, and the King prays to Mary Magdalene to guide the child to safety. In scene 44, on the return voyage, he discovers the child sound on the same rock, and his Queen suddenly awakes from a trance, whereupon he blesses Mary Magdalene (l. 1892 ff.).

In a French mystère on Mary Magdalene, which de Julleville lists as the twenty-fourth of the "cycle des saints", the incident is treated in almost exactly the same way. It was probably written about 1500, but the earliest printed ed. we know of is dated 1605:

"La vie de Marie Magdeleine contenant plusieurs beaulx miracles, comment elle, son frere le Lazare et Marthe sa soeur, vindrent a Marseille, et comme elle convertit le duc et la duchess et est de XXII personnages dont les noms s'ensuivent en la page ci-après, A Lyon par Pierre Delaye, 1605, de 91 pages et le titre."

5. Ibid., p. 292.
6. Ibid., p. 300.
7. Ibid., p. 313.
8. Ibid., p. 326.
9. e.g.: "I'll mend this great fault ere the fault begin.  
O cozening fortune, how hast thou deceived me."  
(I, ii)

"Comfort? no.  
My breast's turned prison, my proud jailor, woe,  
Locks out all comfort."  
(I, ii)

"O madam, many a good thing has been buried quick  
and survived again; I would be buried quick myself,  
an I might choose my grave."  
(III, ii)

"You new create me, and breathe second life  
Into my dying bosom."  
(V, ii)

10. see Barnes, in Materialien (McKerrow), lines 273, 927-8, 2025, 2052.
11. All of Ferdinand, Alphonso, Prosper Colonne occur on the same page in Fenton's Historie of Guicciardin, the source of Barnes' play. But Shakespeare more likely derived many of the names of the characters in Tp. from Thomas' History of Italye.
12. see E.S., IV, pp. 121-2.

#### Appendix E

1. The only recent productions of P. which have come to my attention are those at Stratford in 1947 and in London, with Paul Scofield in the title-role, in 1950. W. Nugent Monck, who directed the revival at Stratford, tells me that he entirely omitted the opening episode of Antiochus and his daughter, as he felt that it was too loosely connected with the remainder of the play to be meaningful for a modern audience.  
Early in 1953, P. was done on the Third Programme, with slight adaptations suggested to the producer by the text of George Wilkins. This production seemed to me wrong and unsuccessful.

Now, even as for lack of wealth I confess myself unworthy of so great a gentleman, so on like wise I say that I am most unworthily repudiated . . ." (p. 317).

5. Ibid., p. 162<sup>v</sup>.
6. see Chapter 6, fn. 19.
7. Lines 1749-1802; see Den Hertog's article in De Gids.



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### Book List

This list does not strive to be a complete bibliography. But it includes most of the texts, monographs, and articles referred to in the text or footnotes of this thesis, which have been directly consulted. While an attempt was made to cover most of the critical work that has appeared in recent decades on the last plays, only those works have been listed which have been referred to in the thesis. More specific bibliographies will be found in the works listed in section 1.

Full titles are provided except in the cases of early texts (Elizabethan and other) where, unless the complete title seemed to be pertinent to the thesis, short titles are sometimes quoted. Wherever no place of publication is indicated, the book was printed in London. For periodicals, the same abbreviations are followed as in The Year's Work in English Studies. In a few instances, the catalogue mark of a rare book in the library of the British Museum is provided in brackets.

Works are listed under five headings: 1) Bibliographies; 2) Basic Works of Reference; 3) Texts and Editions; 4) Critical Works: Monographs; 5) Critical Works: Articles and Letters.

#### 1. Bibliographies

The annual bibliographies published in the April issues of S. in Ph. and Sh. Q.

F. W. Bateson (ed.): The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature, Vol. 1, Cambridge, 1940.

W. Ebisch and L. L. Schuecking: A Shakespeare Bibliography, Oxford, 1931; Supplement for the Years 1930-1935, Oxford, 1937.

U. Ellis-Fermor: "English and American Shakespeare Studies 1937-1952", Anglia, LXXI, 1-49.

W. W. Greg: A List of English Plays written before 1643 and printed before 1700, Bibliographical Society, 1900.

H. Luedeke: "Shakespeare-Bibliographie fuer die Kriegsjahre 1939-1946 (England und Amerika)", Archiv fuer das Studium der neueren Sprachen, 103. Jahrgang, 188. Band (1951), 8-40.

#### 2. Basic Works of Reference

E. K. Chambers: The Elizabethan Stage, Oxford, 1923, 4 vols.

E. K. Chambers: The Mediaeval Stage, Oxford, 1903, 2 vols.

E. K. Chambers: William Shakespeare, Oxford, 1930, 2 vols.

A. Harbage: Annals of English Drama, 975-1700, Philadelphia, 1940.

A.F. von Pauly: Real-Encyclopaedie der Classischen Altertums-Wissenschaft (ed. G. Wissowa and W. Kroll), Stuttgart, 1894-1953 (in progress).

### 3. Texts and Editions Used

#### a) Shakespeare

A. R. Bellinger (ed.): Pericles, Prince of Tyre (The Yale Shakespeare), New Haven, 1925.

E. Dowden (ed.): Cymbeline (The Arden Shakespeare), London, 1903 and 1916.

H. H. Furness (ed.): Much Adoe About Nothing (A New Variorum), Philadelphia, 1899.

H. H. Furness (ed.): The Tragedie of Cymbeline (A New Variorum), Philadelphia, 1913.

H. H. Furness (ed.): The Winter's Tale (A New Variorum), Philadelphia, 1898.

W. W. Greg (ed.): Pericles. The Quarto of 1609 Reproduced in Collotype Facsimile, 1940.

J. O. Halliwell-Phillips (ed.): The First Edition of Shakespeare. The Works of William Shakespeare in Reduced Facsimile from the Famous First Folio Edition of 1623, 1876.

F. Kenmode (ed.): The Tempest (The New Arden Shakespeare), 1954 (?), (consulted in MS.)

S. Lee (ed.): Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies, Being a Reproduction in Facsimile of the First Folio Edition, 1623, from the Chatsworth copy . . ., Oxford, 1902.

M. Luce (ed.): The Tempest (The Arden Shakespeare), 1926 (third, revised edition).

J. M. Nosworthy (ed.): Cymbeline (The New Arden Shakespeare), 1954 (?), (consulted in MS.).

W. A. Wright (ed.): The Works of William Shakespeare (The Cambridge Shakespeare), London and New York, 1892, 9 vols.

b) Other Authors

Anon.: Everyman. Here begynneth a treatyse how the hye fader of heuen sendeth dethe to sonon euery creature, n.d. (c. 1520).

Anon.: Here begynneth a propre treatyse of a marchauntes wyfe . . . Frederyke of Jennen, n.d. (1560?), (the first English ed. appeared at Antwerp in 1518).

Anon.: The Lamentable Tragedie of Locrine, the eldest Son of King Brutus, discoursinge the Warres of the Britaines . . . newly set foorth, overseene, and corrected by W.S., 1595, (falsely attributed to Shakespeare).

Anon.: The Maydes Metamorphosis. As it hath beene sundrie times Acted by the Children of Powles, 1600, (Tudor Facsimile Reprint, 1912).

Anon.: A Most pleasant Comedie of Mucedorus, the Kings Sonne of Valencia. Amplified with new additions as it was acted before the Kings Maiestie at White-hall on Shrove-Sunday night. By his Highnes Servantes usually playing at the Globe . . ., 1610, (earlier ed. 1598?).

Anon.: The Partiall Law (ed. B. Dobell), 1908.

Anon.: The Rare Triumphes of Loue and Fortune. Plaide before the Queenes most excellent Maiestie: wherein are many and fine Conceites with great delight, 1589.

Anon.: The Thracian Wonder. A Comical History . . . (published by F. Kirkman), 1661 (falsely attributed by Kirkman to Webster and W. Rowley);  
re-edited in W. Hazlitt: The Dramatic Works of John Webster, 1857, Vol. IV, 123-212.

Achilles Tattius: Clitophon and Leucippe, MS. c. 300 A.D.; Greek text in *Scriptores Erotici*, Paris, 1856; Latin tr. by A. della Croce, 1554.

Achilles Tattius: The most delectable and pleasant historye of Clitophon and Leucippe . . . nowe newlie translated into Englishe by W. B. (= William Burton), n.d. (1597). *Reprinted Stratford-on-Avon, 1923.*

J. Q. Adams (ed.): Chief Pre-Shakespearean Dramas, Boston, 1924.

J. Q. Adams (ed.): The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, 1623-1673, New Haven, 1917.

Apollodorus Atheniensis: The Library (tr. by J. G. Frazer), (Loeb Classical Library), 1921, 2 vols.

- L. Apuleius: The eleven Bookes of the Golden Asse, conteininge Metamorphosie of Lucius Apuleius, with the Mariage of Cupido and Psiches. Translated out of Latin into English by William Adlington, 1596 (1st. ed. 1566).
- E. Arber (ed.): Stationer's Register. A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640 A.D., 1875-94, 5 vols.
- J. Ayrer: Comedia von zweyen fuerstlichen Raethen, and: Die schoene Sidea = Nos. 28 and 30 in Sammlung des litterarischen Vereins, vol. 79, Stuttgart, 1843 etc.
- M. Bandello: La prima (seconda, terza) parte de le Novelle del Bandello, Lucca, 1554, 3 pts.
- B. Barnes: The Divils Charter: A Tragedie Containing the Life and Death of Pope Alexander the sixt . . ., 1607 (B.M.: C. 34. c. 3);  
ed. by R. B. McKerrow in Materialien zur Kunde des aelteren englischen Dramas, Bd. 6, Louvain, 1904.
- F. Beaumont and J. Fletcher: The Works of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher (eds. A. Glover and A. R. Waller), Cambridge, 1905-12, 12 vols.
- J. Bernier de la Brousse: Les Oeuvres Poëtiques Du Sieur Bernier de la Brousse, Poictiers, 1618, 2 vols.
- G. Boccaccio: The Decameron, containing an hundred pleasant novels, 1620, 2 vols.
- P. Bor: Twee Tragi-comedien in prosa, d'Eene van Appollonius Prince van Tyro. Ende d'ander van den selven, ende van Tharsia syn Dochter . . ., s'Gravenhage (The Hague), 1617 and 1634.
- G. Bredero: G. B. Bredero's volledige Werken (ed. Dr. Knuttel), Amsterdam, 1918-29, 3 vols.
- A. H. Bullen (ed.): A Collection of Old English Plays, 1882-5, 4 vols.
- S. H. Butcher (tr.) and M. C. Nahum (tr. and ed.): Aristotle On the Art of Poetry. With a Supplement, Aristotle on Music, New York, 1950.
- I. Bywater (tr.): Aristotle on the Art of Poetry, Oxford, 1909.
- George Chapman: The Plays and Poems of George Chapman. The Comedies, (ed. by T. M. Parrott), London, 1913.

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