

'THE SLAVES OF CHANCE': ASPECTS OF THE EXPOSITION OF
CHANGE IN SOME OF SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS AND THEIR SOURCES

*But as th'unthought-on accident is guilty
To what we wildly do, so we profess
Ourselves to be the slaves of chance, and flies
Of every wind that blows.*

(The Winter's Tale, IV.iv.539 - 542)

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ABSTRACT

Rather than the assertion of a pre-defined thesis, this study is an empirical investigation of the bearing that the exposition of change in some of Shakespeare's sources may have upon his work.

The first chapter, devoted to the poems Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece, points to the significance of the Time-Fortuna-Occasio topoi and of genre conventions in Early Modern discourse on change; and seeks to identify some of the complexity in Shakespeare's use of them. An appendix to the chapter addresses the question of the inconsistency of discourse in the source-texts.

In the remaining chapters a discussion of issues relating to the exposition of change in the source-texts precedes some consideration of the relevance of these issues to the plays themselves. Chapter Two is primarily concerned with Edward Hall's Chronicle and the Henry VI plays, but also contains a broader discussion of Renaissance historiography that includes Samuel Daniel's The Civil Wars and the influence of Machiavelli. In Chapter Three a discussion of the preoccupation of Euphuistic fictions with the forces that bear upon youth (the opposing attractions of the Active and Contemplative lives, the assaults of Fortune) centres on Greene's Pandosto and Lodge's Rosalynde (the sources of The Winter's Tale and As You Like It). In Chapter Four discussions of the Boethian element in Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde, the

rhetoric of change in Lydgate's Troy Book, and the debt owed to both works by Brooke's pseudo-medieval Romeus and Juliet point to elements of subversion in Troilus and Cressida and Romeo and Juliet. In Chapter Five readings of Hamlet and Macbeth are suggested by a reconsideration of their sources in relation to sixteenth century political and religious controversy. The Conclusion suggests a context in literary criticism within which the findings of the investigation may be placed.

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Lionel Peters

In memoriam

S. P. (1908 - 1962)

R. N. (1914 - 1991)

G. M. (1938 - 1981)

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INTRODUCTION

The underlying premise to this thesis is that in Shakespeare's lifetime an alert reader would have encountered, in both fictional and historical narrative texts, a degree of mingling of classical, medieval and new ideas relating to change that now may all too easily be simplified or otherwise misrepresented. On this premise, I set out to investigate how change is accounted for in a number of Shakespeare's sources in the explanation of the events that are narrated (and as the subject of discourse itself, in such guises as Fortune, Time and Chance), and to examine what implications this may have for the interpretation of his own work. In the main, the balance of attention will lean heavily towards the source-texts, and in relation to the plays themselves all that I hope for is that this investigation will assemble evidence that either corroborates or qualifies interpretations that have previously been offered.

As modest as these aims may be, I do not anticipate that I will be able to meet them fully - that is the inevitable fate of any attempt to reconstruct the past. However meticulous I am in attempting to emulate their reading, many of the discriminations that would be made by Shakespeare and his contemporaries are bound to pass by me unnoticed. And the plays themselves are far too prominent in the culture I have absorbed for me to be able to discount them entirely as I read the texts that

lie behind them. Against such problems must be weighed the danger of undervaluing the source-texts - denying them the respectful attention we normally give all our reading - simply because they are preliminary to the works that we cherish.

One example will serve to demonstrate how easily this step-motherly inclination can transform itself into orthodoxy. In his introduction to Macbeth in the highly-respected Complete Oxford Shakespeare Stanley Wells devotes a paragraph to the play's source. In part, it reads as follows:

Shakespeare took materials for his story from the account in Raphael Holinshed's Chronicle of the reigns of Duncan and Macbeth (AD 1034 - 57). Occasionally (especially in the English episodes of Act 4, Scene 2) he closely followed Holinshed's wording; but essentially the play's structure is his own. He invented the framework of the three witches who tempted both Macbeth and Banquo with prophecies of greatness.¹

The view that the structure of the play is entirely Shakespeare's invention can only be held if we accept the implication that Holinshed was Shakespeare's only source. Others - notably Geoffrey Bullough in his Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare and Kenneth Muir in his Arden edition of the play² - point also to Buchanan's Rerum Scoticarum Historia, and if that work is taken into account Professor Wells' generalisation becomes very open to question. Moreover, his other assertion - that Shakespeare 'invented the framework of the three witches' - will simply not stand up to even the hastiest of

glances through the relevant section of Holinshed's Chronicle. But with the combined weight of Professor Wells' reputation for meticulous scholarship and the authority of the Oxford Shakespeare, loose critical judgements pass on to the general reader as indisputable fact.

Issues relating to Macbeth and its sources are discussed more closely in chapter five of this thesis. What I wish to draw attention to here is the manner in which positive statements about Shakespeare's work can be built on statements with a negative implication about his sources; and how easy it is for statements of the latter sort to be pre-judged or erroneous: when this is the case, the positive conclusions that are drawn about Shakespeare can have little or no value. In saying this I am not, of course, claiming that the plays cannot be interpreted profitably without careful study of their sources. Rather, I am suggesting that a careful and sympathetic study of the sources can be of value in the channelling of our inter-actions with the plays.³

The point of view that I have adopted has been determined to a considerable degree by circumstances within my own professional circle, that of teachers of English in London secondary schools. The concerted efforts of our inspectorate, the London Association of Teachers of

English and the University of London's Institute of Education have, over many years, shepherded us more or less gently towards an emphasis (especially in the years that lead up to the G.C.S.E. examinations) upon the reader's response to the individual text. On the other hand, candidates preparing for Advanced level literature examinations have needed to study texts within broader literary and historical contexts - and the transition between the two approaches has not always been easy.⁴ Ideas propounded by the German theorists Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss - who place emphasis on the relevance of historical context to both the 'repertoires' (Iser) or 'horizons of expectation' (Jauss) that are latent within the text and to those that are brought to bear upon it by contemporary and later readers⁵ - have certainly been of help in resolving the difficulty. Though Jauss himself has made strong - and salutary - criticism⁶ of previous studies of sources that degenerate into a never-ending tracing of influence, the practical example of his own work on the creative provocation of prior models⁷ has suggested some interesting strategies for both G.C.S.E. and Advanced level coursework to the English department at my school; and it is, in fact, the enriched understanding that was evident in the work of those who, for example, elected to read the sources (tales by Riche and Cinthio) before Twelfth Night and Othello that prompted me to resume my own interest in this line of study more comprehensively.

Most of the following chapters keep to a pattern in which a discussion of issues relating to the exposition of change in source-texts that have some shared characteristics⁸ precedes consideration of the relevance of those issues to the plays themselves.

However, in order to both justify these efforts and to explain what is proposed in more detail it will be helpful to reverse the balance of attention in the first chapter, and concentrate on the poems Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece (Shakespeare's own contributions to the narrative form, in both of which he devotes much attention to issues of change) more than on their sources. I hope to be able to show that awareness of the complexities regarding change reflected in these poems gives cause to question the low esteem in which they are often held; by doing so I hope also to go some way towards identifying issues that will be relevant to the texts that will be discussed in later chapters.

NOTES

1. The Complete Oxford Shakespeare, ed. S. Wells and G. Taylor (1987), vol. III, p.1307.

2. Geoffrey Bullough, op.cit., vol. VII (1973), p. 438 ff.; Macbeth, ed. Kenneth Muir, 1951, p. xxxvi ff.

3. A very different approach is taken on a related subject by Frederick Turner in Shakespeare and the Nature of Time (1971). In his introduction he argues that the accumulation of new understandings of the nature of time in the twentieth century puts us 'in a position to understand theoretically much that was exciting but obscure before' in Shakespeare's writing, and adds that

In this study I have not ignored such twentieth-century notions as appear parallel to the insights contained in the poetry and drama of Shakespeare ... I have tried to suggest what Shakespeare and the twentieth century have in common in this respect, and cast light on my object of study by their juxtaposition. (p. 2).

In theoretical terms, what troubles me about this rationale is that it places an unnecessary burden upon literary criticism, leaving us stranded between two avenues that are each worth exploring. It is not knowledge about what Shakespeare writes about time, or what Henri Bergson (to cite a relevant twentieth-century thinker) writes about time, that Turner claims as his object of study, but knowledge about time itself. And to seek this knowledge in areas where two writers might be

in agreement, despite the passage of more than three centuries, would surely leave us prone to both a loss of particularity and to misconstruction. Fortunately, Turner does not adhere to this rationale very strictly, and his work ought really to be read as an infectiously enthusiastic interpretation of Shakespeare's work, very strongly influenced by modern ideas about time. There is, however, an inevitable tendency to build up coherent and unassailable patterns of thought, with a contemporary relevance, that drives attention towards concepts of Time rather than to the function that discourse about Time might serve in a given work. His analysis of Jaques' 'All the world's a stage' speech in As You Like It, for instance, suggests that it projects a negative view of events because it lacks a Bergsonian sense of the imperceptibility of change (op. cit., pp. 32 - 39). I would want to argue, instead, that the speech is an expression of the Contemplative viewpoint on change in the mortal world, reinforcing a thematic element (discussed below, pp. 102ff.) in the source-text (Lodge's Rosalynde) and the genre to which it belongs.

4. This difficulty was noted by a group of American observers in the nineteen-sixties: see J. R. Squire and R. K. Applebee, Teaching English in the United Kingdom (1969), pp. 99 - 104. Robert Protherough's Developing Response to Fiction (1983) also draws attention to the problem (pp. 8 - 12) and to the inter-actional models of the reading process suggested by Wolfgang Iser and others as

a solution. See also Peter Griffith, Literary Theory and English Teaching (1991), pp. 22 - 39.

5. See, for example, Wolfgang Iser, The Act of Reading (1978), pp. 68 - 85; Hans Robert Jauss, 'Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory' in Towards an Aesthetic of Reception (1982), pp. 3 - 45. There are relevant discussions of their contributions to the mediation between literary history and audience-oriented criticism in Susan Suleiman's Introduction to The Reader in the Text, ed. S. R. Suleiman and I. Crosman (1980), pp. 35 - 45 and Marilyn Butler's 'Against Tradition: The Case for a Particularised Historical Method' in Historical Studies and Literary Criticism, ed. J. J. McGann (1985), pp. 36 - 45.

6. H. R. Jauss, 'Horizon Structure and Dialogicity', Question and Answer: Forms of Dialogic Understanding (1989), pp. 218ff.

7. H. R. Jauss, 'Rousseau's Nouvelle Héloïse and Goethe's Werther Within the Shift of Horizons from the French Enlightenment to German Idealism', Question and Answer: Forms of Dialogic Understanding (1989), pp. 148 - 196. I should add here that the tentativeness expressed in my first two paragraphs does not match Jauss's confidence in the ability of reader-oriented criticism to objectively identify 'the specific [initial] disposition towards a particular work that the author anticipates from the

audience' ('Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory', in Towards an Aesthetic of Reception, p. 24), from explicit signals within the text or through other external considerations. It is not just the reader's subjectivity but plain error and incomplete knowledge about the past that make objective identification an impossible goal, though one worth striving towards.

8. The range of source-texts that are studied is unavoidably limited. A much more extensive investigation than is possible here would also take into account (for instance) Plutarch's Lives and the Elizabethan collections of tales represented by Barnaby Riche's Farewell to Militarie profession and William Painter's The Palace of Pleasure.

CHAPTER ONE
SHAKESPEARE'S NARRATIVE POEMS

1.1. PASTORAL AND THE DEATH OF ADONIS

The simplest and most commonly-used means of explaining change is the plain narration of a coherent sequence of events. Mythical narratives, like other stories, employ this technique, but generally the significance of the narrated events lies beyond themselves and has to do with explanations of how things are or how they should be. But the most profound myths, Edmund Leach¹ reminds us, are essentially not rational, and capable of differing interpretations - something that ^{is} equally true of Shakespeare's re-telling of the story of Venus and Adonis, which adds its own complexities to the narrative of change it inherits.

In its literary embodiments, from the time of the earliest pastoral poets, the myth of the death of Adonis functions at two levels: superficially, it is a narrative that explains the origins of a certain short-lived flower (this is, perhaps, the aspect that we are more conscious of in the Metamorphoses); more substantially - and this is reflected in the poems of Theocritus and Bion - it is the myth at the heart of the pastoral religious cult that brought eroticism and seasonal change together in opposition to the force of decay. However, while the internal evidence of the various emulations of Venus and

Adonis² suggests that Shakespeare's contemporaries were strongly conscious of the poem's pastoral context, a more recent 'narrative as explanation' which has itself gained the force of legend has edged it out of modern consideration.

This is the legend of Shakespeare's life and the development of his art, set out by Gervinus and followed by Furnivall and his associates in the New Shakspeare Society, which makes Venus and Adonis a kind of apprentice-piece of the dramatist's Stratford days³ and The Rape of Lucrece little better. To say this is not to deny that the evolutionary approach to the criticism of Shakespeare's work has, from its earliest intimations in the writings of Gervinus and Coleridge through to its many modern adherents, produced valuable insights. But it is an easy matter for the critic, having discovered the points of development to his satisfaction, to pay cursory attention to the earlier writings or to disparage their qualities in order to sharpen their contrast with the later work. Both poems have suffered considerably from this sort of effect. Between Gervinus' Commentaries and the current edition of the poems by F. T. Prince for the New Arden series, there runs a virtual tradition that is predisposed to dismiss these poems as youthful toys or to see them in awkward relationship to the main body of Shakespeare's work. 'In a word,' Hazlitt says⁴, 'we do not like his poems because we like his plays' and, according to Edward Dowden,

When these poems were written Shakspeare was cautiously feeling his way. Large, slow-growing natures, gifted with a sense of concrete fact and with humour, ordinarily possess no great self-confidence in youth.⁵

Professor Prince uses Shakespeare's version of the death of Adonis as evidence that we should read the poem in the specific context of romantic comedy. His death, we are told, is deliberately made unrealistic by the poet:

The fate of the youth who, having been slain by a wild boar, evaporates into air, and whose blood turns into a flower, to be worn by a goddess in her bosom is not intended to arouse tragic emotion. The retention of this fairy-tale detail from Ovid is only the most obvious of Shakespeare's innumerable devices to make his story as light as a bubble and to keep it floating.⁶

The example is far from persuasive. It would be hard, in the first place, to imagine a sixteenth-century poet managing to tell the story of Adonis without this essential part of the fable. But the truth of the matter is that not a single detail of Shakespeare's version of the episode remains unaltered from the source.

In Ovid's tale Venus herself makes the blood of Adonis change into a blood-red flower as a token of her grief - but (in Golding's translation) the 'leaves' are so loose that 'every little blast/ Doo shake them off and shed them so as that they cannot last'.⁷ Shakespeare removes Venus's agency from this metamorphosis and, with it, her intention that the flower memorialise Adonis and her

grief for him. The change is made a spontaneous one and - in a considerable departure from Ovid - it becomes incidental to the new memorial, Venus's announcement of a change in the nature of love on earth (ll. 1135 - 1164). It will thereafter degenerate into a thing of excesses:

Since thou art dead, lo here I prophecy,
 Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend:
 It shall be waited on with jealousy,
 Find sweet beginning, but unsavoury end;
 Ne'er settled equally, but high or low,
 That all love's pleasure shall not match his woe.
 (1135 - 1140)

There is also an ironic twist to the episode that returns us to the arguments that feature so strongly in the earlier parts of the poem. In her attempts to win his love, Venus had depicted for Adonis a sublunary world in which Beauty is destined to decay. Only through love can mortality be overcome:

Therefore, despite of fruitless chastity,
 Love-lacking vestals and self-loving nuns,
 That on the earth would breed a scarcity
 And barren dearth of daughters and of sons,
 Be prodigal; The lamp that burns by night
 Dries up his oil to lend the world his light.

What is thy body but a swallowing grave
 Seeming to bury that posterity,
 Which by the rights of time thou needs must have,
 If thou destroy them not in dark obscurity?
 (751 - 760)

And, earlier, the goddess had urged the *carpe florem* theme:

Make use of time, let not advantage slip;
 Beauty within itself should not be wasted
 Fair flowers that are not gath'ed in their prime
 Rot, and consume themselves in little time.
 (129 - 132)

Now, in a piece of burlesque that is entirely consistent with Shakespeare's projection of Venus throughout the poem, she puts her advice into practice quite literally:

She bows her head, the new-sprung flower to smell,
 Comparing it with her Adonis' breath
 And says within her bosom it shall dwell,
 Since he himself is reft from her by death.
 She crops the stalk, and in the breach appears
 Green-dropping sap, which she compares to tears.

'Poor flower,' quoth she, 'this was thy father's
guise, -
 Sweet issue of a more sweet-smelling sire, -
 For every little grief to wet his eyes;
 To grow unto himself was his desire,
 And so 'tis thine; but know, it is as good
 To wither in my breast as in his blood.

(1171 - 1182)

Whether he would or not, poor Adonis has had offspring of a kind ('father', 'sire', 'issue' - in Venus's words, the implication is unavoidable) despite all his protestations of being too young for love, and the flower is not allowed to rot by itself but 'gath'ered in its prime'.

The death of Adonis has thus been rendered very ambiguous. The main tenor of the episode is pessimistic, and Venus herself, in her prophecy and in her sombre departure for the very seclusion that she previously mocked in 'love-lacking vestals and self-loving nuns', has changed her stance now that death has intruded upon her Arcadian idyll. Beneath the surface description of what happens, however, Shakespeare's variations on Adonis's death and metamorphosis seem, in a rather macabre fashion, to vindicate her earlier arguments - seem, indeed, to show Nature's regenerative processes,

and the permanence that results from succession, as irresistible.

Some light is shed on this ambiguity if we compare Venus and Adonis with analogous poems of the time. In terms of its subject, there are many parallels to Shakespeare's poem in Spenser's Astrophel. But the latter is a coterie pastoral, written by one pastoralist on the death of another - and for a primary audience of others; its vocabulary is deliberately replete with oaten pipes, nymphs and shepherds; and adherence to the forms and conventions of this literary 'kind' is essential to its success. The same may be said - with no intention to disparage them - of other Ovidian narrative poems of the period such as Lodge's Scylla's Metamorphosis, Drayton's Endymion and Phoebe or even Marlowe's Hero and Leander (where the narrative subject leaves little room for pastoral insets). Venus and Adonis, on the other hand, is remarkably free of the appurtenances of pastoral.

The unity of tone that they would supply is provided instead by the frequent employment of emblematic reds and whites. Where there is a single use of these colours together to connote the death of beauty in an earlier poem (interestingly enough, this occurs in a 'Venus and Adonis' insert - ll. 121 - 138 - in Lodge's Scylla's Metamorphosis) and another use to indicate the onset of passion in a later one (Drayton's Endymion and Phoebe, ll. 533 - 554), they are brought into play in intricate

More thematically, what sets Venus and Adonis apart from the other poems mentioned above is that it subverts our expectations with regard to pastoral conventions. It begins with a reversal of the erotic *pastourelle* convention in which an amorous rider encounters a coy rustic maid.⁹ Here it is the horseman, abruptly unseated, who blushes silently and refuses to be wheedled out of a kiss - and when, like a maid in a *pastourelle*, he begins to find eloquence to parry the entreaties of the goddess he is rudely and amusingly frustrated. Stately and sensual lines lead us to expect a crushing rebuttal of her blandishments -

Once more the ruby-colour'd portal open'd,
Which to his speech did honey passage yield;
Like a red morn, that ever yet betoken'd
Wrack to the seaman, tempest to the field,
Sorrow to the shepherds, woe unto the birds,
Gusts and foul flaws to herdsmen and to herds.
(451 - 456)

- but the 'silly boy' is frustrated when the goddess falls down apparently dead, and 'brake off his late intent/ For sharply did he think to reprehend her' to try to revive her with rubs and kisses.

In the first half of Venus and Adonis we are immersed in an erotic idyll, and in its very centre there is a stanza that appears to take the eroticism to a culmination that would be in line with all previous treatments of the myth (it is difficult, now, to remember that the obsessively virginal Adonis is Shakespeare's invention) -

Now is she in the very lists of love,

Her champion mounted for the hot encounter.

- and then descends into anti-climax:

All is imaginary she doth prove;
 He will not manage her, although he mount her.
 (595 - 598)

Similar unsettling effects are wrought, though to a more sombre purpose, between lines 877 and 1032. We are at first led to expect the death of Adonis, only to have that expectation discounted - and then, almost as soon as Venus sheds her fears, she comes upon the youth's body.

Although we encounter here the authentic ring of pastoral elegy -

Alas, poor world, what treasures hast thou lost!
 What face remains alive that's worth the
 viewing?
 Whose tongue is music now? what canst thou boast
 Of things long since, or any thing ensuing?
 (1075 - 1078)

- few readers will be overwhelmed by the poem's pessimistic end. Too much lightness and gaiety has gone before; and, as we have seen, the poem's more fecund theme is still in play even as Venus prophesies its contradiction.

Instead, the various elements that jar our expectations contrive to remove the possibility that the poem can do what it purports to do: it does not work as a narrative that explains the degeneration of love in the mortal world. The over-all effect is quite different, keeping

the polarised views on love, beauty and decay that feature so strongly in the debates between the goddess and the youth in an unresolved equilibrium. And, by doing so, Venus and Adonis manages to keep true to both the ambivalent nature of myth and to the essence (if not the surface) of pastoral. It works, in other words, in analogous fashion to those 'Et in Arcadia' paintings and engravings of the seventeenth century that depict pastoral's happy and melancholy themes simultaneously. What Panofsky says of one such depiction by Poussin applies equally to Shakespeare's poem:

... the conception of Arcadia, as remodelled by Poussin's Louvre picture, could lead to considerations of almost opposite nature, depressing and melancholy on the one hand, comforting and assuaging on the other. ... 'Life' is conceived as transitory yet blessed with indestructible beauty and felicity; on the other hand 'Death' is seen as preserver as well as destroyer.¹⁰

1.2. THE RAPE OF LUCRECE AND THE FALL OF TROY

Very little of the pastoral world is retained in The Rape of Lucrece: it is overwhelmingly a city poem, beginning with the siege of Ardea and ending with the banishment of the Tarquins from Rome. A pervading sense of the city under siege is communicated by the imagery throughout the poem, and comes to the fore in the twenty-nine stanzas

(ll. 1366 - 1568) devoted to the painting of the Fall of Troy in which Lucrece sees the analogy to her plight.

A parallel to this iconic inset occurs in the poem that clearly served as a model for Shakespeare, Daniel's The Complaint of Rosamund (1592). Six stanzas of this poem (ll. 379 - 420) are devoted to Rosamund's contemplation of the mythical scenes - the abductions of Amydone by Neptune and of Io by Jupiter - engraved on the panels of the casket that has been sent as a gift by her royal wooer. These are precedents, Rosamund says, that

Might have fore-warned me well what would ensue
And others' harmes have made me shun my own.
(416 - 417)

But the passage goes on to dismiss the prospect of destiny being affected by any lesson that may be gleaned from precedent:

But fate is not prevented though fore-known
For that must hap decreed by heavenly powers,
Who work our fall, yet make the fault still
ours.
(418 - 420)

In this Daniel is staying true to the pattern of 'complaint' historical verse popularised by Baldwin's Mirroure for Magistrates. As is the case with Baldwin's subjects, the fate of Rosamund is presented as a *de casibus* tragedy, in keeping with the medieval tradition of interpreting history that subsumes events under a providential dispensation (l. 427: '... men must know they have the heavens above them') while nevertheless allowing Fortune considerable prominence in them.¹¹

Over the course of the second half of the sixteenth century, however, the more secular and empirical approaches to the writing and interpretation of history that had developed in Italy and France exerted an increasing influence on the perspective that English writers took upon historical events. Causality in Daniel's The Civil Wars, for instance, written a mere three years after The Complaint of Rosamund, is much more in the style of Polydore Vergil (whose Anglica Historia, first issued in 1536, is generally recognised as having begun the assimilation of the contemporary Italian mode of historical discourse into English historiography). Allusions to Fortune persist in The Civil Wars, but they can no longer be described with any accuracy as simply reflecting the perception of events as determined by the supernatural forces of Fortune herself or those of a controlling Providence.

Both The Civil Wars and the Anglica Historia are discussed in more detail in the following chapter. What I wish to note here is the relevance to the manner in which events are explained in both works of the close associations that developed during the sixteenth century between the concepts of Fortune, Time and Occasion. The latter concept, resurrected from the classic past, added a qualifying element of human efficacy to the patterns of irresistible change traditionally implied by Fortune and Time: in graphic allegories - either as an attribute of

Time, Fortuna and Mutability or as the discrete figures of Occasion, Chance or Opportunity - this ripe moment for action is represented through a conspicuous forelock, by which the otherwise bald figure may be prevented from escaping (as in Figure 1, p. 44) or captured and subdued (Figure 2), either through prompt action or watchful patience.¹² Two of the writers with whom this thesis is concerned feature significantly in the importation of this usage into English. Robert Greene's Menaphon (1589) is cited in Matzke's seminal article¹³ on the topic for the earliest English reference to the forelock of Occasion but Edward Hall's Chronicle (1548) supplies an even earlier example and, through its close connection with Polydore's Anglica Historia suggests one line of transmission from Italy and its use earlier in the century by Machiavelli and other Florentine historians.¹⁴

However, in England at least, the concept of Occasion as an explanatory device appears to have aroused mixed feelings. It is, on the one hand, very commonly adopted uncritically to express the wisdom of promptness or foresight, as in Bacon's essay 'On Delays', an excellent synthesis of the ideas Machiavelli expresses on the subject in his Tercets on Fortune and the last two chapters of The Prince:

Fortune is like the market; where many times, if you can stay a little, the price will fall. And again, it is sometimes Sibylla's offer; which at first offereth the commodity at full, then consumeth part and part, and still holdeth up the

price. For occasion (as it is in the common
verse) turneth a balde noddle, after she hath
presented her locks in front, and no hold taken
... There is surely no greater wisdom than well
to time the beginnings and onset of things.¹⁵

But, increasingly, others looked at the ideas of Bacon's
'doctors of Italy' with more suspicion - and all the more
so if they had any association with Machiavelli: what may
exemplify promptness and foresight to one person can very
easily represent ferocity and cunning to another.¹⁶

Although hard evidence for the latter view is
comparatively small before the end of the sixteenth
century it is discernible in much of the criticism aimed
at Machiavelli, and is given prominence by Spenser in
Book II of The Faerie Queene. In cantos IV and V,
Occasion (who is accompanied by her son Furor) appears as
a lame and filthy hag, with the characteristic feature of
a head that is bald except for the locks that 'Grewe all
afore and loosely hong unrold'.

Spenser makes careful distinctions between Phedon and
Pyrocles, the two victims of this horrid pair. When they
are first encountered by Sir Guyon and the Palmer the
victim of their assaults is Phedon, who (it later
transpires) fell into their clutches through the jealousy
planted in his mind by a false friend. Only by seizing
hold of her forelock is Sir Guyon able to subdue Occasion
and overcome Furor. In this episode Phedon's youth is
emphasised, and after freeing him Sir Guyon is able to

offer the consolation that he may yet be redeemed by temperance.

In contrast the second victim, Pyrocles, appears to have settled vices that have a larger social, or political, significance. He has sent his varlet to seek out Occasion 'where so she bee'¹⁷ because he is intent on bloodshed and cruelty and, even after defeat at Sir Guyon's hands, begs to be allowed to set Occasion and Furor free - and is immediately set upon by them.

In The True Order and Method of wryting and reading Hystories (1574), a blending of Italian texts, Thomas Blundeville projects Occasion more even-handedly than Spenser. He gives as one of the historian's tasks that he show how an agent of history's inward qualities - his 'skill' - 'causeth him to take occasion when it is offered, and to use the meetest meanes to bring it to passe'.¹⁸ But he also stresses the negative consequences of seizing Occasion, giving as one of the prime lessons of history that we are taught

not only to note the taking and leaving of all occasions and opportunities, whereby anye good hath been procured: but also all the daungers of evils, that eyther in tyme hath beene wysely foreseene, and fled: or into which for lacke of foresight, men have headlong fallen, having therein regarde to every mannes state, condicion, facultie, profession, and other such like circumstaunces, to the intent that we our selves may learne thereby to doe nothing unadvisedly. And as the examples of prosperous successes, which God hath gyven us as just rewardes to those, that woorke according to vertue: the great good will and love that all men have towardes

them: their fame, glorie, & praise, sounding in all mens mouthes, and finally their immortalitie in being chronycled for their noble actes, do chiefly serve to sturre us, to verteous, honest, and commendable doinges. Even so, nothing is more meete to drawe us from vice, and dishonest dealing, than the examples of evill successes, which God hath given to the wicked, as punishments for theyr evill deserts: their shame & infamie: the hatred & enmitie, that they procure to themselves, not onleye whilst they lyve, but also after their death: the Infamie which they leave to their familye, posterity, & countrie, whose secreete wycked deeds, are layde open to the world by written Hystorie, in such sort, as men will not for shame once name those persons, whiche in their life time, woulde be honored as Gods.¹⁹

Between them, Blundeville's sources address almost the entire range of positive and negative variations of Occasion taken and unheeded through which the topos could be put in the service of drawing secular lessons (*Occasio Arrepta* and *Occasio Neglecta* are the terms Wittkower uses, citing the comprehensive Latin text produced on the subject in 1605 by the Jesuit Joannes David)²⁰. But there is one other permutation, not made explicit in Blundeville's treatise, that has particular significance in relation to the reaction against Machiavellian 'policy': not just the seizing of the opportunity to do harm but the use of cunning to bring the opportunity about.

The medieval tradition of the turning of the 'giddy round of Fortune's wheel' is referred to by Lucrece, but only as one of the nobler offices of Time that now seem

taken or relinquished, for good or evil, in the manner that Blundeville recommends: the lust of Paris, Sinon's deception (depicted in a final glimmer of pastoral innocence, as hoodwinked shepherds bear him to the city that his words will destroy), Priam's paternal indulgence and then his gullibility are all - in their turn - seen as the triggers of the ensuing cataclysmic events:

Thy heat of lust, fond Paris, did incur
 This load of wrath that burning Troy doth bear;
 Thy eye kindled the fire that burneth here.
 And here in Troy, for trespass of thine eye,
 The sire, the son, the dame and daughter die.

Why should the private pleasure of some one
 Become the public plague of many moe?
 Let sin alone committed, light alone
 Upon his head that hath transgressed so;
 Let guiltless souls be freed from guilty woe.
 For one's offence why should so many fall,
 To plague a private sin in general?

Lo, here weeps Hecuba, here Priam dies,
 Here manly Hector faints, here Troilus swoonds;
 Here friend by friend in bloody channel lies,
 And friend to friend gives unadvised wounds;
 And one man's lust these many lives confounds;
 Had doting Priam check'd his son's desire,
 Troy had been bright with fame and not with
 fire.

(1473 - 1491)

1.3. THE STATUS OF LUCRECE

Much of the difficulty that critics have perceived in The Rape of Lucrece, concerning its structure and Shakespeare's projection of Lucrece, falls away when we read the poem according to the criteria of historiography discussed above, rather than those appropriate to tragic

drama, not least because the perspectives upon events taken by the two modes of writing are entirely different. We anticipate from drama that events will move towards a climax and resolution, and as J. C. Maxwell reminds us (in the introduction to the New Cambridge edition of the poems), our central interest lies with the 'principal agent' in the events rather than the victim.²¹

In the sort of historiography that Blundeville commends, on the other hand, partly because of the emphasis on the discernment of moments of opportunity, there is an ever-shifting perspective that focuses upon an action or decision, concentrates upon its morality, wisdom and consequences and then moves to view the consequences in the same way. From this perspective, in other words, history is seen as a series of events that have their beginnings, durations and ends determined by human endeavour rather than by relentless external forces of change.²²

It is this perspective upon the events of The Rape of Lucrece that is established in the poem's first six stanzas, which present all that happens thereafter as the result of a rash choice by Collatine and draw the contemplative lesson of the fragility of good fortune, honour and beauty. The continued operation of the historiographer's perspective underlies the structure of the poem through to its end (which moves away from both Tarquin and Lucrece to the broader political

consequences), making appropriate the very elements that are decried in both the New Arden and New Cambridge editions as the failings of a young tragedian. What would make for imbalance in a dramatic tragedy - the shift of attention in the body of the poem from the motives of the perpetrator to the consequences for the sufferer; 'Tarquin's deliberations before the crime' and 'Lucrece's tirades after it'²³; the 'highly wrought set pieces on Opportunity and Time, and on the Fall of Troy'²⁴ - are, in the context of a historical poem with priorities broadly similar to those we have seen set out by Blundeville, an integral element in the exposition of the circumstances of an action.

The portrayal of Lucrece in the latter half of the poem makes far greater sense as a depiction of the victim of a historical event rather than as a depiction of a tragic heroine. In comparison with all the significant earlier treatments of the legend that give Lucrece heroic status, Shakespeare alone is clearly intent on communicating a strong sense of corruption passing over to Lucrece. And yet he is far more deliberate than his predecessors in protecting her from any implication of sin, to the point of inventing the detail of the smothering of Lucrece's cries that removes the possibility, present in the versions of Livy and Ovid, that she may have 'given in' to Tarquin to protect her name, and the ambivalence of Chaucer's version, which has her swooning into unconsciousness at the crucial moment, 'for fere of

slandre and drede of deeth'. These dual elements of stain and innocence, stressed throughout the second half of the poem, are brought together glaringly in the description of her corpse towards the end of the poem (ll. 1742 - 1743): 'Some of her blood still pure and red remained,/ And some looked black, and that false Tarquin stained'.

Mr Maxwell's contention is that Shakespeare's projection of Lucrece in the latter half of the poem has allowed theological issues 'quite inappropriate to this tale of pagan honour' to intrude upon his tragic theme, thus inadvertently making St. Augustine's scepticism towards Lucrece in the first book of De Civitate Dei ('*si adulterata, cur laudata? si pudica, cur occisa?*') unavoidable for the reader.²⁵ But such a view, deriving from the feeling (which Mr Maxwell shares with Professor Prince) that Shakespeare loses control of his subject, will not account for the sheer insistence within the poem on both innocence and stain, the awareness that the case of Lucrece will be 'a theme for disputation' (ll. 806 - 823), and the direct confrontation and rejection in lines 1156 - 1175 and 1632 - 1715 of issues of the kind raised by St. Augustine.

Moreover, the passage quoted earlier from Blundeville's True Order gives confirmation - if it were needed - that by the sixteenth century the tradition of secular historiography which I am suggesting as the poem's proper context was capable of deploying pagan and Christian values, and considerations of both Active and

Contemplative life, quite eclectically - and utilising De Civitate Dei to these ends. St. Augustine himself offers the pagan rationale for Lucrece's actions and motivations, if only to dismiss it -

she shamed at the filthiness that was committed upon her, though it was without her consent: and being a Roman, and covetous of glory, she feared, that if she lived still, that which she had endured by violence should be thought to have been suffered with willingness. And therefore she thought good to show this punishment to the eyes of men, as a testimony of her mind unto whom she could not show her mind indeed: blushing to be held a partaker in the fact, which being by another committed so filthily, she had endured so unwillingly.²⁶

- but it is the rationale that Shakespeare's Lucrece uses:

My honour I'll bequeath unto the knife
That wounds my body so dishonoured.
'Tis honour to deprive dishonour'd life;
The one will live, the other being dead.
So of shame's ashes shall my fame be bred,
For in my death I murder shameful scorn:
My shame so dead, mine honour is new born.
(1184 - 1190)

If Lucrece lacks the heroic spirituality that St. Augustine would have praised, and is reduced to being (as Mr Maxwell suggests) 'at best, the guardian of a valuable physical possession', this is not accidental: the various components in Shakespeare's projection of her fall into place when she is seen not as the heroine of the events that make up her legend, but simply as their victim. Both the poem and the eponymous figure may lack the profundity of tragedy, but fulfil the less exalted requirements of historical verse.

When The Rape of Lucrece is considered in this less exalted context one of the acknowledged source texts assumes greater importance, and helps us to see the projection of Lucrece as victim as a significant achievement with considerable implications for Shakespeare's other work. In Book 7, ch.11 of Gower's Confessio Amantis (which Shakespeare also used as his source for Pericles) the legend of Lucrece is presented by the Confessor as an offence against chastity - with the over-riding issue in this section being male responsibility and female passivity:

Within him self the fire he bloweth,
 Whereof the woman nothing knoweth,
 So may she nothing be to wite,
 For if a man him self excite
 To drenche, and woll not forbere,
 The water shall no blame bere.
 What may the gold though men coveit?
 If that a man woll love streit,
 The woman hath him nothing bound,
 If he his owne herte wounde,
 She may not lette the folie,
 And though so fell of compaigny,
 That he may any thing purchase,
 Yet maketh a man the first chace.
 The woman fleeth, and he pursueth,
 So that by way of skill it sueth,
 The man is cause, how so befalle,
 That he full ofte sith is falle,
 Where that he may nought wel arise.²⁷

The theme is pursued in The Rape of Lucrece in lines 1233 - 1267, but Shakespeare's choice of image reflects a shift in emphasis:

For men have marble, women waxen, minds,
 And therefore are they form'd as marble will;
 The weak oppress'd, th'impression of strange kinds

Is form'd in them by force, by fraud, or skill.
(1240 - 1243)

Gower's emphasis is on the responsibility of the male perpetrator of the action, and water is an appropriate image for the blamelessness of the woman in the case; Shakespeare's image of the wax that takes the form impressed upon it by a marble stamp, on the other hand, passes attention to the consequences for the female sufferers of the action, and their limited scope of response:

O, let it not be hild
Poor women's faults that they are so fulfill'd
With men's abuses! those proud lords to blame
Make weak-made women tenants to their shame
(1257 - 1260)

This may not sit well with Augustinian theology, but the passive role of Lucrece in the events of her own legend is truer history.

2.1. CONCLUSION

In different ways, both poems depend on the interplay of ideas relating to change. Venus's prophecy appears to announce the dawn of the age when human actions will determine the outcome of events, but it is embedded in a context that forces us to be conscious of the processes of Nature that are beyond human control. And while The Rape of Lucrece depicts one historical event that seems to conform to Venus's prophecy, within it there are

embedded passages that imply views of Opportunity (ll. 896 - 901) and Time (ll. 936 - 959) that run counter to those that dominate the poem. With different emphases, each poem imparts a sense of human aspirations in conflict with (but potentially reconcilable to) the transcendent force of change implied by the ideas of regenerative Nature and Time as either the destroyer of all or the revealer of truth.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER ONE

DISCURSIVE INCONSISTENCY IN THE SOURCE-TEXTS

Relating individual literary works to broader explanatory systems is an indispensable function of literary criticism. I must acknowledge, however, that the traditional emphasis (mentioned in the Introduction, pp. 3 - 4) within my teaching environment on the reader's response to the individual text predisposes me to approach such generalisations rather cautiously.

In some circumstances this predisposition can inhibit better understanding, but it is clearly justified when the generalisations lead us towards ungenerous readings of individual texts. The plausibility of the dismissive views of Shakespeare's narrative poems held by Edward Dowden and F. T. Prince (noted earlier in this chapter), for instance, derives in turn from the plausibility of extraneous systems of explanation that have been accorded a higher priority than the poems themselves. In Dowden's case the system was the biographical view of Shakespeare's development (tied to a carefully-drawn analogy²⁸ with the growth of a plant into maturity), which allowed him to place the poems as early and therefore inferior creations; to this developmental model F. T. Prince added two other plausible and apparently scientific explanatory devices: the language of clinical psychology (to saddle the poet with morbidity) and the

taxonomy of genres to create a neatly symmetrical exposure of the poems' limitations.²⁹ But coherent systems of explanation in literary criticism do not command the same deference as the laws of science, and it seems to me that when we are faced with the choice it is far more appropriate to dispense with the coherent system than to surrender a more charitable individual reading.

Many of the texts that will be discussed in the following chapters are vulnerable when probed for coherency and system - and particularly so in relation to the manner in which they account for change. A quotation from the chapter devoted to *Fortuna* and *Virtu* in Sidney Anglo's study of Machiavelli (whose work has an important bearing upon some of Shakespeare's sources) will illustrate the difficulty:

We can go round in an endless series of incompatibilities because Machiavelli never makes a serious attempt to define his terms. His polarities are rarely true polarities. His precision is only seeming, not actual. Fortune is merely the totality of inexplicable forces operating on human affairs; necessity is a more immediate manifestation of these forces; and *virtu* too easily becomes a label which Machiavelli sticks on to any quality which is politically effective, and of which he therefore approves. They are not categories of marked usefulness in the description and analysis of complex political activity: but Machiavelli prefers to keep his most important conceptions on the level of metaphor which might as easily change according to the dictates of emotion, or literary effect, as to the requirements of consecutive argument.³⁰

There is a strong sense of frustration and irritation throughout the chapter: 'In trying to establish the meanings attached to *virtu* and Fortune', he says earlier, 'one is not merely faced with inconsistencies but is also oppressed with the sense of proceeding in ever diminishing circles.'³¹

For the most part, the inconsistencies that Anglo complains of in Machiavelli only become apparent when we attempt a global view of his work - and it certainly was not his intention that passages (such as the last three chapters of The Prince) in which forceful action is approbated or advocated as the remedy for malicious Chance should be brought together with others in which prudence is recommended or Fortune is said to be unassailable.

On the other hand, when Anglo claims³² that 'He never makes up his mind, even in one short work, either on the exact nature of Fortune or the extent of its power' one must presume that he is referring to the Tercets on Fortune, and acknowledge that it is as contradictory as he suggests. But this verse letter is Machiavelli's only sustained consideration of the topic that is not aimed at the explanation or advocacy of a specific line of action, and appears to have had the purpose of setting out everything he felt about it.

The contradictions are not peculiar to Machiavelli alone, but inherent in the sheer diversity of ideas relating to change that were available to him, at a time when long-standing orthodoxies were gradually being eroded by a new emphasis on the efficacy of men's political actions. Considered thus, the point worth remarking is that in the Tercets on Fortune he was able to fabricate a complex image (Fortune's palace contains a multiplicity of wheels, is thronged with aspirants and personifications of attributes associated with her, and her domain is surrounded by 'narrative paintings that draw morals from history') that gives essentially contradictory ideas even the semblance of consistency. That there is no real logical consistency to Machiavelli's application of these ideas in extended political and historical discourse is of little importance in relation to the influence of his writing and the reaction against the views that were associated with him.

But if Anglo's analysis serves little constructive purpose it at least has the merit of being factually correct. When S.L. Wolff reached similarly negative conclusions about Robert Greene his irritation and desire for regularity allowed an element of error to creep into his generalisation:

Greene is Fortune's abject slave; he suffers from *lues fortunae*, or *tychomania*, a disease which once having gripped its victim, blinds him to the true course of human affairs, and renders him incapable of building more than a *novelle*-plot, or depicting a consistent character. Fortune has him in thrall.

He attributes to her the plainest effects of a line of causes already begun - effects which are perfectly calculable and which exhibit not the slightest element of chance. He attributes to her the gifts which, according to a distinction that was one of the commonplaces of medieval and Renaissance thought, really come from 'Nature'. He drags her in at every possible or impossible place, simply as a *cliche*, meaning no more than 'condition of life' or 'change of affairs' or 'difficulties to be overcome' or 'some reason or other why things happen as they do - some reason which I don't care to take the trouble to find out'. This intellectual laziness leads Greene to employ 'drag-net' or 'blunderbuss' formulae when he wishes to be sure of including the true cause of his event.³³

We could easily forget, reading this, that Greene is a pioneer of prose fiction rather than a follower of a well-established tradition of realistic novels. Moreover, to translate the many incidental references to Fortune in Greene's work into a personal obsession ignores the evidence of Pandosto (the source for The Winter's Tale), the design of which subsumes the apparent power of Fortune under the greater power of Time, and Morando where, in Greene's only extended treatment of the topic, a detailed rebuttal of its validity is given to the character Peratio.³⁴ The frequent incidental references to Fortune in his work, on the other hand, usually serve merely to knit events together and do not merit being elevated into a system.

Clearly, an investigation along the lines that I have proposed will be hampered if we approach the texts that

served as Shakespeare's sources with the expectations of consistency held by Wolff and Anglo. Inconsistencies abound in them, presenting an easy target to those who are inclined (if I may adapt the comment by Hazlitt quoted earlier), to disparage the sources because they like the plays. What is needed is an approach that will allow us to identify, methodically and sympathetically, what there was in the individual text for the dramatist - or my notional 'alert reader' - to respond to, without preoccupying ourselves too greatly with whatever contradictions we might discern. Some of the grounds that justify such an approach are indicated below.³⁵

1. Accretionary histories: Texts such as the Chronicles of Edward Hall and Raphael Holinshed cannot accurately be attributed to a single author. They are, in effect, built up by the heavy incorporation of previous histories. Some indication of Hall's debt to Polydore Vergil has already been given in this chapter, and it is discussed more closely in the next. Holinshed's Chronicle, in turn, absorbs Hall's - and in Chapter Five I argue that it is important to recognise the hidden presence of Hector Boece's Scotorum Historiae in its Scottish section. (Both Hall's Chronicle and the second edition of Holinshed's were published posthumously, and the contributions of their editors have also to be taken into account.)

2. Modes of explanation in narrative texts: Various modern theorists have questioned the presumption that all explanations, in historical narratives, necessarily derive from a 'covering law'. Patrick Gardiner, in 1952, attempted only to qualify the covering-law model of explanation by suggesting that historians may implicitly offer explanatory generalisations in terms of what they conceive to have been the historical agent's standpoint; Dray and Stover suggested, further, that when a historian offers a law-like statement as an explanation of an event, or as a plausible basis for the agent's prospective action, he does not commit himself to the truth of the 'law', and that the law-like statement is not belied by negative evidence or contradictory explanations.³⁶

3. Explanation and Advocacy: It is a feature of most of the texts that are discussed in subsequent chapters that they are aimed at a readership that wielded considerable power. Some - Lydgate's Troy Book, Hall's Chronicle, and Buchanan's Historia - are dedicated to members of the ruling family themselves, but all are clearly intended to exert an influence upon those whose spiritual and secular behaviour was of no little significance to the public well-being.³⁷

In linguistic terms, rules and laws are closely related, and there is bound to be a resemblance between the 'covering law' statements anticipated by modern

understanding and the lessons that a reader might distil from both historical and fictional narratives of the early modern period.³⁸ But, in terms of values they advocate and the perceptions of change they entail, the authors of the sixteenth-century source-texts that are studied here switch, with varying degrees of equanimity, between the spiritual and the secular.³⁹ Generally the contradictions are left unremarked, but a distinct polarisation of the two sets of values is noticeable within those texts that were published after 1563 - showing, in the Euphuistic fictions discussed in Chapter Three, as a tension that is characteristic of the genre.

In his narrative poems, as we have seen, the interplay of contrasting views on change was a significant part of Shakespeare's design; the extent to which the same is true of his plays - where a multiplicity of viewpoints is inherent - should emerge from a comparison with his source-texts.



Figure 1 (right): Occasion taken when it is offered. Plate 7 of Theodor Galle's cycle for Joannes David's Occasio arrepta, neglecta (1605). See p. 23.

Figure 2 (above): Herculean Virtue chastising vicious Fortune (Marc Antonio Raimondi, early 16th century). See p. 23.



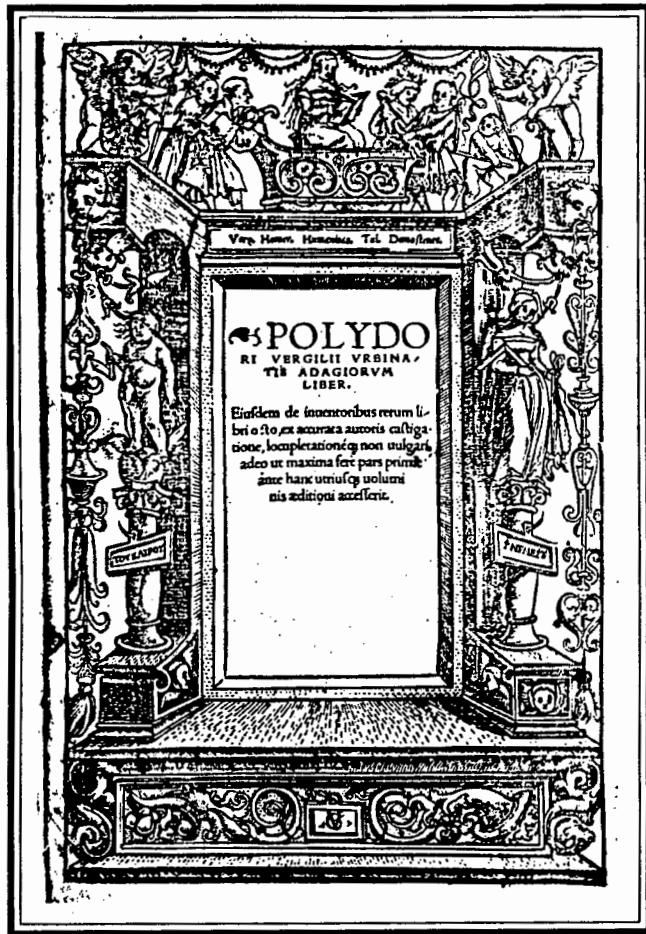


Figure 3 (above): Title-page of Polydore Vergil's *de Inventoribus Rerum*, 1521. See pp. 48 - 49, note 14.

Figure 4 (right): 'In Occasionem', from *A Choice of Emblems*. See p. 49, note 15.

In occasionem. 181

To my Kinsman M. GEEFREY WHITNEY.

Horat. lib. 1. Ep. 11.
ad Bullatum.
Tu quicumque Deus
tibi fortunaveris hora,
Grata sume manu: nec
dulcia differ in somno.

WHAT creature thou? *Occasion I doe shewe.*
On whirling wheel declare why doste thou stande?
Because, I still am tossed too, and froe.
Why doste thou houlde a razor in thy hande?
That men maie knowe I cut on euerie side,
And when I come, I armies can denide.

But wherefore hast thou winges vppon thy feete?
To shewe, how lighte I flie with litle winde.
What meanes longe lockes before? *that suche as meete,*
Maye houlde at firste, when they occasion finde.
Thy head behinde all balde, what telles it more?
That none shoulde houlde, that les me slippe before.

Why doste thou stande within an open place?
That I maye warne all people not to staye,
But at the firste, occasion to embrace,
And when shee comes, so meete her by the waye.
Lysippus so did thinke it best so bee,
Who did denise mine image, as you see.

Z 3 Potentia

NOTES

1. E. Leach, 'Genesis as Myth', in Genesis as Myth and Other Essays (1969). The fullest discussion of the Adonis myth remains the relevant section (Book I, Part IV) of Frazer's The Golden Bough.

2. The Venus and Adonis sonnets in The Passionate Pilgrim reflect the erotic aspect of pastoral; H.C.'s 'The Sheepheard's song of Venus and Adonis' in England's Helicon emphasises the debate between them, and Spenser's Astrophel borrows from the details of the death and metamorphosis of Adonis.

3. See, for example, G. G. Gervinus, Shakespeare Commentaries (tr. F. E. Bunnètt, 1877), pp. 36 - 44.

4. William Hazlitt, Characters of Shakespeare's Plays, 1818. Quoted from the Everyman edition(1906), p. 264.

5. Edward Dowden, Shakspere - His Mind and Art (1875). Quoted from the 1897 edition, pp. 52 - 53.

6. F. T. Prince (ed.), The Poems (Arden Shakepeare, 1960), pp. xxx - xxxi.

7. Metamorphoses, Book X, ll. 862 - 863.

8. For example, ll. 76 - 77; ll. 345 - 348.

9. On *pastourelle*, see W.W. Greg, Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama (1906), pp. 63 - 71; F. Kermode (ed.), English Pastoral Poetry (1952), pp. 32 - 35 (Norton edition, 1972). The latter provides examples.

10. E. Panofsky, 'Et in Arcadia Ego', Philosophy and History, (ed. R. Klibansky and H. J. Paton (1938), pp. 239 -240.

11. F. P. Pickering summarises the 'Boethian scheme of history' thus: 'God, his Providence; the fate of all temporal things and beings - including man; Fortune the Free Will of man. This paradigm was known to every medieval author as being the only one available for works of non-theological content, for the rational interpretation of "real" history (history proper), or for the composition and interpretation of all kinds of fictions.' (Literature and Art in the Middle Ages, 1970, pp. 1181 -182). One may accept this description, I think, without having to accept Pickering's rigid distinction between Christian history ('after Augustine') and secular history ('after Boethius'): see C. Trinkaus, In Our Image and Likeness (1970), vol. 1, pp. 18 - 27.

12. I am indebted to the Librarians of the Warburg Institute for permission to reproduce items from their Picture Collection, and for their kind assistance. The most important studies of the Occasion theme are those by

Rudolf Wittkower in the first volume of the Institute's journal - 'Patience and Chance', JWCI, (1937 - 8), pp. 171 - 7; 'Chance, Time and Virtue', *ibid.*, pp. 313 - 21 - and Frederick Kiefer, 'The Conflation of Fortuna and Occasio in Renaissance thought and iconography', Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 9 (1979), pp. 1 - 27. The substance of this article informs Kiefer's later study of Fortune and Elizabethan Tragedy (1983). In 'Platonic Tyranny and the Renaissance Fortune', Essays in Honour of Erwin Panofsky (ed. M. Meiss, 1961) Edgar Wind traces the application to political discourse of the idea that 'human foresight can conspire with chance, despite their obvious conflicts' from Ficino's interpretation of a passage in the fourth book of Plato's Laws and the influence of his reading upon the Florentine circle of Machiavelli and Guicciardini. On Machiavelli's use of the terms Fortuna, Occasione and virtu, see J. G. A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment (1971), especially pages 78 - 79; 165 - 182.

13. J. E. Matzke, 'On the Source of the Italian and English Idioms meaning "To Take Time by the Forelock"', PMLA, VIII (1893), pp. 303 - 334.

14. From Edward Hall's The Union of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre and York (1548), ed. H. Ellis (1809), p. 124:

Therefore I say, it is wisdome to take occasion,
when the hery side and not the balde side is

profered. If we feare the multitude remembre our awne victories, which we have ever obtained by less nombre, and not the greater. If we feare death, remembre the glory and immortall fame, that shall succeade of our valiaunt actes, if we sell our lifes so dere.

Interestingly, the 1521 Basle edition of Polydore's de Inventoribus Rerum was ornamented by a block that shows an architectural Triumph of Humanitas, in which Nemesis and Occasion (here labelled 'Kairos') with a prominent forelock are the supporting caryatids (see Figure 3). However, although Polydore frequently, and generally approvingly, has the agents of history 'seizing occasion' in the Anglia Historia he never refers to her forelock. Presumably, the 'common verse' mentioned by Bacon in the passage quoted below was also familiar to Hall.

15. Francis Bacon, 'Of Delays', Essays (1612). Quoted from A. W. Pollard's edition (1900), p.53. The 'common verse' Bacon refers to is most likely to be no. XII of the epigrams of Ausonius. Whitney's English version (in A Choice of Emblems) is included here as Figure 4.

16. Cf. Felix Raab, The English Face of Machiavelli (1964), pp. 67 - 101.

17. The Faerie Queene, Book II, Canto V, stanza 43.

18. Thomas Blundeville, op. cit., sig. Bii^v.

19. Ibid., sig. Hi^v - Hii. In this section Blundeville adapts from a manuscript treatise by his friend Giacomo Concio (an Italian Protestant exile residing in England, also known as Jacobus Acontius or Accontio Tridentino) entitled Della osseruazioni, et auuertimenti che hauer si debbono nel legger della historie, composed before August 1564 and presented to their mutual patron, the Earl of Leicester. See H. G. Dick, XXX, Huntington Library Quarterly, III (1939 - 40), pp. 149 - 170; Lily B. Campbell, Shakespeare's Histories (1947), pp. 49 - 51.

There are echoes of the passage quoted here in lines 197 - 210 of The Rape of Lucrece. Other similarities occur and, whether they are caused by the related subject matter or, perhaps, Shakespeare's knowledge of Blundeville's Treatise, they are worth recording:

(Ai) Blundeville, op. cit., sig. Fiii^v - Fiv^v:

First to knowe by the examples of others, whyther those thinges which we desire and seeme to us good, be good in deede or not: and secondlye what the obtayning therof will cost. For manye tymes those things which seeme good, have bene cause of great evil, as riches, honour, and greatnesse ... consider howe much the thing which we desire will cost. For the cost maye be such as we were better to be without our desire, than to have it.

(Aii) The Rape of Lucrece, lines 134 - 151.

(Bi) Blundeville, op. cit., sig. Gi - Gi^v:

Moreover, it shall be needfull to compare the long time of our traveyle, and great charges, with the short tyme of enjoying the thing which wee are to obtayne. It importeth also not a little to remember that many tymes, things doe seeme unto us more precious and more goodly whylest we seeke them, than when we have gotten them. And in seeking them by unlawfull meanes, wee have to note what revenge God is woont to take of such doinges, and howe short a tyme & with what trouble, hee suffereth us to enjoye them.

(Bii) The Rape of Lucrece, lines 211 - 217.

20. Joannes David, Occasio Arrepta. Neglecta, Antwerp (1605).

21. J. C. Maxwell (ed.), The Poems (New Shakespeare, Cambridge, 1965), p. xxv.

22. Cf. Frank Kermode, The Sense of an Ending, 1967, pp. 46 - 64.

23. F. T. Prince (ed.), The Poems (Arden Shakespeare, 1960), p. xxxv.

24. J. C. Maxwell (ed.), The Poems (New Shakespeare, Cambridge), 1965, p. xxiv.

25. Ibid., pp. xxiii - xxiv

26. De Civitate Dei, Book I, ch. xviii (Everyman edition, trans. J. Healey, 1945, p.24).
27. Confessio Amantis, Book 7, ch. 11 (ed. R. Pauli, 1857, vol. 3, pp. 235 - 236).
28. Edward Dowden, op. cit., pp. 42 - 43.
29. F. T. Prince, op. cit., pp. xxx - xxxviii.
30. Sidney Anglo, op. cit., 1969, pp. 236 - 237.
31. Ibid., p. 235.
32. Ibid., p. 222.
33. S. L. Wolff, The Greek Romance in Elizabethan Prose Fiction, (New York, 1912), p.377.
34. Robert Greene, Works (ed. A. B. Grosart, 1881 - 83), vol. III, pp. 128 - 141.
35. The preceding argument owes much to J. G. A. Pocock, Politics, Language and Time (New York, 1971: see, especially, pp. 3 - 41) and A. B. Ferguson, Clio Unbound, Durham, N. C. (1979).
36. P. L. Gardiner, The Nature of Historical Thinking (1952); W. Dray, Laws and Explanation in History (1957);

R. Stover, The Nature of Historical Thinking (Chapel Hill, 1967). There is an unavoidable bluntness to my summary of their arguments that I must apologise for. Later publications by Gardiner (The Philosophy of History, 1974) and Dray (Philosophy of History, 1964) are helpfully objective expositions of the debate. For a discussion of this issue that includes both historical and fictional narratives, see C. Strout, The Veracious Imagination (1981), pp. 1 - 28.

37. Describing this sort of anticipated response, Jane Tompkins speaks of the literary work as not simply an object for interpretation but 'a unit of force whose power is exerted upon the world in a particular direction'. ('The Reader in History: The Changing Shape of Literary Response' in Reader Response Criticism, ed. Jane P. Tompkins, 1980, p. 204) When secular and spiritual values are given similar weight, however, this force must be seen as having more than one direction.

38. Cf. R. Stover, op. cit., pp. 251 - 252.

39. Cf. A. B. Ferguson, op. cit., p.427:

Such seeming anomalies are no doubt to be expected of a period during which observers of society had been forced to express changing attitudes towards the relevant past in paradigmatic language ill-suited to the task. The problem, then, is to explain them, not necessarily to explain them away.

CHAPTER TWO

HALL'S CHRONICLE AND THE KING HENRY VI PLAYS

Shakespeare's primary source for the three King Henry VI plays was the work generally known as Hall's Chronicle¹, which was first published, by Richard Grafton, in 1548 (the year after Edward Hall's death). There was a second edition two years later, but further publication was prohibited in the reign of Queen Mary. Hall's work, however, was substantially incorporated into the later histories compiled by Raphael Holinshed and Grafton himself.

Two notable attempts have been made to identify underlying pattern in the Chronicle's exposition of history, both in terms of providence-bolstered dynastic myth. For E. M. W. Tillyard the unfolding of the 'Tudor Myth' - 'the working-out of a long chain of nemesis to its happy expiation' - gives the Chronicle a symphonic unity², while H. A. Kelly's exhaustive study, which takes careful account of sources and antecedents, finds that three such providential myths - of the Lancaster, York and Tudor dynasties - have managed to distil themselves into the text.³

Both critics have contributed much that is valuable to the understanding of the Chronicle and its influence: Tillyard by demonstrating the importance of the work and forcefully identifying a major theme that would

strengthen many readers' understanding of Shakespeare's history plays; Kelly by qualifying Tillyard's generalisations with sharply-defined scrutiny of the text. But in selecting providential explanation for their main attention they have tended to marginalise other aspects of exposition in the Chronicle. Their inherent supposition, which surfaces from time to time, appears to be that providential explanations - because of their universal implications - necessarily supersede all others.

The issues relating to the practice of renaissance historiographers, and to modern analysis of the nature of historical explanation generally, that were raised in the appendix to the previous chapter (exacerbated in the case of the Chronicle by the fact that it was only partially readied for the press by Hall himself) suggest that it is not necessary, or advisable, to do so. The Chronicle offers its explanations from a range of different standpoints: some of these are contemplative (sometimes recoiling at the world's inscrutable mutability, and sometimes detecting various strains of providential dispensation) and others are more worldly. What matters for the acceptability of an explanation in the course of a narration is its plausibility in its immediate context. If certain sorts of explanation accumulate - as they certainly do in the Chronicle - they may well impact on the reader as thematic patterns, but ought not to be thought of as mutually exclusive.

1.1. TUDOR LEGITIMACY AND MARRIAGE

The formal division of the Chronicle is into eight sections, each of which has a title that characterises the reign that is its subject: The Unquiet Tyme of Kyng Henry the Fowerth; The victorious Actes of Kyng Henry the V; The Troublous season of Kyng Henry the VI; The Prosperous Reign of Kyng Edward the IIII; The Pitiful life of Kyng Edward the V; The tragical Doyngs of Kyng Richard the III; The Politike Governauce of Kyng Henry the VII; The triumphant reign of Kyng Henry the VIII.

The scope and argument of the work is announced in the full title⁴ and reiterated in the dedication and the first chapter:

... But what miserie, what murder, and what execrable plagues this famous region hath suffered by the devision and discension of the renoumed houses of Lancastre and Yorke, my witte cannot comprehende nor my tounge declare nether yet my penne fully set furthe ... But the olde devided controversie betwene the fornamed families of Lancastre and Yorke, by the union of Matrimony celebrate and consummate betwene the high and mighty Prince Kyng Henry the seventh and the lady Elizabeth his moste worthy Quene, the one beeyng indubitately heire of the hous of Lancastre, and the other of Yorke was suspended and appalled in the person of their moste noble, puissant and mighty heire kyng Henry the eight, and by hym clerely buried and perpetually extinct. ... By the union of man & woman in the holy Sacrament of Matrimony the generacion is blessed and the synne of the body clene extincte

& put awaie. By the union of marriage, peace betwene realme and realme is exalted, and love betwene countree and countree is norished. By conjunction of matrimony, malice is extinct, amitie is embraced, and indissoluble aliance and consanguinite is procured. What profite, what commfort, what joy succeeded in the realme of England by the union of the fornamed two noble families, you shall apparently perceive by the sequele of this rude and unlearned history. (p.1)

Hall is indebted to Polydore Vergil's Anglica Historia⁵ for the theme reflected above - as, indeed, he is for much else: although thirty-five additional sources are named for the Chronicle, the influence of Polydore can be detected throughout (notwithstanding the wholesale incorporation of More's life of Richard III) in passages that are either a direct translation or an expansion of both his narrative and his commentary.

Nevertheless, some important distinctions can be discerned between the principles underlying the two works. Hall is stoutly patriotic, and the well-being of the realm - its profit and its honour - is much more of an abiding emotional concern than it is in the Anglica Historia; Polydore, who came to England as a Papal representative, is far more even-handed in his treatment of French points of view. And, although he outlived Hall, Polydore circumspectly ended his work (as it was first published) with Henry VII and was thus able to present a history that was a justification of the line of the Catholic Princes who were his masters, sealed by the

divinely-ordained marriage of Henry VII and Elizabeth, the daughter of Edward IV.⁶

On the other hand, events would seem to have outpaced the writing of the Chronicle, and none of Henry VIII's marriages provided Hall with the culmination suggested at the outset of his work. Following Polydore, great spiritual and political significance is attributed to marriage throughout, but in the Chronicle this culminates in a very detailed justification of the dissolution of the king's marriage to Catherine. The further complications to this thematic difficulty may well have contributed to Hall's loss of diligence in his project beyond the coronation of Anne Boleyn, that Grafton mentions (p. vii) in his preface. Marriage, in other words, does not emerge in the text of the Chronicle as the indispensable element of the controlling idea that the dedication and preface might lead us to expect. But - deriving from its importance in the Anglica Historia - its consequences feature strongly among the range of ideas that are employed to explain or to draw lessons from contingent events.

A sense of the spiritual and political significance the Chronicle attributes to this subject is communicated when Richard III is denounced for arranging a demeaning marriage for one niece (a daughter of Edward IV) and elevating another (a daughter of his sister Anne) through

marriage into the Scottish royal family. The king of Scotland recognises that

emongest all bondes and obligacions of love and amitie, that there is neither a surer nor a more perfighter locke, then the knote of conjuncion in the sacrament of Matrimony, which was in the very begynnynge of the first age of man, ordeyned and instituted in the holy place of paradise terrestrial by God hym selfe: by reason whereof, the propogacion and succession of the humane nature, stablished upon the sure seate of lawfull matrimony betwene princes, maye norishe peace, concorde and unite, aswage and breake the furious rage of truculente Mars and terrible battayle, and encrease love, favour and familiarite.

(pp. 401 - 402)

Richard's later plan to marry his brother's other daughter himself is described as 'a thinge not onely detestable to be spoken of in the remembraunce of man, but much more cruel and abhominable to be put into execution' (p. 406), and much space is devoted to the breaches of faith and the lack of wisdom in the marriages of both Henry VI and Edward IV. Both events are presented, in turn, as the root causes of consequent disasters:

This mariage [of King Henry VI to Margaret of Anjou] semed to many, bothe infortunate, and unprofitable to the realme of England, and that for many causes. ... But moste of all it should seme, that God with this matrimony was not content. For after this spousage the kynges frendes fell from hym, bothe in Englande and in Fraunce, the Lordes of his realme, fell in division emongest themselves, the commons rebelled against their soveraigne Lorde, and naturall Prince, felde wer foughten, many thousandes slain, and finally, the kyng deposed, and his sonne slain, and this Quene sent home again, with asmuche misery and sorowe, as she was received with pompe and triumphe, such is worldly

unstablenes, and so waveryng is false flattering fortune. (p. 205)

Yet who so will marke the sequele of this story, shall manifestly perceyve, what murther, what miserie, & what troble ensued by reason of this mariage [of Edward IV to Lady Elizabeth Grey]: for it can not be denied, but for this mariage kyng Edward was expulsed the Realm, & durst not abide, And for this mariage was therle of Warwycke & his brother miserable slain. By this mariage were kyng Edwardes. ii. sonnes declared bastardes, & in conclusion prived of their lifes. And finally by this mariage, the quenes blood was confounded, and utterly in maner destroyed. (pp. 264 - 265)

1.2. PROVIDENCE AND MUTABILITY: THE CONTEMPLATIVE STANDPOINT

Though Hall follows Polydore closely in so much else, he often takes care to distance himself on issues relating to the discernment of divine providence. The broad argument of the narratives of both histories is capable of being interpreted as unfolding God's dispensation for the realm but this is never unequivocally stated in the Chronicle⁷ and Hall generally qualifies the confident providential assertions he found in the Anglica Historia. Where Polydore reports that by his capture and beheading William of Suffolk 'receaved from God due punishment' for the murder of the Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, for instance, Hall adds the phrase 'as men judge'.⁸ Duke Humphrey's death is itself given by Polydore as evidence of the ill luck that attached to the Gloucester title, but Hall reports this as how 'it semeth to many men'⁹ and,

although he traces unhappy consequences for the Lancaster house that stem from his death, adds

This is the worldly judgement, but God knoweth, what he had predestinate & what he had ordained before, against whose ordenaunce prevayleth no counsaill, and against whose will avayleth no stryvinge. (pp. 209 - 210)

Indeed, Hall is quite scathing about any prospect of discerning the ways of providence (p.265: 'But such conjecture for the most part, be rather of mens phantasies, then of divine revelacion'; p. 287: 'as mennes imaginations ranne, their tounge clacked') except for instances of false oaths, which stand distinct as crimes against God.¹⁰

The sense of the inscrutability of providence reinforces the strain of Christian pessimism and contempt for worldly matters that runs through the Chronicle in lessons that are drawn of the mutability of the human condition. No sooner does parliament confirm Henry IV, for instance, than plots begin to reinstate Richard II:

But O Lord, what is the mutabilitee of fortune? O God what is the change of worldly safetie? O Christe what stables consisteth in mannes provision? Or what ferme suerty hath a prince in his throne and degree? Considryng this king havng the possession of the croune and realme, and that in open parliament, agreed to by the princes, condiscended to by the Clerkes, ratified by the commons, and enacted by the three estates of the realme, was when he thought hymself surely

mortised in a ferme rock & immovable foundation,
sodainly with a trimbelyng quicksande & unsted-
faste grounde like to have sonken or been
overthrowen. (p. 15)

Similarly, the Chronicle frequently shows events to be dominated by Fortune, as the symbol of inconstancy and haphazard chance, or draws the moral of eschewance of worldly goods and glory from the shortsighted willingness of history's agents to participate in the rise and fall of Fortune's wheel.

These *de contemptu mundi* lessons are usually drawn when the narrative records an important death, in the course of a considered estimation of the historical figure's life. The paragon of princes, Henry V, is allowed to make the point himself -

For it is commonly sayd, that as tyme chaungeth,
condicions alter, and in long time al thinges
continue not in one estate. But as eternitie is
the triumpher upon tyme, so do I trust after this
short life to have an eternal beyng, and after
this miserable pilgrimage, mine hope is to enjoy
the celestial kyngdome, and to come to the place
of rest and palice of quietnes (p. 111)

- but in the case of Warwick the King-maker (p. 296) the 'rest, peace, quietnes, and tranquillitie' of death is contrasted with the busy efforts of his 'worldly and mundain affeccions'.

1.3. EXPLANATIONS FROM A SECULAR STANDPOINT

On the other hand, the Chronicle often places quite different value on such matters as worldly glory and the hazards of chance when it supplies the plausible motivation of historical figures, traces the political significance of events or fulfils the task of enshrining fame. The spiritual consolation for his early death that is ascribed to Henry V (quoted above) is preceded by his more worldly consolation that

... this short tyme and smal tract of my mortal life, shal be a testimony of my strength, a declaration of my justice, and a setting furth of all myne actes and procedynges, and shall be the cause that I by death shal obteine fame, glory and renoume, and escape the reprehension of cowardnes, and the mote of all infamy ...

(p. 111)

In the formal evaluation of the king's life that follows there is a lengthy exposition of his merited glory: its impassioned rhetoric is only approached again when the Chronicle records a similar evaluation of Henry VII (p. 505: '... lyving all his tyme in the favour of fortune, in high honour, riches and glory, & for his noble actes & prudent pollecies, worthy to be registered in the book of fame ...') or the deeds of Talbot, the other great hero of the wars in France, as in this evocation of his last battle:

Oh sonne sonne, I thy father which onely hath bene the terror and scourge of the French people so many yeres, which hath subverted so many townes, and profligate and discomfited so many of them in open battayle, and marcial conflict,

neither can here dye, for the honor of my countrey, without great laude and perpetuall fame, nor flye or departe without perpetuall shame and continuall infamy. But because this is thy first journey and enterprise, neither thy flyeng shall redounde to thy shame, nor thy death to thy glory. (p. 229)

As noted in the previous chapter, renaissance historiography could pass easily and eclectically between secular and contemplative standpoints. Henry VI, the only major figure in the Chronicle to merit praise for pious avoidance of worldly matters, may receive it in one part of a sentence - 'In him reigned shamfastnesse, modestie, integritie and pacience to bee marveiled at' - but is criticised for lack of political awareness in the rest: 'yet was he governed of them whom he should have ruled, and brided of suche, whom he sharply should have spurred' (p. 208).

Similarly, when describing reversals experienced by Edward IV, the Chronicle (p. 284) follows exclamation at his 'miserable chaunce' by ascribing the event to his wantonness ('But his mynd was so geven to pastyme, dalyaunce, & sensuall pleasure, that he forgat the olde adage ...') and lack of foresight ('The only excuse is that he so much trusted in fortunes flatteryng, that he thought never to have at dyce any change, or at chestes any checke mate.').

However, Edward is shown not to despair and, from his refuge in Burgundy, hopes for a 'mature and ready

occasion' that will enable him to regain the kingdom. Such watching for the suitable moment, recalling the passage quoted from Blundeville's Treatise in the previous chapter, is frequently used to explain willingness (or lack of it) to engage in battle. It is used, for instance, to praise the French king's prudence in avoiding engagement with the Duke of Bedford:

... kyng Charles did politiquely consider, what a variable lady, Fortune was, and what a sodain and unthought chaunce of a small thyng, might do in a battail ... And beside that, he had by his explorators and spies, plain and perfect knowledge, that many and diverse citees & tounes in Fraunce ... would, (when they sawe their tyme) not onely rebell and returne to his faccion and parte, but also were ready to aide and assiste hym, in recovery of his desired realme ... (p.153)

Both French and English leaders are also acknowledged for either thwarting Fortune' (e.g., p. 215) or accepting her benevolence with boldness, as when the French build on their successes during civil discord in England (p. 224: 'The wittie capitaines perceiving fortunes favour towards them, thought it necessary to take the tyme, while their good planet reigned.').

1.4. THE UNTRUSTWORTHINESS OF WOMEN

Discernible throughout the Chronicle, and often closely linked to the estimation of the consequences of a

marriage, is a notable stringency towards the actions of women. The Chronicle's greatest antagonism is reserved for la Pucelle (although Polydore is the source of most of Hall's adverse comments on women he is, as one might anticipate from his more international perspective, far more sympathetic in her case¹¹). Most of the chapter on the ninth year of Henry VI's reign is devoted to berating the French for giving her credence -

this woman was not inspired with the holy ghost, nor sent from God, (as the Frenchmen beleve) but an enchanteresse, an orgayne of the devill, sent from Sathan (p. 157)

- and to the justification of her burning because of her unnatural behaviour. He cites shamefastness, pity and the avoidance of scandal as the three signs of a good woman and proves from her lack of these qualities that she was no saint, but a 'false prophetisse, and a seducer of the people':

If these qualities, be of necessitie, incident to a good woman, where was her shamefastnes, when she daily and nightly, was conversant with comen souldiors, and men of warre, emongest whom, is small honestie, lesse vertue, and shamefastnesse, least of all exercised or used? Where was her womanly pitie, when she taking to her, the harte of a cruell beaste, slewe, man, woman, and childe, where she might have the upper hand? Where was her womanly behavior, when she cladde her self in a mannes clothyng, and was conversant with every losell, gevyng ocassion to all men to judge, and speak evill of her, and her doynges. (p. 159)

In the chapter on the fifteenth year of Henry VI's reign both the king's mother and the Duchess of Bedford are

criticised for marrying intemperately (pp. 184 - 185)¹² and the necromantic exploits of Eleanor, the wife of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester are mentioned in the twentieth year (p.202). Later, in the twenty-seventh year, when the Duke of Somerset surrenders Caen to the French it is done 'partely to please the tounes men, but more desirous to please the duches his wife' (p. 215).

The twenty-sixth year of Henry VI's reign is sarcastically introduced as the first year of the reign of Queen Margaret, and the previous chapter sets out the consequences of both her accumulation of power at the king's expense and her complicity in the death of Duke Humphrey:

During the tyme of this truce or abstinence of warre, while there was nothyng to vexe or trouble the myndes of men, within the realme, a sodain mischief, and a long discorde, sprang out sodainly, by the meanes of a woman ... So here the Quene mynding to preserve her husband in honor, & her selfe in auctoritie, procured & consentid to the death of this noble man, whose onely death brought to passe that thyng, which she woulde most fayne have eschewed, and toke from her that jewel, which she most desired ... (pp. 208 - 210)

Although the Chronicle's chapters on the reign of Richard III are largely an incorporation of the work of St Thomas More, it does include some material from the Anglica Historia, and when Hall reports the acquiescence of Edward IV's widow in Richard's plan to marry her daughter

he expands on what is no more than an aside by Polydore¹³ to generalise on the fickleness of women:

And so she putting in oblivion the murther of her innocente children, the infamy and dishonoure... forgettyng also the feithfull promes & open othe made to the countesse of Richmond mother to the erle Henry, blynded by avaricious affeccion and seduced by flatteryng wordes, first delivered into kyng Richards handes her. v. daughters as Lambes once agayne committed to the custody of the ravenous wolfe. ... Surely the inconstancie of this woman were mucche to be merved at, yf all women had bene founde constante, but let men speake, yet wemen of the verie bonde of nature will folowe their awne kynde. (p. 406)

It is worth noting that these strictures are reserved for women playing an active role in events. The comments on Shore's wife (successively mistress of Edward IV and Lord Hastings), when she dies in old age, are remarkably indulgent and he is far more sympathetic to the widows of both Henry VI and Edward IV when they cease to be active participants. Each of these more charitable strictures, however, derives from More's life of Richard III rather than the Anglica Historia.

2.1. 1 HENRY VI: GLORY AND THE TRAVESTY OF GLORY IN THE WARS IN FRANCE

The permutations of conjecture as to whether 1 Henry VI precedes or follows Shakespeare's other early history plays in composition, whether Shakespeare's part in its

authorship is limited, and whether it displays evidence of later embellishment, are manifold - and this is hardly the place at which to entertain them.¹⁴ But if 1 Henry VI stands apart from the other plays, it does so in a way that is particularly appropriate to a dramatisation of the events in the Chronicle. For, whether as prologue or epilogue to the sequence, 1 Henry VI explores the question of heroism and the fame that attaches to the hero to an absorbing degree, and establishes the patriotic concerns that underlie Hall's text.

Some manipulation of events brings three renowned figures into a significant juxtaposition at the start of 1 Henry VI - Henry V is dead and Sir John Talbot languishes in prison, while Joan of Arc ('la Pucelle') begins to make her mark. The sense of periodicity - of an end and a beginning - that is created for us is communicated, in the case of both the English and the French, in terms of glory. La Pucelle's announcement, couched very similarly to the eagle's explanation of how fame extends in Chaucer's The House of Fame, of what amounts to a new covenant for the French -

Assigned I am to be the English scourge ...
 Glory is like a circle in the water,
 Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself
 Till by broad spreading it disperse to nought.
 With Henry's death the English circle ends;
 Dispersed are the glories it included.
 Now am I like that proud insulting ship
 Which Caesar and his fortune bare at once.
 (1 Henry VI, I.ii.128 - 1139)

- complements the fears for England's prospects expressed in the first scene (which departs from the Chronicle in showing England's nobility in disarray until the accumulation of news from France forces them into action). The nobility of England look back to the remembered glories of Henry V while the French look forward with la Pucelle.

To demonstrate that the contrast is pointed, and to suggest the significance of this to the play will require more detailed examination of what happens in these first scenes. The opening speeches of the first scene are particularly interesting in this light for the modulations they offer upon a basic theme of action. Bedford's initial apostrophe, far from being the mere formulaic set-piece that is sometimes¹⁵ suggested by critics, manifests a fatalistic acceptance of events (as beyond human control) with which his later forebodings are consistent:

... we'll offer up our arms
 Since arms avail not; now that Henry's dead
 Posterity wait for wretched years
 (I.i.46 - 48)

Bedford begins an encomium on the dead king's heroic qualities that is picked up by Gloucester. However, we are not allowed to ignore the negative element contained in mourning and inaction: Exeter's comment underscores the resemblance of what we are watching with conventional

representations of the Triumph of Death, and forcibly articulates the alternatives they are faced with:

Why mourn we not in blood?
 Henry is dead and never shall revive.
 Upon a wooden coffin we attend;
 And Death's dishonourable victory
 We with our stately presence glorify,
 Like captives bound to a triumphal car.
 What! shall we curse the planets of mishap
 That plotted thus our overthrow?
 (I.i.17 - 24)

But his forceful speech is immediately swamped by Winchester's continuation of the encomium and the bickering between Gloucester and the bishop that follows.

Moreover, in the ensuing events of the scene we note that the lords only hesitantly move towards the actions that are so immediate in the Chronicle: the alternative of inaction is frequently and explicitly countenanced, and contributes to our sense of their discord:

Gloucester: Is Paris lost? Is Rouen yielded up?
 If Henry were recall'd to life again,
 These news would cause him once more yield the ghost
 (I.i.65 - 67)

Exeter: Were our fears wanting to this funeral
 These tidings would call forth her flowing tides.
 (I.i.82 - 83)

Exeter: The Dauphin crowned king! All fly to him!
 O, whither shall we fly from this reproach?
Gloucester: We will not fly but to our enemies'
 throats.
 (I.i.96 - 90)

The third messenger's description of Talbot's manful struggle in the face of adversity (and, in contrast,

Falstaff's cowardice) is obviously relevant to this lack of concert. His example finally drives the assembled lords into purposeful action, as the dissatisfied Winchester notes. With the news that the heroic captain is still alive, Bedford passes from the despair of

Is Talbot slain? Then will I slay myself,
For living idly here, in pomp and ease
(I.i.141 - 142)

to the determination of

Farewell, my masters; to my task will I,
Bonfires in France forthwith I am to make
To keep our great Saint George's feast withal.
(I.i.152 - 154)

In the first scene we have witnessed two attitudes towards mischance at play - despair; and courage that derived from necessity. In the next scene it is the same 'necessity' that empowers the famished English troops to repulse the French, as the Dauphin recognises:

Let's leave this town; for they are hare-brain'd
slaves,
And hunger will enforce them to be more eager:
Of old I know them; rather with their teeth
The walls they'll tear down than forsake the siege.
(I.ii.37 - 40)

The courage of the English troops contrasts markedly with the irresolution shown by the English nobility in the previous scene, amply demonstrating the lesson, that England's virtues were so great that she could only be defeated by the failure of her leaders implied by the messengers in the previous scene.

The decision by the French to attack Orleans is not taken immediately upon entry: they are first allowed to parade their ascendant position exultantly:

Dauphin: At pleasure here we lie near Orleans
The whiles the famished English, like pale ghosts,
Faintly besiege us one hour in a month...

Reignier: Let's raise the siege. Why live we idly here?

(I.ii.6 - 8; 13)

Yet, despite their advantage, the French are defeated by the besieging English and relapse into what appears to be projected as native cowardice:

Alencon: Lean raw-boned rascals! Who would suppose
They had such courage and audacity?

Charles: Let's leave this town ...

Reignier: By my consent we'll even let them alone.

Alencon: Be it so.

(I.ii.35 - 37; 44 - 45)

Among the various conjectures upon the role of la Pucelle (whose entry at this point galvanises the despondent French), Tillyard's understanding is of particular interest:

God was ultimately in control and the divine part of man, his reason and the freedom of his will, need not yield [to the influence of the stars and witchcraft]. Further, God used both stars and evil spirits to forward his own ends. Joan, then, is not a mere piece of fortuitous witchcraft, not a freakish emissary of Satan, but a tool of the Almighty, as she herself (though unconsciously) declares in her words to Charles after her first appearance, 'Assigned am I to be the English

scourge' Who but God has assigned her to this duty?¹⁶

This is attractive, since it subsumes the French episodes plausibly under the contemplative convention of God's providence, linking them neatly with the question of Henry VI's rights to the throne. Nevertheless, it is a well-remarked failing of Tillyard's world-order projections that the syntheses he effects exclude much that is ambiguous. Moreover, he overlooks here, as A. L. French has pointed out, the comparatively small significance Henry VI has in this sequence of the play, and the location of reference to his grandfather's usurpation solely in the scenes concerned with Richard Plantagenet's aspirations.¹⁷ French, however, retreats too far from the evidence of historiography in his attempt at rectifying Tillyard (his case being that "the real damage sustained by the English is due not to Joan of Arc but to themselves" - her victories are 'singularly unimpressive'). In emphasising the sedition within the English nobility he has to hypothesize that Shakespeare alters his conception of la Pucelle abruptly in the third scene of Act V. References to her witchcraft in the earlier scenes, he suggests, have to be taken as the characters' prejudiced viewpoints.

Perhaps some mediation between the views of Tillyard and French is called for. It was suggested earlier that la Pucelle's words (I.i.129 - 139) amount to the announcement of a covenant. This, indeed, is what the

French take her entry to be: we note, for instance, the reiterated acceptance of her as a prophet (and her use of the word 'scourge' is consistent with prophetic statement). But their acceptance of her is not conveyed unambiguously. We know it to be an orthodox formulation that with the advent of Christ the nature of God's covenant changes: though not impossible, miracles are rare, and prophets more likely to be false than true. La Pucelle's very promise to Charles of worldly glory would place her among the former sort. To this we are bound to add the sexual aspect of Charles' reaction to this prophet, the implication of his reference to the 'false' prophet Mohamed and his exit line in the scene which, by asserting the contrary ('No prophet will I trust if she prove false'), nevertheless articulates an attitude towards her that an audience may not easily ignore.

A factor of considerable importance in controlling the dramatist's presentation of la Pucelle and the response of the French to her would appear to be the letter from the English king to the Duke of Burgundy that the Chronicle produces as a reasonable view of her:

... But Paulus Emilius, a famous writer, rehersyng that the citezens of Orleauce, had buylded in the honor of her, an Image or an Idole, saith, the Pius bushop of Rome, and Anthony bishop of Florence, much merveiled and greatly wondered at her actes and doynges. With whiche sayng, I can very well agree, that she was more to be merveiled at, as a false prophetisse, and seducer of the people: then to be honored or worshipped as a saint sent from God into the realme of Fraunce (p. 159)

This raising of an 'Image or an Idole' clearly connects the appeal of la Pucelle with a Roman decadence in the French. It is a motif that we find reiterated through the French scenes, and particularly in Charles' profane excesses:

Charles: Bright star of Venus, fall'n down on earth,
How may I reverent worship thee enough
(i.ii.144 - 145)

...

Reignier: Woman, do what thou canst to save our
honour
Drive them from Orleans, and be immortaliz'd
(I.ii.147 - 145)

...

Charles: ...all the priests and friars in my
realm
Shall in procession sing her endless praise.
A statelier pyramis to her I'll raise
Than Rhodope's of Memphis ever was ...
No longer on Saint Denis shall we cry,
But Joan de Pucelle shall be France's saint
(I.vi.19 - 29)

...

Bastard: Search out thy wit for secret policies
And we will make thee famous throughout the world.
Alencon: We'll set thy statue in some holy place,
And have thee reverenc'd like a blessed saint
(II.iii.12 - 15)

The implications of the French behaviour in passages like these lead with some force to the impression that theirs is a travesty of fortitude, and that the glory they seek is in reality a sort of vainglory. Bedford's comment, which A. L. French would want us to take as his subjective view -

Coward of France, how much he wrongs his fame
 Despairing of his own arm's fortitude,
 To join with witches and the help of hell!
 (II.i.15 - 18)

- appears to be corroborated by the behaviour of his opponents. In this light it is apt that la Pucelle's ultimate fate should be stated by York in words that recall the biblical justice done to idolatry:

Break thou in pieces and consume to ashes
 Thou foul accursed minister of hell!
 (V.iv.92 - 93)

Far from being the point at which an altered presentation obtrudes (as French suggests), Act V Scene iii - in which la Pucelle is deserted by her familiar spirits - links with and explains what has gone before. Her promises of future success, we recall, had been predicated upon the transient nature of worldly fame and glory. This understanding had not extended to her own cause then; it is forced upon her now:

See! They forsake me. Now the time is come
 That France must vail her lofty-plumed crest
 And let her head fall into England's lap.
 My ancient incantations are too weak,
 And hell too strong for me to buckle with.
 Now France, thy glory droopeth to the dust
 (V.iii.24 - 29)

As she is depicted in the play, the seemingly-heroic la Pucelle progresses from glory and fame to infamy. The contrast with Sir John Talbot is remarkable.

Personal and public aspects of fame are the subject of the scene depicting the Countess of Auvergne's plot to capture Talbot, in which both the countess and the audience are, in effect, given a dramatised tutorial by the English captain on the true qualities of a martial hero.

It is Talbot's fame, and the desire to possess a similar commodity that spurs the countess on in her enterprise - this is clear from the messenger's announcement in the previous scene, and her own comment -

... if all things fall out right,
 I shall so famous be by this exploit,
 As Scythian Tomyris by Cyrus' death.
 Great is the rumour of this dreadful knight,
 And his achievement of no less account.
 (II.iii.4 - 8)

The lesson is contained in the resolution of the disparity between the countess' expectations of a convention-bound hero and Talbot's real figure (II.iii.17 - 21: 'I see report is fabulous and false ... this is a child, a silly dwarf'). Talbot reverses the commonplace of fame being a shadow, sometimes preceding and sometimes following the substantial figure:

No, no, I am but a shadow of myself:
 You are deceiv'd, my substance is not here;
 For what you see is but the smallest part
 And least proportion of humanity
 (II.iii.49 - 52)

It is in the courage of the English forces, and not his own fortitude, that Talbot's fame lies. In saying this, of course, he is displaying an essential quality of personal honour, that of modesty; his warranty for personal honour is extended further by the mildness of his response (II.ii.72 - 75) to the countess' scheme, which is consistent with the charitable treatment of the vanquished enemy that is frequently commended in treatises on martial conduct.¹⁸

Similarly, he properly ascribes the glory of his victories to God and his king, but retains concern for his honourable reputation and that of his peers (cf. III.iv.10 - 12; I.iv.73 - 96; I.v.34 - 39; IV.v.3 - 18). There is, indeed, little subtlety in the projection of this scourge of the French - nor is it called for, when he is to represent clearly the English qualities that are brought into peril by political events.

However, the scenes portraying the deaths of Talbot and his son go beyond the earlier simplicity, bringing some of the anomalies of mutability to bear upon his heroic life. Even as he dies Talbot is so confident of their Fame that he can scorn Death's victory - a virtual apotheosis of the warrior father and son is suggested:

Thou antic Death, which laugh'st us here to scorn,
 Anon, from thy insulting tyranny
 Coupled in bonds of perpetuity,
 Two Talbots winged through the lither sky
 In thy despite shall scape mortality. (IV.vii.18 - 22)

But the next scene harshly undercuts this sentiment by building upon the intimation of mortality in an incidental phrase ('whose corps was left on the ground': pp. 229 - 230) in the Chronicle. To the listing of Talbot's titles by Sir Edward Lucy, couched in the ubi sunt formula, la Pucelle responds with a blunt assertion of putrefaction -

Him that thou magnifiest with all these titles,
Stinking and fly-blown lies here at our feet.
(IV.vii.75 -76)

- and the next twenty lines underscore the point by repeating the effect.

The passage in the Chronicle that is the subject of these scenes was used by George Whetstone to illustrate a nice difficulty in military ethics: the Talbots' sacrifice of their lives cannot be approbated on theological or strategic grounds: nevertheless, they are to be honoured for their courage, "although not necessary to be followed".¹⁹ Daniel shows them to have 'gained a glorious end' (The Civil Wars, 1609, Book VI, 97.1): their everlasting fame will be for succeeding generations 'Th'eternall evidence of what we were'. Shakespeare's version allows the contemplative discrimination upon worldly honour to co-exist with the patriotic, idealised portrayal of their heroism.

2.2. FORTUNE'S PAGEANT

In the Chronicle the early stages of the Duke of York's pursuit of power (between the thirtieth and the thirty-second years of Henry VI's reign) are characterised by secrecy and watchful restraint. On his return from Ireland, for instance he is described as hiding his true intentions from the king's envoys:

The duke hearyng the message of the two bishops,
either doubting the variable chaunce of mortal
battaill, or lokyng for a better occasion, or a
more luckey daie, aunswered the prelates, that
his commyng was neither to dampnifie the kyng,
neither in honor, nor in persone, nor yet any
good man ...

(p. 226)

Over the course of the three parts of King Henry VI this becomes the basis of a consistent portrayal of the Duke. Though he chafes at the restraint, he adheres to the advice given to him by Mortimer (1 Henry VI, II.v.97, 101: 'But yet be wary in thy studious care. With silence, nephew, be thou politic') and constantly looks forward to the opportune moment:

Well, I will lock his counsel in my breast.
And what I do imagine, let that rest.

(1 Henry VI, II.v.118 - 119)

A day will come when York shall claim his own;
And therefore will I take the Nevils' parts
And make a show of love to proud Duke Humphrey,
And when I spy advantage, claim the crown ...
Then, York, be still awhile, till time do serve:

Watch thou, and wake when others be asleep,
 To pry into the secrets of the state;
 (2 Henry VI, I.i.240 - 251)

While you are thus employ'd, what resteth more
 But that I seek occasion how to rise,
 And yet the King not privy to my drift,
 Nor any of the house of Lancaster?
 (3 Henry VI, I.ii.44 - 47)

He first spies an opportunity when he is entrusted with troops to subdue rebellion in Ireland, and declares himself ready to put everything at hazard. The passage closely resembles one in The Rape of Lucrece in which Shakespeare, a little later, sets out the gamble taken when we covet more than we have:

Now, York, or never, steel thy fearful thoughts,
 And change misdoubt for resolution:
 Be that thou hop'st to be, or what thou art
 Resign to death; it is not worth th'enjoying. ...
 Whiles I in Ireland nourish a mighty band,
 I will stir up in England some black storm
 Shall blow ten thousand souls to heaven, or hell;
 And this fell tempest shall not cease to rage
 Until the golden circuit on my head,
 Like to the glorious sun's transparent beams,
 Do calm the fury of this mad-bred flaw.
 (2 Henry VI, III.i.331 - 354)

The aim of all is but to nurse the life
 With honour, wealth and ease, in waning age;
 And in this aim there is such thwarting strife
 That one for all or all for one we gage:
 As life for honour in fell battle's rage;
 Honour for wealth; and oft that wealth doth cost
 The death of all, and all together lost.

So that in vent'ring ill we leave to be
 The things we are for that which we expect;

And this ambitious foul infirmity,
 In having much, torments us with defect
 Of that we have; so that we do neglect
 The thing we have, and, all for want of wit,
 Make something nothing by augmenting it.

(The Rape of Lucrece, ll. 141 - 154)

What is absent from York's speech is the sense of the futility of such effort that is conveyed in the poem through the voice of the narrator. In the Chronicle, on the other hand, when participants in history are shown to be making conscious - and futile - attempts to predict or shape the future they become liable to the same sort of irony that attaches to the scrabbling figures in depictions of Fortune's Wheel:

Here a man maie beholde, what securitie is in worldly glory, and what constancie is in fortunes smilyng: for this Duke of Suffolke in open Parliament of the Lordes praised, of the commons thanked, and into the kynges favor, entirely received, within foure yeres after ... beyng exiled the realme, he was taken upon the sea, and made shorter by the hedde, whiche chaunce had not happened to him, if he had remembred the counsail of the popyngay, sai yng: when thou thynkest thy self in courte moste surest, then is it high tyme to get thee home to rest. (p. 207)

In the Henry VI plays equivalent on-stage ironic effects are achieved through both the composition of individual scenes and the relationship between scenes. Each of the three plays, for instance, ends with an aspiring figure confidently asserting the shape of the future, but in each case we have strong reason to doubt his wisdom. When, at the end of 1 Henry VI, Suffolk speaks of his plan to control the realm through the love of the future

Queen the imagery evokes the Trojan War (with Suffolk in the role of Paris), giving us an intimation of disastrous consequences; after their victory at St Albans Warwick exultantly anticipates 'more such days as these' (2 Henry VI, V.iii.34) for the Yorkist faction - but we know from the previous scene that the younger Clifford's heart is set on revenge for the death of his father; and Edward IV's sense of security in his newly-regained throne -

Sound drums and trumpets! Farewell sour annoy!
 For here, I hope, begins our lasting joy.
 (3 Henry VI, V.vii.45 - 46)

- is preceded by his brother Richard's bloodthirsty plans to replace him.

But it is worth noting that, in each play, Shakespeare ensures that the irony attaches not just to the aspirant figures but also to their sympathetically-presented victims. The death of Lord Talbot was earlier considered in some detail from this point of view; in 2 Henry VI it is the Duke of Gloucester who becomes the main focus of the audience's sympathies. At the start of the play he attempts to re-assert the values of enduring honour and selfless patriotism that figured so importantly in 1 Henry VI -

O peers of England! Shameful is this league,
 Fatal this marriage, cancelling your fame,
 Blotting your names from books of memory,
 Razing the characters of your renown,
 Defacing monuments of conquer'd France,

Undoing all, as all had never been
 (2 Henry VI, I.i.97 - 102)

- but he is cynically dismissed in the next two lines by Cardinal Beaufort ('Nephew, what means this passionate discourse,/ This peroration with such circumstance?') and in the next scene his Duchess is shown to be an eager participant in the new ethos (II.ii.65 - 66: 'I will not be slack/ To play my part in Fortune's pageant').

Understanding only comes to her much later, when she slips out of participation in events:

 my joy is death
 Death, at whose name I have been afeard,
 Because I wish'd this world's eternity
 (II.iv.88 -90)

But while Gloucester attempts to console his wife and himself with the temporariness of this misfortune - 'So cares and joys abound, as seasons fleet' (l. 4); 'These few days' wonder will be quickly worn.' (l. 69); 'The world may laugh again' (l. 82) - and faith in the bulwarks of ordered justice and his own virtue, the next scene (in which the contending factions unite to bring him down) abruptly disabuses him:

Ah! gracious lord, these days are dangerous,
 Virtue is chok'd with foul Ambition,
 And Charity chas'd hence by Rancour's hand;
 Foul subornation is predominant,
 And Equity exil'd your Highness' land
 (III.i. 142 - 146)

Similarly, in 3 Henry VI (IV.viii. 38 - 57), King Henry in one moment states his assurance that his virtues will protect him and in the next is captured by his opponents.

3.1. CONCLUSION

In the preceding section of this chapter I drew attention to the regularity with which Shakespeare, in each of the Henry VI plays, associates the watching-out for opportunity with the Duke of York. After his death this association is transferred to his sons - to both Edward²⁰ and, with most sinister effect, to Richard as he announces his plans to hew his way to the throne:

Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile,
 And cry 'Content!' to that that grieves my heart,
 And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,
 And frame my face to all occasions.
 I'll drown more sailors than the Mermaid shall;
 I'll slay more gazers than the basilisk;
 I'll play the orator as well as Nestor,
 Deceive more silyly than Ulysses could,
 And, like a Sinon, take another Troy.
 I can add colours to the chameleon,
 Change shape with Proteus for advantages,
 And set the murderous Machiavel to school.
 (3 Henry VI, III.ii.182 - 193)

In what is generally an excellent study of the King Henry VI plays A. C. Hamilton gives close attention to the Duke of York's qualities and suggests that he is Shakespeare's first truly political character.²¹ In saying this, I think, he overlooks the irony that is applied to the

efforts of all the characters who, like York, attempt to shape events to their own ends. They are indeed truly political characters, but behind their political machinations other forces of change sweep history along in ways that make their efforts meaningless.

But just as irony applies equally to those who plot to shape events and to their victims, so too does pity. York's death is a harrowing one, and so is Suffolk's; and both Jack Cade and the Duchess of Gloucester receive a last touch of sympathy. The Duchess of Gloucester's phrase 'Fortune's pageant' is very apt: whatever their own perceptions may be, the actions of the characters in the new ethos of personal ambition (that begins to establish itself after the death of Lord Talbot) appear to have as much futility as the ritually scrabbling figures in conventional depictions of Fortune's wheel.

Indeed, a pageant-like scene interrupts the narrative enactment in 3 Henry VI to give us a bearing upon events: Henry VI sits on a molehill and evokes a world of pastoral innocence. But his nostalgic idyll is interrupted by evidence of how the civil wars have harmed the entire commonwealth, with the entries of 'a Son that hath kill'd his Father' and 'a Father that hath kill'd his Son':

King Henry: O piteous spectacle! O bloody times!
 Whilst lions war and battle for their dens,
 Poor harmless lambs abide their enmity.

Weep, wretched man; I'll aid thee tear for tear;
And let our hearts and eyes, like civil war,
Be blind with tears, and break o'ercharg'd with
grief.

Father: O. pity, God, this miserable age!
What stratagems, how fell, how butcherly,
Erroneous, mutinous, and unnatural,
This deadly quarrel daily doth beget!
(3 Henry VI, II.v.73 - 78; 88 - 91)

APPENDIX ONE

A NOTE ON THE INFLUENCE OF MORE'S LIFE OF RICHARD III

For the most part, the Henry VI plays reflect the cynicism towards women in the Chronicle that can be traced to Polydore and Hall. The only sense we get of positively honourable women is indirect, when York berates Queen Margaret for her lack of womanly virtues (3 Henry VI, I.iv.111 - 149) and through passing references in 1 Henry VI to Lord Talbot's wife in the scenes discussed in section 2.1 above - and the mention of her does little more than round out the family's honourable name. For most of the three parts of King Henry VI the female characters of any significance epitomise vice rather than virtue: la Pucelle and the Duchess of Aumerle are followed by the Duchess of Gloucester, whose ambition, in Part II, leads her to conjure with spirits, and by Queen Margaret, who is both an adultress (Part II) and a conniver in brutal murders (Parts II and III).

From this point of view the incorporation of St Thomas More's History of Richard III (c. 1514) into the Chronicle assumes particular significance. In the comparatively short sequence of events that his work dominates (from the death of Edward IV to the breach between Richard III and the Duke of Buckingham) a far more gentle and charitable view of women prevails. Only two women - Edward IV's widow Elizabeth and his mistress

('Shore's wife') - receive this more benevolent treatment, but the relevant passages are very affecting. More is able to evoke visual images - of Shore's wife compelled to open penance on the streets of London and of Queen Elizabeth sitting alone on a pile of rushes 'all desolate & dismayde' (p. 350) while hasty preparations are made for her entry into sanctuary - that encapsulate the pathos of a situation.

This is reflected in Richard III. The fault that women display is simply weakness: Richard can successfully woo Anne, the widow of the Lancastrian Prince of Wales over his father's coffin, even though she knows his part in both their deaths (I.i); and, after the murder of her sons, he is still able to persuade Queen Elizabeth to help him to a marriage with her daughter (IV.iv.204 - 430). But, in both these scenes, attention falls upon the suffering of the female characters and his manipulation of their weakness; and other, pageant-like, episodes (IV.i; IV.iv.1 - 135) present the plight of the women in the civil wars for our main attention.

APPENDIX TWO

DANIEL, MACHIAVELLI AND SHAKESPEARE'S LATER ENGLISH HISTORIES

It is well-known that, in their treatments of the Wars of the Roses, Shakespeare and Daniel exerted some influence upon each other. In Shakespeare's later history plays - particularly the two parts of Henry IV and Henry V - there is clear evidence that the 1595 version of The Civil Wars served as one of his sources, and Daniel's revision of his poem in 1609 shows his knowledge of the plays.²² Theoretically, it is also possible that Daniel was aware of the Henry VI plays while he was preparing his 1595 text, but the evidence for this is slim.²³

His familiarity with the writings of Machiavelli can be asserted with much more confidence. The aphorism in the couplet of the stanza below -

They saw likewise that Princes oft are faine
To buy their quiet, with the price of wrong:
And better twere that now a few complaine
Then all should morne, aswell the weake as strong:
Seeing how little *Realmes* by change doe gaine,
And therefore learned by observing long
T'admire times past, follow the present will,
Wish for good Princes, but t'indure the ill.
(Civil Wars, 1595, I.73 [1609, I.72])

- might well have been plucked directly from Tacitus²⁴ rather than from Machiavelli's paraphrase in the Discourses ('... men must honor past things and obey present things; they should wish for good princes, but should endure those of any sort'²⁵), but the context suggests otherwise. Within seven stanzas (I.69 - 75)

devoted to the response of different elements of the population to Henry Bolingbroke's exile a substantial proportion of Daniel's wry comments on political reality (as is often the case throughout the poem) can be traced back to either The Prince or the Discourses.²⁶

And yet it would be wrong to think of Daniel as a disciple of the Florentine historian. Effectively, he tells us this himself during the course of his description of the murder of Duke Humphrey, which begins with an expansion of Holinshed and Hall that is within Machiavelli's conventions of explanation -

And therefore did they cast this way about
To have him closely murdred out of sight,
That so his trouble and his death hereby
Might come together and together dye.

Reckning it better since his end is ment
And must be wrought, at once to rid it cleere
And put it to the fortune of th'event,
Then by long doing to be long in feare:
When in such courses of high punishment
The deed and the attempt like daunger beare;
And oft things done perhaps doe lesse anoy
Then may the doing handled with delay.

(IV.83 - 89 [1609: V.82 - 83])

But the lines that follow clearly have as much to do with the antagonism towards Machiavellism that built up in England by the 1590s as they do with his immediate subject:

Are these the deedes, hye forraine wittes invent?
Is this that Wisedome whereof they so boast?
O then I would it never had beene spent
Here, amongst us, nor brought from out their coast!
O let their cunning in their limits pent,
Remaine amongst themselves that like it most!
And let the *North* they count of colder blood
Be held more grosse, so it remaine more good.

Elsewhere he reminds the reader that the design of the poem requires him to emphasise the pessimistic:

And onely tell the worst of every raine
 And not the intermedled good report
 (IV.14 [1609: V.13])

Qualified in this fashion, Tillyard's insight holds true of Daniel: he constantly turns away from contingent events to remind the reader of processes of change - Providence, Fortune, Time and Chance - that run at odds with human endeavour. But though he finds Machiavellian interpretations of men's political behaviour repulsive he does employ them in the contingent explanation of events and actions because he also finds them accurate.

Of the various permutations of the Occasion topoi that were identified in the first chapter of this thesis Daniel employs only those that are also used by Machiavelli. Figures in history either fail because they 'let occasion slip' or - more frequently - look calculatingly for the opportune moment to effect their plans. The signal difference is that while the susceptibility of worldly matters to change is for Machiavelli the complacent pre-supposition of political discourse, for Daniel it is the affliction of the period he surveys:

And now the while these Princes sorrowed,
 Forward ambition come so neere her ende
 Sleeper not nor slippes th'occasion offered,
 T'accomplish what it did before intende:
 A parlament is forthwith summoned
 In *Richards* name, whereby they might pretend
 A forme to grace disorder and a shew
 Of holie right, the right to overthrow.

Ah could not Majestie be ruined
 But with the fearefull powre of his owne name?
 And must abusd obedience thus be led
 With powrefull titles to consent to shame?
 Could not confusion be established
 But forme and order must confirme the same?
 (II.99 - 100 [1609: II.94 only])

In the three Henry VI plays Shakespeare uses the Occasion topoi very similarly - and, as I have suggested in the main body of this chapter, associates the sense of cunning forethought particularly with members of the house of York. While I do not intend a close study of Shakespeare's later history plays here, it is worth pointing out that, somewhat paradoxically, the very plays that are known to have The Civil Wars as a secondary source manifest a shift in the language relating to change. In Richard II the contrasting fates of the king and his usurper are tracked by many incidental references to Fortune, but the major speeches relate to Time; and while both parts of Henry IV are structured in such a way as to allow Prince Henry to twice demonstrate his readiness to seize the opportunity to redeem his reputation, he does so against Hotspur's prodigal haste in the one play -

O, Harry, thou hast robb'd me of my youth!
 I better brook the loss of brittle life
 Than those proud titles thou hast won of me;
 They wound my thoughts worse than thy sword my
 flesh:
 But thoughts, the slaves of life, and life, time's
 fool,
 And time, that takes survey of all the world,
 Must have a stop.

(1Henry IV, V.iv.76 - 82)

- and his father's guilt-ridden watchfulness in the other:

O God, that one might read the book of fate,
 And see the revolution of the times
 Make mountains level, and the continent,
 Weary of solid firmness, melt itself
 Into the sea, and other times to see
 The beachy girdle of the ocean
 Too wide for Neptune's hips; how chance's mocks
 And changes fill the cup of alteration
 With diverse liquors!

(2 Henry IV, III.i.45 - 53)

'Ocean', of course, is Daniel's favoured symbol for the mutability of events²⁸, and the passage above is closely linked to his version of the last exchange between the king and his son²⁹. Even in the Henry VI plays, however, Shakespeare manages by a combination of poetic sensibility and stagecraft to somehow simultaneously communicate both the personal aspirations of his characters and contradicting processes of history. The shift of emphasis towards Time - at once the giver and destroyer - in the later history plays heightens the effect.

NOTES

1. All references to the Chronicle are to the edition of 1809 prepared by H. Ellis. Quotations from this text have been compared against the 1548 and 1550 editions. The elimination of contractions and i/j and u/v substitutions have not been indicated.

2. Tillyard, op. cit., p.56.

3. H. A. Kelly, Divine Providence in the England of Shakespeare's Histories (1970), pp. 109 - 137.

4. The full title is as follows:

The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre and York, Beeyng Long in Continual Discension for the Croune of this Noble Realme, With all the Actes Done in Both the Tymes of the Princes, Bothe of the One Linage and of the Other, Beginnyng at the Tyme of Kyng Henry the Fowerth, The First Auctor of this Devisiion, And so Successively Proceadyng to the Reigne of the High and Prudent Prince King Henry the Eight, The Indubitate Flower and Very Heire of Both the Sayd Linages.

5. References to the Anglica Historia hereafter are to the English versions of relevant sections issued by the Camden Society: ed. H. Ellis, 1845; ed. and trans. D. Hay (1950). Hay's introduction, later expanded as Polydore Vergil (1952) is particularly helpful on his influence on later historiographers.

6. A later edition published during the reign of the staunchly Roman Catholic Queen Mary (1555) extends the Anglica Historia to 1537 and squarely attributes responsibility for the dissolution of Henry VIII's first marriage to Cardinal Wolsey

7. Polydore's certainty is qualified in the Chronicle:

'By reason of whiche mariage [between Henry VII and Elizabeth of York] peace was thought to discende oute of heaven into England' (p. 425).

8. Anglica Historia, ed. Ellis, p. 83; Chronicle, p. 219.

9. Anglica Historia, ed. Ellis, p. 73 ; Chronicle, p. 209.

10. In Shakespeare's History Plays E. M. W. Tillyard suggests (p. 52) that in the Chronicle 'the cause of events is usually a crime and God's vengeance on it.' The description applies more aptly to Polydore, who is far readier to assert the ways of providence; the example given is one of oath-breaking (which tends to be the exception to the Chronicle's general circumspection on such matters).

11. Anglica Historia, ed. Ellis, pp. 37 - 39.

12. 'This woman, after the death of kyng Henry the fifth her husband, beyng young and lusty, folowng more her awne appetite, then frendely counsaill, and regarding more her private affeccion, then her open honour, toke to

husband privily, a goodly gentilman, & a beautyful person ...'

13. '... without much adoe they began to mollyfy hir (for so mutable is that sex), in so muche that the woman herd them willingly ...' (op. cit., ed. Ellis, p. 210)

14. Emrys Jones, who does not bring authorship into question, reviews the issue of the order of composition of the Henry VI plays and argues for the priority of 1 Henry VI in The Origins of Shakespeare (1977), pp. 127 - 141.

15. See, for example, Wolfgang Clemen, English Tragedy Before Shakespeare (1955), p. 235, p. 250.

16. Tillyard, op. cit., p. 170.

17. A. L. French, 'Joan of Arc and 1 Henry VI', English Studies 49 (1968), pp. 425 - 429.

18. Cf. George Whetstone, The Honorable Reputation of a Souldier (1585), sig. Ciiii - Dii.

19. Ibid., sig. cii^v.

20. 3Henry VI, IV.vii.60 - 61.

21. A. C. Hamilton, The Early Shakespeare (1967), pp. 36 - 46.

22. See Laurence Michels' introduction to his edition of the poem (The Civil Wars by Samuel Daniel, ed. L. Michel, New Haven, 1958), esp. pp. 7 - 28. Michel's text, it should be noted, is based on the edition of 1609, which expands considerably on the editions of 1595 and 1599. My references are to the 1595 edition (the text that Shakespeare would have used); where quoted lines are repeated in the 1609 edition I have added a reference to Michel's edition of the 1609 text in square brackets.

23. However, a striking repetition of an allusion does occur that cannot be explained in any other way. In his comments on the unhappy consequences of Henry VI's marriage to Margaret of Anjou (arranged by the Earl of Suffolk) Daniel includes the following verse:

Deare didst thou buy, ô King, so faire a Wife,
 So rare a spirit, so high a minde, the-while:
 Whose portion was destruction; dowry, strife:
 Whose bed was sorrow; whose embracing, spoyle:
 Whose maintenance cost thee and thine, their life;
 And whose best comfort, never was but toyle.
 What *Paris* brought this booty of desire,
 To set oure mightie *Ilium* here on fire? .

There are no other allusions to the Trojan War in Daniel's poem, but this is also to be found in 1Henry VI, when Suffolk, departing on this mission, is made to say

Thus Suffolk hath prevail'd; and thus he goes,
 As did the youthful Paris once to Greece;
 With hope to find the like event in love,
 But prosper better than the Trojan did.

(V.v.103 - 106)

This is, I would agree, too slender evidence on which to build a firm case, but it does raise the possibility that

the relationship between Daniel's poem and Shakespeare's plays is even more complex than is generally admitted.

24. The relevant sentences occur incidentally during a debate in the Senate over the selection of deputies to congratulate Vespasian when he is confirmed as emperor (Tacitus, Histories, IV.viii).

25. Discorsi 3.6. Quoted from Allan Gilbert (tr.), Machiavelli: The Chief Works and Others, Durham, N.C. (1958), vol. 1, p. 429.

26. A cursory check of these stanzas from Book One of The Civil Wars against The Prince and the Discorsi throws up the following parallels. Stanza and line references are given for both the 1595 and 1609 editions of The Civil Wars. Machiavelli's works are cited from Gilbert's translation, listed above.

(a) 71.1 - 4 [1609: 70.1 - 4]: Discorsi 3.6 (p. 431); 3.16 (p.469).

(b) 71.5 - 8 [1609: 70.5 - 8]: Discorsi 1.46 (p.290 - 291).

(c) 73.1 - 4 [1609: 72.1 - 4]: Prince ch. 8 (p. 38); Discorsi 1.45 (p. 289).

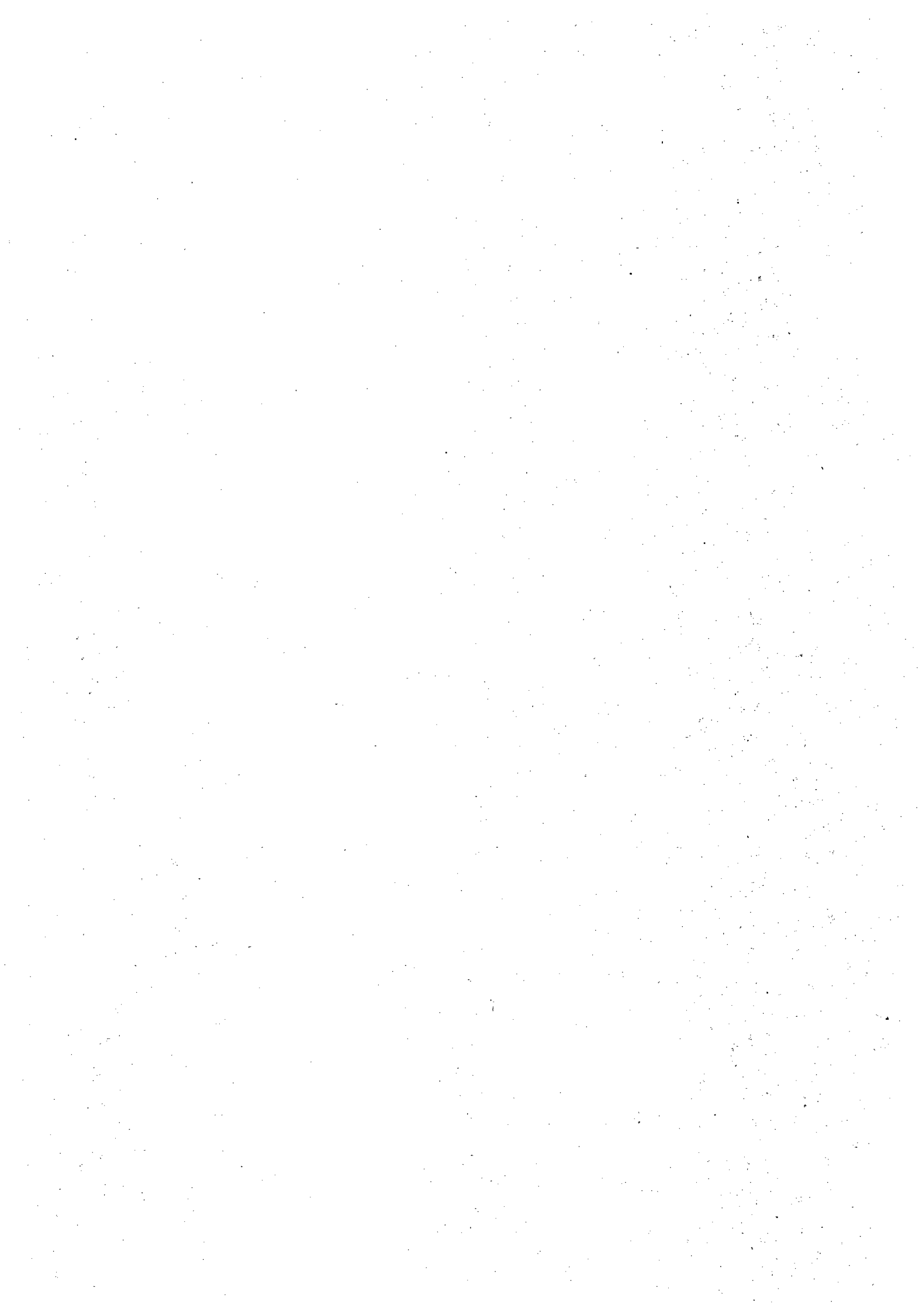
(d) 74.1 - 2 [1609: 73.1 - 2]: Prince ch. 25 (p. 90); Discorsi 3.3 (p.425).

(e) 74.5 - 6 [1609: 73.5 - 6]: Discorsi 1.33 (p. 265).

27. Tillyard, op. cit., pp. 28 - 29.

28. See, for instance, The Civil Wars, I.115.

29. Ibid., IV.89 - 96.



CHAPTER THREE

SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF EUPHUISTIC FICTION: AS YOU LIKE IT AND THE WINTER'S TALE

John Lyly's Euphues. The Anatomy of Wit was published in 1578, and was followed into print two years later by Euphues and his England. These works were of sufficient popularity to continue in publication into the seventeenth century and - themselves owing much to George Pettie's Petite Palace of Pettie His Pleasure (1576) - to engender a number of other prose fictions whose links with Lyly's own work range from close imitation in the case of Thomas Lodge's Euphues Shadow (1592) to mere evocation of the name of Euphues in the subtitle of John Dickenson's Arisbas, Euphues amidst his Slumbers (1594). There are resemblances between the plots of The Anatomy of Wit and The Two Gentlemen of Verona, but Shakespeare's greatest debts within the Euphuistic tradition are to Lodge's Rosalynde (1590) and Robert Greene's Pandosto (1588). In the first part of this chapter the study of these texts, the primary sources of As You Like It and The Winter's Tale is preceded by consideration of relevant aspects of the two works by Lyly that began the tradition.¹

1.1. LYLY'S EUPHUES: THE SUSCEPTIBILITY OF YOUTH

Lyly derived the name of his central character from Ascham's The Schoolmaster, where the meaning of Euphues is given as the gifts of nature that predispose a young person towards learning.² Many of Ascham's precepts are incorporated into the sage advice offered by Eubulus, a Neapolitan elder, who tries unsuccessfully to warn Euphues of the error of his ways, and amidst the repletion of images that characterise Lyly's style one is repeated from The Schoolmaster that is central to the ideas of both works:

...this Euphues, whose witte beeing lyke waxe apte to receive any impression... (The Anatomy of Wit, vol. I, p. 185)

Dyd they not remember that whiche no man ought to forgette, that the tender youth of a childe is lyke the temperinge of newe waxe apte to receive any forme? (ibid., p. 187)

For the pure clean wit of sweet young babe, is like the newest wax, most able to receive the best and fairest printing ... (The Schoolmaster, p. 115)

Beneath Lyly's ornate prose the narrative is uncomplicatedly linear, and bears a resemblance to the parable of the Prodigal Son. Euphues has inherent wit, but chooses to desert the world of study in Athens for the metropolitan pleasures of life in Naples. Eubulus, who recognises his potential, attempts to deter him, but Euphues rejects his arguments in debate and has to discover for himself that wit alone is insufficient to protect him from the dangers of the

outside world. He betrays his friend Philautus by secretly courting his lover, Lucilla - she is at first receptive, but later transfers her affections elsewhere and, having failed in both love and friendship but now possessed of wisdom, Euphues eventually returns to Athens. The Anatomy of Wit is thus able to confirm Ascham's assertion that learning is a far more efficient means of acquiring wisdom than the accumulation of experience, and to offer the targeted 'Gentleman readers' edification in two ways: through the vicarious experience of Euphues' failure in the first, narrative, section; and then in the later, discursive, sections through the advice he gives with his new-found wisdom:

I will so frame my selfe as al youth heereafter shal rather rejoyce to se mine amendment then be animated to follow my former lyfe. Philosophie, Physicke, Divinitie, shal be my study. ... If witte be employed in the honest study of learning what thing so pretious as witte? if in the idle trade of love, what thing more pestilent then witte? The prooffe of late hath bene veriefied in me, whome nature hath endued with a lyttle witte which I have abused with an obstinate will. (vol. I, p.241)

However, Lyly does not treat the two changeable characters in the narrative even-handedly. Euphues' betrayal of Philautus and Livia (the female acquaintance he uses as a decoy to hide his interest in Lucilla) is presented as simply the fallibility of his impressionable youth, the experience he passes through in his development of better understanding. On the other hand the fickleness of Lucilla

is made to seem an incorrigible failing in her, and it appears to be a major part of Euphues' new, anti-secular understanding that the fault is endemic to all women:

I had thought that women had bene as we men, that is true, faithful, zealous, constant, but I perceive they be rather woe unto men, by their falshood, gelousie, inconstancie. I was halfe perswaded that they were made of the perfection of men, & would be comforters, but now I see they have tasted of the infection of the Serpent, and will be corasives. ... it is harde to deale with a woman whose wordes seeme fervent, whose heart is congealed into hard yce, least trusting their outward talke, he be betraied with their inwarde trechery.

(vol. I, p.241)

Any hint of misogyny is scrupulously avoided in Euphues and his England, in which the friends, now reconciled, explore English society. The women they encounter or hear about are all paragons of beauty as well as of virtue, and although Philautus can do nothing to win the very best of them (the beautiful and constant Camilla) away from her absent lover, he is eventually matched with Frauncis, who is nearly her equal. Euphues, too, is so charmed by the women of England that he announces his intention to fall in love to Philautus (who is amazed by his betrayal of his much-vaunted principles) and recants the harsh views expressed in the earlier work, claiming also that they were specifically aimed at the women of Italy (vol. II, pp. 91 - 103). A fortuitous summons to Athens removes Euphues from the narrative at this awkward point, and when we next learn of

him he has completed his withdrawal from worldly affairs by becoming a hermit.

It is known that Lyly was actively seeking advancement at the court of Queen Elizabeth, and when he came to write Euphues and his England he may well have seen some practical wisdom in softening the harshness towards women in The Anatomy of Wit. But other writers whose names we associate with his (Pettie, Riche, Greene and Lodge) also move between projecting love as a power that renders the secular world a chaos to be avoided in one narrative, and responding more sympathetically to that power in another.

Indeed, when the text of The Anatomy of Wit is examined carefully, Euphues' claim that it was misunderstood proves to have some substance. The second discursive addition to that work is a treatise on education, deriving from Ascham and Plutarch, from which it becomes clear that Lyly (or, to accept the fiction, Euphues) does not consider the secular life, in itself, to be less worthy than the contemplative. They should be mutually supportive, and are opposed in the treatise by a third, degenerative, way of life:

There is amongst men a trifolde kinde of lyfe, Active which is about civill function and administration of the common weale. Speculative, which is continuall meditation and studye. The thirde a lyfe ledde, moste commonlye a lewde lyfe, an idle and a vaine lyfe, the lyfe that the *Epicures* accompte their whole felicitie, a voluptuous lyfe ... if this Active lyfe be wythout Philosophy, it

is an idle lyfe, or at the least a lyfe evil
 imployed, which is worse: if the contemplative life
 be separated from the Active it is most un-
 profitable. (vol. I, p.276)

But this trifold distinction is never satisfactorily
 absorbed into the narrative sections of the Euphues texts,
 leaving the impression of inconsistency that Lyly himself,
 in the second narrative at least, appears to recognise.

1.2. LODGE'S ROSALYNDE: THE LEGACY OF SIR JOHN OF BORDEAUX

There does exist a version of Euphues' transformation that
 avoids any suggestion of inconsistency. In 1592, two years
 after Rosalynde, Thomas Lodge published his Euphues Shadow,
 which purports to be a fictionalised account of the life of
 Euphues written by Philautus for the benefit of his
 children. The plot is considerably more complex, but there
 is no element of misogyny and although the contrast of the
 contemplative and secular lives is expressed more forcibly,
 we are not left with a sense of their incompatibility:

Long time in great joy lived these lovers,
 entertayning Philamis in hartly affection, who wholly
 delighted in his solitarie life, and contemning the
 vanities of the world, having regarde to the well
 ending of his lyfe, and the intending of his study,
 with hartly affection tooke his leave of his
 Philamour: the one desired the other to continue
 companie: yet Philamour must not leave his new

wife, neither will Philamis be drawne from contemplation: in briefe, after many promises of continuall intercourse by letters, they tooke their friendly farewell.

(Euphues Shadow, vol. II, pp. 85 - 86)

To ensure that his friend does not become over-confident in his worldly existence, however, Philamis - Lodge's Euphues - leaves with him a stern dissertation ('The Deafe Mans Dialogue') on the vanity of life. Rosalynde gains from being seen with Euphues Shadow as one of a pair of narratives that, together, occupy the same ground as Lyly's Euphues texts - the former embodying the values of the secular world and the latter adopting a contemplative standpoint.

In most editions (from 1592 onwards), Rosalynde begins with two sets of admonitions for youth from their elders that establish the work's Euphuistic credentials, but have a less than straightforward relationship with the events that are narrated. A letter from Euphues acts as a preface in which (drawing the analogy of the precepts bequeathed to Cassander by Archelaus in the sub-tale at the beginning of Euphues and his England) Lyly's hermit, sensing that death is near, declares the accompanying story to be his legacy to the sons of Philautus. Being young, the letter says, the children of Philautus 'have green thoughts' - and yet, because of their parentage, 'have great minds'. Much as Ascham advised his readers in The Schoolmaster, Euphues advises his friend to

'bend them in their youth like the willow, lest thou bewail them in their age for their wilfulness'.

The lessons that we are told will be learnt from the story are in keeping with The Anatomy of Wit -

They shall find Love anatomized by Euphues, with as lively colours as in Apelles table: roses to whip him when he is wanton, reasons to withstand him when he is wily. Here may they read that virtue is the king of labours, opinion the mistress of fools; that unity is the pride of nature, and contention the overthrow of families.³

- and at the start of the novel itself the legacy of Sir John of Bordeaux to his three sons repeats similar precepts (first in prose and again in verse), urging true friendship and fortitude and warning against the worldly temptations of Fortune and Love:

Fortune when she wils you to flie, tempers your plumes with waxe, and therefore either sit still and make no wing, or els beware the Sunne ... Oh my sonnes, fancie is a fickle thing, and beauties paintings are trickt up with times colours, which being set to drie in the Sunne, perish with the same. ... a womans eye as it is precious to behold, so it snareth unto death. Trust not their fawning favours, for their loves are like the breath of a man upon steele, which no sooner lighteth on but it leapeth of, and their passions are as momentarie as the colours of a Polipe, which changeth at the sight of everie object. (Bullough, p. 162.)

But, just as acknowledgement is made in Euphues Shadow of the place of love in a virtuous secular life, Sir John's warning against 'fancie' stops short of condemning love and the female sex entirely:

My breath waxeth short and mine eyes dimme, my hour is come and I must away: therefore let this suffice, women are wantons, and yet man cannot want one: and therefore if you love, choose her that hath eyes of Adament, that will turne only to one poynt; her heart of a Diamond, that will receive but one forme; ... yet for that she is a woman, shalt thou finde in her sufficient vanities to countervaile her vertues. (p. 163)

This loophole proves large enough to allow the ensuing narrative to uphold secular values wholeheartedly. We are frequently reminded of Sir John's legacy throughout Rosalynde, but it becomes the focus of the challenge facing the youthful central characters, embodying the high standards that love and virtue must attain if an active life is to be accounted worthwhile. The anatomy of love that is promised in the letter from Euphues never materialises and although his youngest son, Rosader, (in the way of all prodigals in the Euphuistic tradition) does not comply with Sir John's warnings, the unravelling of the main thread of the narrative shows him to be the true inheritor of his father's values.

1.3. ROSALYNDE: LOVE AND FORTUNE

Sir John's own life was characterised by Lodge as a successful and happy one in which innate virtue and external circumstance were so much in harmony that, in a formula much

used by the Euphuists, 'it was a question whether fortune or nature were more prodigal in deciphering the riches of their bounties.' The main narrative line of Rosalynde takes us from the absence of this ideal combination in the lives of its hero and heroine through to a resolution where that combination comes about, but in doing so reverses the educational principle that Lyly affirmed in The Anatomy of Wit.

In The Schoolmaster 'Euphues' is only the first requirement, the foundation upon which noble character can be built: the two factors of the gifts of nature and a good education must conjoin.⁴ Ascham is quite scathing in his criticism of those who allow the promise of youth to be dissipated by poor bringing-up⁵ and defends 'learning' against its disparagers and those who lay greater store by the formative influence of 'blind and dangerous experience'.⁶ (This was the argument put by Eubulus in his debate with Euphues over 'nature' and 'nurture' - scorned by Euphues at the time, but eventually adopted as his own.) In Rosalynde, on the other hand, the menial upbringing imposed by his brother ('though he be a gentleman by nature ... make him a peasant by nurture') is reduced to the first of the adverse circumstances that Rosader and Rosalynde must overcome through their inborn virtue.

Fortune (almost entirely absent from The Anatomy of Wit) features very prominently in Rosalynde, as the goddess who manipulates these circumstances. As we have seen, Sir John warns his sons against her meretricious gifts and, conversely, it is with fortitude that the virtuous characters must survive her numerous assaults. It is in these terms, for instance, that Rosader makes his estimation of the franklin whose sons have been killed by the king's wrestler;⁷ and even as Rosalynde complains that it is her high birth that has singled her out for Fortune's malice she offers herself the consolation that 'being great of bloud, thine honour is more, if thou brookest misfortune with patience'.⁸ Much the same point is made in relation to Rosader by Adam Spencer:

When I remember the worships of his house, the honour of his fathers, and the vertues of himselfe, then doo I say, that fortune and the fates are most injurious, to censure so hard extremes, against a youth of so great hope. Oh Rosader, thou art in the flower of thine age, and in the pride of thy yeares, buxsome and full of May. Nature has prodigally inricht thee with her favours, and vertue made thee the myrrour of her excellence: and now, through the decree of the unjust starres, to have all these good partes nipped in the blade, and blemisht by the inconstancie of Fortune. (p. 195)

The climax to the test of Rosader's fortitude comes in the forest of Arden, when he is presented with the opportunity to rid himself of his oppressive brother and to attain the status he feels he deserves (Saladyne is asleep while a hungry lion watches him for a sign of life). He is sorely tempted to abandon his brother to his fate and at first

walks away, congratulating himself that Fortune, 'having crost thee with manie frownes, now she presents thee with the brightnesse of her favours' (p. 216).

But, even as he appears to succumb to the temptation, his virtuous nature wins through and he returns to slay the lion:

Ah, Rosader, wert thou the son of Sir John of Bourdeaux, whose vertues exceeded his valour, and yet he the most hardiest Knight in all Europe? Should the honour of thy father shine in the actions of the sonne? and wilt thou dishonour thy parentage, in forgetting the nature of a Gentleman? ... Oh Rosader, what though Saladyne hath wronged thee, and made thee live in exile in the Forrest? shall nature be so cruell, or thy nurture so crooked, or thy thoughts so savage, as to suffer so dismall a revenge? (p.217)

In the Tale of Gamelyn, the medieval ballad⁹ that was Lodge's source for Rosader's adventures, the hero's marriage comes abruptly at the conclusion, putting the seal of success upon his affairs. The same sense of happy resolution is conveyed by the marriages at the end of Rosalynde, but Lodge makes the vindication of love the most distinctive and entertaining feature of the story.

When they first meet Rosader and Rosalynde appear to confirm Sir John's warnings against 'fancie'. Rosader, who is about

to clash with the King's wrestler becomes transfixed by Rosalynde's bewitching looks, so much so that he is put into danger:

The Norman, seeing this young Gentleman fettered in the lookes of the Ladies, drave him out of his memento with a shake by the shoulder. (p. 171)

Rosalynde, on the other hand, is flirtatious - she gives him 'an amorous look' to encourage his wrestling feats (p.171) and, although she is attracted to Rosader, Lodge adds

... but she accounted love a toye, and fancie a momentarie passion, that as it was taken in with a gaze, might bee shaken off with a winck; and therefore feared not to dallie in the flame. (p. 172)

She very soon becomes aware of his stirring qualities - his parentage as well as his personal attributes - and falls truly in love with him. Thereafter, the interest for the reader lies in their being virtuous and true lovers who are separated only by untoward circumstances, reinforcing the virtue - fortune opposition we have been tracing earlier.

It is a striking feature of the structure of Rosalynde that both tests - of fortitude and of love - that the hero and heroine undergo are effectively completed a little more than halfway through the narrative, and not long after the location of events has been transferred to the forest of Arden. Immediately preceding Rosader's reconciliation with Saladyne there is an extended passage (pp. 206 - 214) that

takes the lovers through all the ritual of a sophisticated courtship. Rosader tells Rosalynde of the depth of his feelings, and his willingness to endure his 'maladie' with patience; she at first doubts his honesty, but soon accepts his assurance that 'Truth and regard, and honour guide my love' (p. 212) and they go through a form of marriage with her cousin Alinda taking the role of the priest. Rosalynde, of course, is disguised as the boy Ganimede, and 'pretends' to be herself; but it is made very clear to the reader that 'it cannot be but such a shaddowe portends the issue of a substaunce' (p. 215).

Agreement between the other pair of courtly lovers - Alinda and the newly-reformed Saladyne - is brought about with even more rapidity. Indeed, the anatomy of love that was promised by Euphues in the preface turns out to be much more of a celebration, and what comes in for scrutiny and ridicule, instead, is precisely the form of behaviour that Sir John had recommended. Phoebe, the beautiful shepherdess adored by Montanus, attempts to deal equally with the two perils of youth. But to resist love utterly - to say as Phoebe does, 'I hate Love: for I count it as a great honour to triumph over fancy as over Fortune' (p. 231) - is to resist too well, and transforms virtue into a vice. Unlike the two courtly women in the story, she is both uncharitable and ungenerative (p. 225: 'But this I am sure', quoth Corydon, 'if all maidens were of her minde, the world would growe to

a madde passe; for there would be great store of wooing and little wedding.'). That she should fall in love with 'Ganymede' is comic, but also a reflection and a punishment of what is, within secular values, a mistaken attitude to love.

1.4. GREENE'S PANDOSTO: FORTUNE AND TIME

From around 1590 - when his Never Too Late and Mourning Garment were published - Greene appears to be motivated by the harrowing circumstances of his own life to abandon the Euphuistic tendency to maintain distinctly contemplative and secular points of view in separate fictions. Favoured themes that had previously been largely kept apart (the ever-constant woman on the one hand, the 'prodigal son' betrayed by a false lover on the other) are brought closer together, the autobiographical core to the narratives is made increasingly obvious, and friends and readers are exhorted to follow Greene in looking for resolution in this world, through repentance.

Pandosto, which was published in 1588, may lack the urgency of Greene's subsequent writing, but marks the turning-point. The two-part structure of its plot allows him to bring antithetical narratives - labelled here as a 'tragical dis-

course of fortune' (p. 171) and a 'comic event' (p. 203) - into symmetry within one work and within a design, moreover, that excludes contemplative considerations. The title page sets out much the same positive view of secular events that Lucrece despaired of in The Rape of Lucrece (ll. 936 - 940) and Hall promised in the opening pages of the Chronicle:

Pandosto. The Triumph of Time. Wherein is discovered by a pleasant history that although by the means of sinister fortune truth may be concealed, yet by time in spite of fortune it is most manifestly revealed. ... *Temporis filia veritas.*

(Pandosto, ed. Salzman, p 153)

In the body of the text, however, Time is seldom mentioned: its victory is by implication, in the outcome of events, with the vagaries of Fortune appearing to dominate at every turn of the two plot-sequences.¹⁰

Each sequence repeats a theme from Greene's previous work. Bellaria (Shakespeare's Hermione) is, like the heroines of Mamillia (1580) and Penelope's Web (1587), the constant female beset by circumstances - in her case the unfounded suspicions of her husband Pandosto the King of Bohemia (Shakespeare's Leontes - the locations of events are transposed in The Winter's Tale):

Alas Bellaria, how infortunate art thou because fortunate! Better hadst thou been born a beggar than a prince, so thou shouldest have bridled fortune with want, where now she sporteth herself with thy plenty. Ah happy life, where poore thoughts and mean desires live in secure content, not fearing fortune because too low for fortune.
(p.164)

For Bellaria - unlike Hermione - there is no alleviation of misfortune and, although Apollo's oracle confirms her fidelity, she dies when this message is followed by news of the death of her son Garinter.

The later sequence, which takes up the fate of her second child, is set in the pattern of prodigal youth in conflict with the strictures of their elders that is often repeated in Euphuistic fictions.¹¹ Dorastus (Florizel) angers his father Egistus the King of Sicilia (Polixenes) by his unwillingness to marry Euphania, heir to the King of Denmark but soon afterwards meets and falls in love with Fawnia (Perdita), who has been brought up by a shepherd, Porrus, and his wife as their daughter.

The reader is aware that in their case 'fortune is plumed with time's feathers' (p. 178), but the young lovers see themselves as meriting fortune's whips because of their impetuosity in settling their affections so unequally. At the point in the narrative from which the extracts below are taken they have assumed new identities and fled Sicilia, only to be put under duress in Bohemia, as unsatisfactorily-explained strangers. Pandosto has fallen in love with Fawnia and has sought to eliminate Dorastus by imprisoning him:

Ah, infortunate Fawnia, thou seest to desire above fortune is to strive against the gods and fortune. Who gazeth at the sun weakeneth his sight; they which stare at the sky fall oft into deep pits.

Hadst thou rested content to have been a shepherd,
 thou needest not to have feared mischance. Better
 had it been for thee, by sitting low, to have had
 quiet, than by climbing high to have fallen into
 misery. (p. 198)

Ah, unfortunate wretch born to mishap, now thy
 folly hath his desert. Art thou not worthy for thy
 base mind to have bad fortune? Could the destinies
 favour thee, which hast forgot thine honour and
 dignities? Will not the gods plague him with
 despite that paineth his father with disobedience?
 (p, 199)

But for Dorastus and Fawnia, at least, the truth unfolds in
 time to make the outcome of events a happy one. Pandosto, it
 has to be said, becomes something of a loose thread that
 Greene ties up (or, more accurately, breaks off) rather sum-
 marily to allow Dorastus to succeed him as King of Bohemia:
 remembering all the harm he has caused, he is reported in
 the last paragraph as being so 'moved with these desperate
 thoughts, he fell in a melancholy fit, and to close up the
 comedy with a tragical stratagem, he slew himself'.

2.1. DISTURBANCE OF THE EUPHUISTS' CONVENTIONS IN AS YOU LIKE IT AND THE WINTER'S TALE

By the end of Rosalynde there has been a complete transition
 from the eschewance urged in Sir John's legacy to a secular
 alternative that merits equal probity. The usurper king has

been killed and the rightful king is restored; amity has been established between his sons, who have also proved themselves equal to his high standards of secular virtue -

Let your countries care be your hearts content, and thinke that you are not borne for your selves, but to leuell your thoughts to be loyal to your Prince, careful for the Common weale, and faithfull to your friends. (p. 162)

- in battle against the usurper; and for both the high and the lowly, love's disruptive passion has been channeled creatively through marriage.

Matters are resolved somewhat differently in As You Like It, leaving nothing in the clear-cut state that it was in Rosalynde. Duke Senior is restored without a blow being struck: his usurping brother does not die, but renounces the secular world after being converted by 'an old religious man' that he encountered at the edge of the forest. The three marriages in Lodge's fiction are off-set by a fourth that undermines the spirituality of 'high wedlock' even as it is being celebrated. And one of the group, Jaques, refuses to join the others in their return to society, preferring instead to join the new recluse. His resistance allows both ends of the transition in Rosalynde to be encapsulated within the last seconds of the play:

Duke: Stay, Jaques, stay.

Jaques: To see no pastime, I. What you would have I'll stay to know at your abandon'd cave. [Exit]

Duke: Proceed, proceed. We will begin these rites,

As we do trust they'll end, in true delights.
(V.iv.193 - 197)

In A Natural Perspective Northrop Frye alerts us in general terms to the salutary effect endings like this can have on dramatic performance, by channelling the spectator's ambivalence.¹² But, more specifically, the changes in the last scene are also consistent with the tendency of Shakespeare's transformation of Rosalynde to destabilise the ideas and conventions that underlie its events. There is nothing in As You Like It to match the contemplative stringency we encounter at the start of Rosalynde, but the ideas expressed there are never completely out of consideration, though they may be tinged with irony: we can't, for instance, take Sir John's pronouncements against women and love very seriously when they are allotted to Rosalind dressed up as a page but, on the other hand, we can't disregard them either:

Orlando: Did you ever cure any so?

Rosalind: Yes, one, and in this manner. He was to imagine me his love, his mistress; and I set him every day to woo me. At which time would I, being but a moonish youth, grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing and liking, proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles, for every passion something, and for no passion truly anything ... (III.ii.394 - 402)

This episode in the play, moreover, begins and ends by gently mocking the seminal figure of Euphuistic fictions, the anti-secular hermit. It is plausible to think that Shakespeare had Euphues in mind not just from the preface of

Rosalynde but also from the harsh supplements to The Anatomy of Wit:

... an old religious uncle of mine taught me to speak, who was in his youth an inland man, one that knew courtship too well, for there he fell in love. I have heard him read many lectures against it, and I thank God I am not a woman, to be touched with so many giddy offences as he hath generally taxed their whole sex withal. ...

... I drave my suitor from his mad humour of love to a living humour of madness - which was to forswear the full stream of the world and to live in a nook merely monastic.

(III.ii.335 - 342; 405 - 409)

The concept of Fortune so frequently evoked in Rosalynde and other Euphuistic texts, is similarly undermined in the two episodes in As You Like It where it intrudes to any degree. Both are worth examining in some detail.

The first of these episodes occurs soon after the audience's initial encounter with Celia and Rosalind. They turn for amusement to 'mock the good hussif Fortune from her wheel' (1.II.30 - 31) and prove to be very knowledgeable about both their target and its use in Euphuistic fiction. Celia is able to allude to the sort of debate that we find in Lyly's Euphues and His England¹³ over the qualities in women that are to be preferred -

Rosalind: ... the bountiful blind woman doth most mistake in her gifts to women.

Celia: 'Tis true, for those that she makes fair,
she scarce makes honest; and those that she makes
honest, she makes very ill-favouredly. (I.ii.34 -
38)

- but Rosalind drags into the argument the opposition between Nature and Fortune that is almost mandatory for the start of Euphuistic fictions (and essential to the design of Rosalynde) -

Nay now thou goest from Fortune's office to
Nature's; Fortune reigns in gifts of the world, not
in the lineaments of Nature. (I.ii.39 - 41)

- and the entry of Touchstone gives them the opportunity to have fun with the particular mixture of Fortune, Nature and Wit that begins The Anatomy of Wit.

Subtle yet considerable benefits are gained from this episode later in the scene. As we have noted earlier, it was essential to Lodge's design that Rosalynde should first feel love as 'a toye, and fancie a momentarie passion', but Shakespeare's heroine is spared this foible before she meets Orlando: Celia and Rosalind move into their mockery of Fortune by first entertaining and then abandoning the idea of falling in love as an alternative pastime. The consequence of this preparation is to remove from Rosalind and Orlando the heavy formulaic burden - the twin assaults of Love and Fortune - that Lodge has to impose on Rosalynde and Rosader. With trivial love and the massive apparatus of Fortune both already discounted, the sudden onset of their

love is rendered altogether more natural and more engaging. Rosalind's chain becomes a heartfelt gift - Lodge makes it part of the game of love - and the glancing references to her fortunes are all the more pathetic for not being part of an elaborate system:

Gentleman,
Wear this for me; one out of suits with fortune,
That could give more but that her hand lacks means...

My pride fell with my fortunes ...
Sir, you have wrestled well, and overthrown
More than your enemies.

(I.ii.235 - 245)

The second episode involving the concept of Fortune is similarly tied into the broader function of the scene in which it occurs. It is, once again, the formulaic rhetoric - the 'good set terms' - that is ridiculed when Jaques recounts Touchstone's incongruous moralising in the wood. But through the distancing perspective of his report we learn that the fool then turned his moralising to a broader and harsher aspect of mutability:

'Thus may we see', quoth he, 'how the world wags:
'Tis but an hour ago since it was nine,
And after one hour more 'twill be eleven,
And so from hour to hour, we ripe, and ripe,
And then from hour to hour, we rot, and rot,
And thereby hangs a tale.'

(II.vii.23 - 28)

With the inexorable process of decay thus trivialised, the audience has, in effect, been primed.¹⁴ When the same matter is returned to more powerfully later in the scene (in

Jaques' 'Seven Ages of Man' speech), we are able to respond to the resonance it gives to the plight of Rosader and Adam - Old Age carried onstage by Youth as the speech ends - unencumbered by a sense of either the harshness or the conventionality that characterises the start of Rosalynde.

When Rosalynde and Alinda first set foot in the forest of Arden Lodge quickly passes over any lurking dangers and soon makes us aware that they have entered an arena where nature has been conjoined with art, to create an idealised pastoral environment that does not shame their royal status:

Passing thus on along, about miday they came to a Fountaine, compast with a grove of Cipresse trees, so cunninglie and curiouslie planted, as if some Goddesse had intreated Nature in that place to make her an Arbour. By this Fountaine sat Aliena and her Ganimede, and foorth they pulled such victualls as they had, and fed as merilie as if they had been in Paris with all the Kings delicates: Aliena onely grieving that they could not so much as meete with a shepheard to discourse them the way to some place where they might make their aboade. (p. 180)

The need for suitable rustics is satisfied almost immediately by Montanus and Coridon who, between them, can very fluently versify on love, and philosophise on the advantages the forest has over the court:

... and for a shepheards life (oh Mistresse) did you but live a while in their content, you would saye the Court were rather a place of sorrowe, than of solace. Here (Mistresse) shall not Fortune

thwart you, but in mean misfortunes, as the losse of a few sheepe ... Envie stires not us, wee covet not to climbe, our desires mount not above our degrees, nor our thoughts above our fortunes. (pp. 188 - 189)

In Pandosto, Fawnia is also capable of expressing such Arcadian sentiments -

Sir, what richer state than content, or what sweeter life than quiet? We shepherds are not born to honour, nor beholding unto beauty, the less care we have to fear fame and fortune. We count our attire brave enough if warm enough, and our food dainty if to suffice nature. Our greatest enemy is the wolf; our only care in safekeeping our flock. ... Our greatest wealth not to covet, our honour not to climb, our quiet not to care. Envy looketh not so low as shepherds; Shepherds gaze not so high as ambition... (pp. 183 - 184)

A few other features of pastoral occur in Pandosto. Some comedy is extracted from the country manners of Porrus and his wife, and Dorastus employs the *carpe florem* theme in the course of wooing Fawnia. But there is no inherent interest in the rustic environment itself. As in Rosalynde, the members of the younger generation are tested and vindicated before they assume a legitimised place in society, but it is in the court of Pandosto that Fawnia and Dorastus are challenged: rural Sicilia serves merely as the inappropriate background that Fawnia leaves behind.

The pastoral environment of Rosalynde, where Fortune's powers are minimised, creates an ideal setting for the demonstration of fortitude; Dorastus and Fawnia, however,

are more prodigal than Rosader and Rosalynde and it is only very briefly that Fawnia remains tied to the quiescent sentiments that belong to a true pastoral figure like Lodge's Coridon. Between their affirmation of love and their flight from Sicilia Greene attaches the qualities of boldness and fore-planning to his youthful lovers. Fawnia urges her prince to make speedy plans 'lest fortune might prevent their pretense with some new despite' and anticipates the future eagerly:

Fawnia, poor soul, was no less joyful that, being a shepherd, fortune had favoured her so as to reward her with the love of a prince, hoping in time to be advanced from the daughter of a poor farmer to be the wife of a rich king ... (p.189)

References to Time in the text of Pandosto are largely confined to this short sequence, and have no connection with the broad pattern of events indicated on the title page. Instead, they are variants of the 'Occasio' topic and reinforce the sense of the lovers as bold opposers of Fortune:

Dorastus determined, as soon as time and opportunity would give them leave, to provide a great mass of money and many rich and costly jewels for the easier carriage and then to transport themselves and their treasure into Italy, where they should lead a contented life until such time as either he could be reconciled to his father, or else by succession come to the kingdom. ... Dorastus, whom love pricked forward with desire, promised to dispatch his affairs with as great haste as either time or opportunity would give him leave ... hiding up his shepherd's attire till occasion should serve again to use it, he went to the palace, showing by his merry countenance that

either the state of his body was amended or the case of his mind greatly redressed. (pp. 188 - 189)

All this is entirely in keeping with the theme of youth's prodigality in Euphuistic fictions. But Shakespeare's dramatisation of Pandosto - undertaken more than twenty years after the publication of Greene's text, and long after Euphuistic fiction had ceased to be fashionable - is remarkable for staying very close to the narrative details of the source text and nevertheless transforming its character utterly to suit, instead, the persisting vogue for pastoralism.¹⁵ Overpoweringly pastoral episodes occupy a substantial middle section of The Winter's Tale and send reverberations through the rest of the play, so that the dominating sense of change that we are left with is of Nature's process rather than Greene's Fortune and Time. This is so prominent a theme in the play (elucidated by the excellent commentaries of Wilson Knight and Tillyard, among others)¹⁶ that re-tracing it here would be superfluous: on the other hand, the efforts Shakespeare takes to align the presentation of the young lovers with his shift of emphasis are worth investigating.

Every suggestion of fore-planning in opposition to Fortune that attached to Dorastus and Fawnia (reflected in the passages from Pandosto quoted above) is removed from Florizel and Perdita - and the removal is stressed. The ship that stands ready to aid their flight from Polixenes' wrath

becomes a lucky accident rather than part of a lovers' plot, and they see themselves as the victims of chance rather than the creators of their own fates:

let myself and fortune
Tug for the time to come. This you may know,
And so deliver, I am put to sea
With her whom here I cannot hold on shore;
And most opportune to her need, I have
A vessel rides fast by, but not prepar'd
For this design.

(IV.iv.497 - 503)

Camillo: Have you thought on
A place whereto you'll go?
Florizel: Not any yet:
But as th'unthought-on accident is guilty
To what we wildly do, so we profess
Ourselves to be the slaves of chance, and flies
To every wind that that blows.

(IV.iv.537 - 542)

One effect of this change is that it takes away from Perdita and Florizel any hint of the cunning that, as we have seen in the previous chapters, could be associated with the taking of Occasion (a topic that is linked, instead, to the amoral Autolycus at IV.iv.831 - 836).¹⁷ More significantly, without the prodigal conflict with Fortune of Dorastus and Fawnia the younger generation in The Winter's Tale become comparatively minor figures. The climax of Greene's narrative is the duress and vindication of the young lovers in Pandosto's court; in The Winter's Tale Perdita's true identity retains its narrative importance, of course, but no climactic struggle is involved, and - with our attention

returned to the events that involved her parents - it is sufficient for this revelation to be communicated to the audience through the report of gentlemen of the court.

Shakespeare's attenuation of Greene's Euphuistic theme also contributes to the radical difference between the pastoral episodes in each text. In Pandosto, as we have seen, Fawnia rapidly sheds the guise of a literary shepherdess to embark on her adventures with Dorastus. In contrast, Perdita is much more diffident -

even now I tremble
 To think your father by some accident
 Should pass this way, as you did: O the fates!
 How would he look, to see his work, so noble,
 Vilely bound up?

(IV.iv.18 - 22)

- and only flees Bohemia when the accident she dreads comes about. In the meanwhile, because she has no plans to escape from it, Shakespeare can integrate her thoroughly into the scene's vibrant pastoral atmosphere, and let her speak of Nature's power with a religious fervour that would be out of place in Fawnia's circumstances.

NOTES

1. Wherever it is possible, the references in this chapter are to editions of the texts that are most readily available (after comparison with the originals). These are: for John Lyly, The Complete Works, ed. R. Warwick Bond (1902); for Robert Greene, The Complete Works, ed. A. B. Grosart (1881 - 86); for Thomas Lodge, The Complete Works, ed. Edmund Gosse (1883). However, Pandosto is quoted from An Anthology of Elizabethan Prose, ed. Paul Salzman (1987) and Rosalynde from The Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, ed. Geoffrey Bullough, supplemented by W. W. Greg's modern spelling edition(1907). References to The Schoolmaster will be cited from The Whole Works of Roger Ascham, ed. J.A. Giles(1864), vol. III.

2. The Schoolmaster, p. 106. Ascham, in turn, derives the term from Plato's Republic.

3. This section of the text is not present in Bullough's 1590 copy-text, and the quotation here is from W.W. Greg's modern spelling edition(1907), p. xxx.

4. 'Therefore, if to the goodness of nature be joined the wisdom of the teacher, in leading young wits into a right and plain way of learning; surely children, kept up in God's fear, and governed by his grace, may most easily be brought

well to serve their country, both by virtue and wisdom.' (p. 116)

5. Ibid., pp. 122 - 123.

6. Ibid., pp. 130 - 138.

7. '... I see thou scornest fortune with patience, and thwartest the injurie of fate with content, in brooking the death of thy Sonnes ...' (p.170)

8. p. 174.

9. Given as an appendix to The Canterbury Tales in W. W. Skeat's edition of Chaucer's Works (1884), vol. IV, pp. 645 - 67.

10. But only apparently so. In describing Pandosto as a work in which Greene has satisfied a characteristic fondness for the disasters of fortune by depriving the story of a happy ending in the medieval romance tradition J. Winny (The Descent of Euphues, 1957, p.xix) undervalues both the structure of the work and the development in Greene's preoccupations.

11. Richard Helgerson's The Elizabethan Prodigals (1976) is an excellent study of this motif.

12. A Natural Perspective (N.Y. 1965), pp. 91 - 93.
13. Works, vol. II, pp. 58 - 62.
14. Cf. F. Turner, Shakespeare and the Nature of Time (1971), pp. 42 - 44.
15. Cf. W. W. Greg, Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama (1906), pp. 147 - 154; 251ff.
16. G. Wilson Knight, The Crown of Life (1947); E. M. W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's Last Plays (1938).
17. It is worth noting that in an earlier play Shakespeare adopted the opposite strategy. Small intimations in William Painter's version of the story of Giletta of Narbon become, in All's Well That Ends Well (I.i.212 - 225), Helena's thorough rationale for seizing - and making - the appropriate moment. In terms of the full range of Occasion topoi, of course, Helena is no less virtuous than Shakespeare's other, more forbearing, heroines (see above, p.23) but their fame and Machiavelli's infamy have left her in bad standing with most readers.



CHAPTER FOUR

PLAYS WITH NARRATIVE VERSE SOURCES: TROILUS AND CRESSIDA AND ROMEO AND JULIET

Two English versions of the story of Romeo and Juliet were available to Shakespeare: in prose, as the ninety-first 'novel' in Painter's The Palace of Pleasure (Second Tome, 1567) and in Arthur Brooke's poem The Tragical Historie of Romeus and Juliet (1562). They are both close renditions of the French version¹ of the story, very seldom differing on details of the narrative, but where they do diverge it is Brooke's poem rather than Painter's tale that Shakespeare follows. In this chapter my interest in this text will focus on the rhetoric that is devoted to change, and the influence this has on Romeo and Juliet.

With Troilus and Cressida the question of sources is much more complicated and - if we are to navigate successfully around the variety of material Shakespeare used - the strange origins of some of the texts that were taken to be primary historical evidence of the fall of Troy have to be borne in mind. Apparently factual reports, uncluttered by pagan supernaturalism, that seemed to be made by participants in the events - for the Greeks, Dictys' Ephemeris de Historia Belli Troiani, and for the Trojans, Dares' De Excidio Troiae Historia - were accepted at their face value in the Middle Ages, and it was only in the eighteenth century that they were

dismissed as fictions. For the nations that saw themselves as the descendants of the Trojan diaspora the report of Dares appealed further by providing a counterbalance to what was seen as the unfair bias towards the Greeks in Homer's Iliad. The sequence of events set out by Dares, beginning with Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece - the indirect cause of the first sacking of Troy - and bringing Troilus into prominence as a successor to Hector, was followed by Benoît de Sainte-Maure's Roman de Troie, the twelfth-century romance that lies behind the history of Troy by Guido delle Colonne (Historia Destructionis Troiae, 1287). The veracity of Guido's history was never doubted until the eighteenth century debunking of Dares and Dictys.² References in this chapter to the 'Benoît-Guido' version or narrative are intended to indicate the purported sequence of history that derives from their work rather than a specific text.

Only a third of the narrative of Troilus and Cressida is directly concerned with the three characters who dominate Chaucer's poem. The rest of the play is devoted, in roughly equal proportions, to the wider preoccupations of the inhabitants of the besieged city and those of their opponents - the substance of the Benoît-Guido narrative that Shakespeare appears to have accessed from both Lydgate's Troy Book and the third book of Caxton's Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye (1475).³ Since the latter is a much more superficial representation of the same matter it is upon Lydgate's poem (which also throws

some light upon Romeo and Juliet) rather than Caxton's prose version that I will concentrate in discussion of the Benoît-Guido narrative.⁴

1.1. The Perception of Change in Troilus and Criseyde:

The deaths that Benoît invented for Hector and Troilus play an important part in the shifting of the bias in the Trojan legend away from the Greeks. Hector, the greatest Trojan hero, could not be allowed to die in the shameful manner described by Homer: instead, Achilles repays his magnanimity in their penultimate encounter by returning to deal him a treacherous death-stroke when he is unguarded, and his body has to be rescued from the Greeks for an appropriately splendid entombment. Troilus, in the role created for him as Hector's successor, is also slaughtered cunningly by Achilles (who instructs his Myrmidons to surround and disarm the younger Trojan hero so that he may, once again, have a defenceless opponent) and Benoît adds on the most shocking aspect of the Iliad's version of Hector's death, the trailing of his corpse through the dust, tied to Achilles' horse. The shame of the incident now falls unambiguously upon the Greeks rather than the Trojans:

Ha! las, tanz cous i ot feruz
 Sor lui d'espees maintenant!
 E Achillès se mist en tant

Qu'il ot la teste desarmee.
 Grant defense, dure meslee .
 Lor a rendu: mais ço que chaut?
 Rien ne li monte ne ne vaut,
 Quar Achillès, le reneié,
 Li a anceis le chief trenchié
 Qu'il puisse aveir socors n'aïe.
 Grant cruèuté, grant felenie
 A fait: bien s'en poüst sofrir;
 Ancor s'en puisse il repentir! ⁵

Guido keeps very close to Benoît, using the deaths of the two heroes, and Achilles' cruelty, to berate what is perceived as Homer's partisanship⁶, and although Chaucer's report of Troilus' death is remarkably brief, consisting of just one line, it is clear that he has in mind the Benoît-Guido version: 'Despitously hym slough the fierse Achille.' (Troilus and Criseyde, V.1806).

In the stanzas that follow on from this line a new perspective on the poem's events emerges rather suddenly. Together with their gods, the pagan authorities who were cited by the narrator with reverence only moments before (V.1791 - 1792) are now exposed to his scorn, and the 'double sorrow' of Troilus that his audience had been persuaded to follow with sympathetic interest (first, the lack of love's pleasures, and then their loss) is given an austere Christian interpretation that renders it a matter that, like his death, is of little significance - or, more accurately, of great insignificance. 'Younge fresshe folkes' inclined to love are exhorted to learn from the example of Troilus and to turn their hearts towards God:

And syn he best to love is, and most meke,
 What nedeth feynede loves for to seke?

Lo here, of payens corsed olde rites;
 Lo here, what alle hire goddes may availle;
 Lo here, this wrecched worldes appetites;
 Lo here, the fyn and guerdoun of travaille
 Of Jove, Appollo, of Mars, of swich rascaille!
 Lo here, the forme of olde clerkis speche
 In poetrie, if ye hire bokes seche.

(V.1847- 1855)

Three stanzas (lines 1807 - 1827) that Chaucer appears to have inserted into this sequence in a revision make this new perspective not simply the narrator's but one that he shares with Troilus himself. Translated to a heavenly sphere after his death, he looks down and laughs at the insignificance of mortal concerns:

And down from thennes faste he gan avyse
 This litel spot of erthe, that with the se
 Embraced is, and fully gan despise
 This wrecched world, and held al vanite
 To respect of the pleyne felicite
 That is in hevne above; and at the laste,
 Ther he was slayn, his lokyng down he caste.

And in hymself he lough right at the wo
 Of hem that wepten for his deth so faste;
 And dampned aloure werk that foloweth so
 The blynde lust, the which that may nat laste,
 And sholden al our herte on heven caste.

(V.1814 - 1825)

As John Steadman notes in his study of the poem in relation to the apotheosis tradition⁷, apart from its broad *contemptus mundi* orientation the sequence owes much to the Consolation of Philosophy where, in the final book, Philosophy gives the imprisoned Boethius a similar insight into the perception of mortal events by the

'science' of God (towards whom, like Chaucer's 'younge fresshe folkes', he is urged to direct himself). Since allusions to the Consolation occur throughout the poem, strongly influencing the various perceptions of change expressed by the significant characters in the narrative, it is important to remember that all Philosophy offers Boethius is a glimpse of the divine perspective. Her immediate task, in the last book of the Consolation, is to resolve her disciple's remaining doubts over how human free choice can be squared with divine providence - and in order to do so she delineates four levels of perception, the powers of each being subsumed within those of the higher level: 'Wit' is the purely sensory perception of things or events; 'Imagination' can move from sensory perception to abstractions; 'Reason', possessed only by mankind, can form universal conceptions, and the perception of 'Divine Intelligence' looks down upon the earth with a perspective that transforms the sequence of temporal events into a contemporaneous instant (thus accommodating free choice in mortal actions). The greatness (but also the limitation) of humanity is that we, of all creatures, can at least strive towards the divine perception, and it is with Philosophy's exhortation of Boethius towards this goal that the work ends. The imperfection of mortal insight into divine providence, I will want to suggest later, comes to take on great significance in Troilus and Criseyde.

Of the three main figures in the poem, it is Troilus alone who comes to share the highest level of perception described by Philosophy: as we have seen, he does so quite literally in the last stanzas of the poem, but it is the distinctive feature of his way of understanding events - once the cynicism he displays at the start of Book I is dispelled - that he always attempts to see them in some kind of divine pattern. Pandarus, on the other hand, consistently employs his higher faculties in the service of the primitive existentialism that Boethius' Philosophy defined as Wit, while Criseyde herself describes the limitations of her perception:

Prudence, alas, oon of thyne eyen thre
 Me lakked alwey, er that I come here!
 On tyme ypassed well remembred me,
 And present tyme ek koud ich well ise,
 But future tyme er I was in the snare,
 Koude I nat sen; that causeth now my care.
 (V. 744 - 749)

The narrator (virtually the poem's fourth major character) keeps pace with the developments in Troilus' perceptions, in general terms creating a sympathetic environment, but also including details that allow them to be questioned.

The first allusion to the Consolation in Troilus and Criseyde occurs in Book I when Troilus, still a new convert to Love, endures the sweet anguish of unrequited passion as his punishment for previously mocking Cupid's work. His circumstances bear a surface resemblance to the

duress suffered by the contemplative prisoner in the Consolation in that both are alone and complain of unbearable torture that would make death a welcome release. Where Boethius is visited by sombre Philosophy, however, Troilus' complaints are interrupted by the bustling figure of Pandarus. His speech and manner echo those of Philosophy -

... he is fallen into a litargye, which that is a comune seknesse to hertes that been desceyved. ... 'Felistow,' quod sche, 'thise thynges, and entren thei aught in thy corage? Artow like an asse to the harpe? Why wepistow, why spillestow teeris? Yif thou abidest after help of thi leche, the byhoveth discovre thy wownde.' (Boece, Book I, Prosa 2, Prosa 4)

.....

What! slombrestow as in a litargie?
Or artow lik an asse to the harpe,
That hereth sown whan men the strynges plye,
But in his mynde of that no melodie
May sinken hym to gladen, for that he
So dul ys of his bestialite?
(I.729 - 735)

And therefore wostow what I the biseche?
Lat be thy wo and torning to the grounde;
For whoso list have helying of his leche,
To him byhoveth first unwre his wownde.
(I.855 - 858)

- but the authority he cites is Ovid⁸ (by reputation, Cupid's laureate) rather than the philosophers favoured by his spiritual counterpart, and when he argues that his own failures in love qualify him to be an excellent counsellor, he very modestly rejects the image of flight that is a persistent metaphor for the approach to the divine perspective in the Consolation:

I love oon best, and that me smerteth sore;
 And yet, paraunter, kan I reden the,
 And nat myself; repreve me na more.
 I have no cause, I woot wel, for to sore
 As doth an hauk that listeth for to pleye;
 But to thin help yet somewhat kan I seye.
 (I.667 - 672)

It is hardly surprising, then, that his counsel should be a ludicrous imitation of Philosophy's. But precisely because it is no more than a parody of the critique of Fortune in the Consolation -

Thou hast bytaken thiself to the governaunce of Fortune and forthi it byhoveth the to ben obeisaunt to the maneris of thi lady. Enforcestow the to aresten or withholden the swyftnesse and the sweigh of hir turnynge wheel? O thow fool of alle mortel foolis! Yif Fortune bygan to duelle stable, she cessede thanne to ben Fortune.

(Boece, Book II, Prosa 1)

- his optimistic and worldly suggestion (I.841 - 854) that the low point of Troilus' fortunes must herald a change for the better in his luck (I.848 - 849: 'For if hire whiel stynte any thyng to torne/ Then cessed she Fortune anon to be.') is intrinsically flawed. With or without knowledge of the Consolation, the reader can see that, quite simply, Pandarus misses the point of what he is saying: if the turning of Fortune's wheel will carry Troilus to the zenith of happiness, then its continued turning is bound to bring him down again. Awareness of the allusion to the Consolation, on the other hand, makes our consciousness of the flaw deeper and more formal.

So, too, with the passage in Book IV (ll. 958 - 1078) where the news that he will soon be separated from

Criseyde drives Troilus to the unhappy conclusion that God's ordinance, and not man's free choice, determines the outcome of events. One doesn't need to know the background to the passage to sense that it is somewhat incongruous for an unhappy lover to be engaging himself in a complex philosophical argument, or to see the limitations of his argument - it all breaks down rather sadly when, having proved to his satisfaction that God's providence is impervious to human endeavour, the hap-less Troilus nevertheless prays for divine mercy:

'And over al this, yet sey I more herto,
 That right as whan I wot ther is a thyng,
 Iwys, that thyng moot nedfully be so;
 Ek right so, whan I woot a thyng comyng,
 So mot it come; and thus the bifallyng
 Of thynges that ben wist bifore the tyde,
 They mowe nat ben eschued on no syde.'

Thanne seyde he thus: 'Almyghty Jove in trone,
 That woost of al this thyng the sothfastnesse,
 Rewe on my sorwe, and do me deyen sone,
 Or bryng Criseyde and me fro this destresse!'
 (IV.1072 - 1082)

Nevertheless, awareness that Troilus' arguments repeat almost verbatim the last doubts that Boethius confesses to his spiritual liberator does deepen our understanding of the transformation that he is undergoing - it becomes clearer that Troilus' philosophic musings mark a stage of spiritual transformation. His reasoning here may be imperfect, but at least it gropes in a direction that is more meaningful than the mechanistic determinism of Fortune's wheel to which (in his first response to the

impending separation from Criseyde, IV.260 - 329) he had earlier subscribed.

The impression of Troilus' changing perception is reinforced by the interruption of his deliberations by Pandarus. In Book I, as was noted earlier, it was his suggestion that Troilus should welcome the opportunities that the turn of Fortune's wheel would present; and in Book III he again makes a materialist inversion of a passage in the Consolation when he warns Troilus to do his best to stay in Fortune's graces.⁹ Here, in contrast to Troilus' tortured efforts to perceive the divine pattern, he once again employs his higher faculties to reduce the significance of events to the simplest, sensory level:

Lat be, and thynk right thus in thi disese:
That, in the dees right as ther fallen chaunces,
Right so in love ther come and gon pleasaunces.
(IV.1097 - 1099)

The high point of Troilus' felicity in love is also marked by an allusion to the Consolation that shows him striving for the spiritual meaning of events. Chaucer's own translation of the verses (Book II, Metrum 8) celebrating the Love that keeps the world's mutability under restraint -

That the world with stable feyth varieth
accordable chaungynges; that the contrarious
qualities of elementz holden among hemsel
allyaunce perdurable; that Phebus, the sonne,
with his goldene chariet bryngeth forth the
rosene day ... that the see, gredy to flowen,

constreyneth with a certein eende his floodes, so that it is nat leueful to strecche his brode termes or bowndes uppon the erthes (*that is to seyn, to coveren al the erthe*) - al this accordaunce of thynges is bounde with love, that governeth erthe and see, and hath also commandement to the hevene. And yif this love slakede the bridelis, alle thynges that now loven hem togidres wolden make batayle contynuely, and stryven to fordo the fassoun of this world ...

(Boece, Book II, Metrum 8.)

- is closely imitated in the hymn to Love at the end of Book III of Troilus and Criseyde which, we are told, has become for Troilus a frequent expression of his happy state:

That that the world with feith, which that is
stable,
 Diverseth so his stowndes concordynge,
 That elementz that ben so discordable
 Holden a bond perpetuely durynge,
 That Phebus mote his rosy day forth brynge,
 And that the mone hath lordshipe over the nyghtes, -
 Al this doth Love, ay heried be his myghtes!

That that the se, that gredy is to flowen,
 Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so
 His flodes that so fiersly they ne growen
 To drenchen erthe and al for evere mo;
 And if that Love aught lete his bridel go,
 Al that now loveth asondre sholde lepe,
 And lost were al that Love halt now to-hepe.
 (Troilus and Criseyde, III. 1751 - 1764)

But here, too, there is an important difference between the two versions. Troilus' hymn takes it on trust - with tragic outcome - that love between mortals is of the same order as this heavenly Love, while the passage from the Consolation quoted above has a less sanguine conclusion -

O weleful were mankynde, yif thilke love that
 governeth hevene governede yowr corages.

- and, later, the delights of the body ('whiche delices the desirynges ben ful of anguyssch, and the fulfillynges of hem ben ful of penance') are dismissed among the ephemeral pursuits that obsess mankind.¹⁰

1.2. THE RHETORIC OF CHANGE: LYDGATE'S TROY BOOK AND BROOKE'S ROMEUS AND JULIET

The critical disengagement that Chaucer is able to maintain from the events of the Benoît-Guido narrative by deploying a variety of perspectives is entirely absent from Lydgate's Troy Book. Lydgate tells us in the Prologue that the work is a translation of Guido's history of Troy, written to meet his prince's request for an authoritative record in English of the civilisation from which the kingdom he would inherit claimed descent. To fulfil its monumental function, however, the translation is a highly embellished one, with many rhetorical inserts. The terms in which Lydgate couches his approval of Guido's craft is very revealing of his own method:

For he enlumyneth by crafte & cadence
 This noble story with many fresche colour
 Of rethorik, and many riche flour
 Of eloquence to make it sownde bet
 He in the story hath ymped in and set
 (Troy Book, Prologue, 362 - 366)

For the modern reader, accustomed to the text in the drab guise of the EETS edition, his emphasis on repletion may serve as a grim reminder of Lydgate's enthusiasm for repetition and amplification. Nevertheless, the two crafts that he draws in by analogy do help to explain his great popularity in the sixteenth century. Both the illuminator of manuscripts and the gardener who grafts flowering stems on other stock employ their skills to add a related but extrinsic beauty to objects - and in both cases superfluity is a significant part of the desired effect.

Lydgate's analogy with the skills of the illuminator is particularly apt, and it is worth bearing in mind that all aspects of the production of the lost manuscript that he eventually presented to King Henry V would have been handled within the confines of his own monastery. For when the Troy Book is read in an extant manuscript version (or, indeed, in the 1513 black letter edition, which adheres to a manuscript pattern) it becomes very clear that a large proportion of the passages relating to change were written with the physical make-up of the book in mind, and were designed to complement the ornamentation that would be added. In one of the manuscripts that I have been able to consult (British Library Royal 18.D.II: see the illustration on p. 185, which shows the verso of folio 30), for instance, the seventy-two lines of largely unremarkable¹¹ complaint

against the changeability of Fortune that Lydgate introduced into his translation to mark the start of his second book -

The envious ordre of Fortunas meving,
 In worldly þing, fals and flekeryng,
 Ne will not suffre us in þis present lyf
 To lyve in reste with-oute werre or striffe;
 For sche is blinde, fikel, and unstable,
 And of her course, fals & ful mutable.

(Troy Book, II.1 - 6)

- gain appropriateness (to the volume as a physical entity, admittedly, rather than to the narrative alone) from the co-presence of a miniature of Fortune and her wheel and other sumptuous decoration that befits the start of a new Book. (A miniature representing Fortune is present at this point in three of the nineteen extant manuscripts and in the edition of 1513, and it is reasonable to surmise that in this they reflect the make-up of the lost original. The illustration shown on p. 184 is from BL Royal 18.DII, in which the spelling differs considerably from the EETS copy-text.)

A similar effect is achieved - on a smaller scale, but with great frequency - when Lydgate turns the indication that some time has elapsed into highly-wrought set-pieces on the movements of the cosmos that are suffused with reference to classical mythology. Passages of the type quoted below often introduce sub-sections of a Book, and when they do there is invariably a transference of decorative value between the verses themselves and the illuminated lettering that accompanies them:

The nyȝt ypassed, at springyng of þe day,
 Whan þat þe larke with a blisshed lay
 Gan to salue the lusty rowes rede
 Of Phebus char, þat so freschely sprede
 Upon þe bordure of þe orient;
 And Aurora, of hert and hool entent,
 With þe swetnes of hir silver schoures
 Bedewed had þe fresche somer floures,
 And made þe rose with new bawme flete,
 Þe sote lillye and þe margarete
 For to unclose her tender levys white,
 Oppressed hertes with gladnes to delyte
 Þat drery wern afor of nyȝtes tene;
 And hony-souklis amonge þe buschis grene
 Enbamed hadde enviroun al þe Eyr;
 Longe or Titan gan make his repeire,
 With þe brytnes of his bemys merye
 For to reioische al oure Emysperye:
 For longe a-forn, or he dide arise,
 Þis worthi Iason

(I.1197 - 1216)

In manuscript, the effect is to distribute a large number of 'beauty spots' (often echoing verses from Chaucer, though they are generally far more prolonged and self-contained than the passages they resemble) throughout the text, where verse and decoration appear to have been designed for each other.

In terms of our own reading of the Troy Book, to point this out is to plead for only a small amelioration of Lydgate's reputation. Inevitably, such passages now seem repetitive, derivative and disproportionate. But, in order to understand the response of readers who were closer to the manuscript tradition, their sheer frequency should also be seen as imparting its special character to the text: the narrative may be about the two destructions of Troy, but the persistent rhetoric also communicates a sense of Fortune and the movements of the heavenly bodies

that mark the passage of time as important ancillary motifs.

It is a striking feature of Brooke's Romeus and Juliet that although the reader is told that the poem narrates a recent event (ll.39 - 40: 'No legend lye I tell, scarce yet theyr eyes be drye/ That did behold the grisly sight, with wet and weeping eye.') the style of the narration is deliberately archaic and seeks to leave the impression that we are immersed in a medieval romance. Brooke clearly had Lydgate in mind when establishing the persona of the narrator, whose modest appraisal of his ability to obey his Muse's dictate -

... an heavy happe befelle
Which Boccace skant (not my rude tong) were able forth
to tell.
Within my trembling hande, my penne doth shake for
feare
And on my colde amased head, upright doth stand my
heare.
But since she doth commaunde, whose hest I must obaye,
In moorning verse, a wofull chauce to tell I will
assaye.

(Romeus and Juliet 15 - 20)

- consciously or not, recalls Lydgate at his desk in the throes of composing his translation of the Fall of Princes:

Wheras goode will gan me constreyne,
Bochas tacomplishe for to do me peyne
Cam Ignoraunce with a maas of dreede
Mi penne tarreste; I duste nat proceede.

Thus to my-selff remembryng on this book,
It to translate how I hadde undirtake,
Ful pale of cheer, astonyd in my look,

And the brytnes of his bemys schene,
 Hadde over-gilt þe hiȝe hilles grene;
 And floures eke ageyn þe morwe-tyde
 Up-on her stalke gan splaie her levis wyde ...
 (Troy Book, I. 3093 - 3106)

- but a single line just above this passage (I.3081: 'Atwen þe tweylyȝt and þe rody morwe') appears to have also recalled Lydgate's preamble in Book III to a Greek council of war:

Whan Esperus, þe faire bryȝte sterre,
 Ageynes eve, caste his stremys ferre,
 And in þe weste rapest gan appere,
 Whan þe twylyȝt, wiþ a pale chere,
 In maner morneth þe absence of þe sonne,
 And nyȝt aprocheþ with his copis donne -
 Þe same tyme, whan Titan toke his leve,
 Þat clerkis calle Crepusculum at eve, -
 Whiche is nat ellis but þe mene lyȝt
 Of Phebus absence, and þe dirke nyȝt,
 And twylyȝt hatte: for it is a mene
 Of day and nyȝt, departinge hem betwene,
 Fully nouper, but of boþe meynt,
 Or þe hevene be cluȝtryd and depeynt
 With bryȝte sterris in þe Evenynge;
 (Troy Book, III.2667 - 2681)

Apart from Brooke's rhetorical indebtedness, these passages also highlight another aspect of narration, over which he does indeed have a greater affinity with Chaucer than with Lydgate. In the conclusion to her recent study of Chaucer in relation to a closely-defined romance tradition stemming from Benoît, Barbara Nolan suggests that the Troy Book can be seen as one of the late, decadent manifestations of the tradition, whose

... responses to their models tend to lack precisely those qualities which, in the earlier texts, had given an ethically problematic, circumstantial density to the classical matter of Thebes and Troy. Gone is the rich, dramatic tension between the public and private spheres, realized largely through the theatricality of

of Lydgate's rhetorical idiom is to create in the reader a sense of Fortune and the movement of the cosmos (as ancillary themes) that is, if anything, even stronger. But his other models - Troilus and Criseyde is one and the very story he took from Belleforest's Histoire Tragiques is another - enable him to employ this rhetoric in the service of a number of subjective voices, the most prominent of which are the narrator, the Friar and the lovers themselves.

2.1. CHANGE IN ROMEO AND JULIET

Earlier in this chapter I suggested that the Lydgate-like persona Brooke created for his narrator was part of a more general effort on his part to dress up his narrative with the trappings of the past. No such impression is communicated by Shakespeare in Romeo and Juliet; but this is not just a matter of his avoiding the archaisms in Brooke's vocabulary. Beneath the implicit transfer of events into a contemporary milieu there is a subtle but important distinction between the cultural inclinations of Romeo and Juliet and its source that leads Shakespeare to adopt contrasting strategies towards Brooke's two motifs of change.

Since birth, and heaven, and earth all three do meet
 In thee at once (III.iii.118 - 120)

The skill of being a man, in the play's version, lies in using all that one has been blessed with:

Fie, fie, thou sham'st thy shape, thy love, thy wit,
 Which, like a usurer, abound'st in all,
 And usest none in that true use indeed
 Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit.
 Thy noble shape is but a form of wax
 Digressing from the valour of a man
 (III.iii.121 - 126)

Both of these speeches have their desired effects. The two recipients are galvanised into actions appropriate to the general tenor of their version of the story: Romeus makes the last of his visits to Juliet's bedchamber, and shares the Friar's wisdom with her in a conversation of over two hundred and fifty lines,¹⁶ dominated by the concept of Fortune and her wheel; in the play we observe the lovers talking intimately in the last minutes of their only night together. The episode ends, it is true, with the most prominent of the few references that Shakespeare has left scattered thinly about the play -

O Fortune, Fortune! All men call thee fickle.
 If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him
 That is renown'd for faith? Be fickle, Fortune,
 For then I hope thou wilt not keep him long
 But send him back.

(III.v.60 - 64)

- but, transferred to Juliet at this point and reduced to a mere five-line encapsulation, the Friar's lengthy speech and Romeus' even longer repetition of its substance lose all their authoritative quality and become simply a heart-felt and reckless expostulation.

In contrast, Brooke's other motif of change - the movement of the heavenly bodies - is absorbed so thoroughly into the play that it becomes one of its most notable features. From the first mention of Romeo -

Benvolio: Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
Peer'd forth the golden window of the east ...
So early walking I did see your son. ...

Montague: Many a morning hath he there been seen,
With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs;
But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
Should in the farthest east begin to draw
The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
Away from light steals home my heavy son
And private in his chamber pens himself,
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out
And makes himself an artificial night.

(I.i.116 - 138)

- its imagery is maintained as a motif for the young lovers that is suspended after it reaches its greatest prominence in the scene in which they part but given a subdued reintroduction in the last speech of the play:

A glooming peace this morning with it brings:
The sun for sorrow will not show his head.

(V.iii.304 - 305)

When it is expressed through their own voices, however, there are usually elements of daring and danger concealed in the beauty of the motif that set Romeo and Juliet apart from the other, medieval and pseudo-medieval, lovers who have figured in this chapter. In identifying Juliet's beauty with that of the sun Romeo speaks of her killing the moon and shaming the stars (II.ii.2 - 25); and Juliet's impatience for her wedding night is charged with a scarcely-controllable violence:

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
 Towards Phoebus' lodging. Such a waggoner
 As Phaeton would whip you to the west
 And bring in cloudy night immediately.
 Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,
 That runaway's eyes may wink, and Romeo
 Leap to these arms untalk'd-of and unseen. ...

Come, gentle night, come loving black-brow'd night,
 Give me my Romeo; and when I shall die
 Take him and cut him out in little stars,
 And he will make the face of heaven so fine
 That all the world will be in love with night
 And pay no worship to the garish sun.

(III.ii.1 - 25)

And even when the motif is heard most serenely, when they watch for the dawn after their night together, they do not indulge in wistful complaints against the passing of time - as their counterparts in Brooke's poem or Troilus and Criseyde do in comparable passages¹⁷ - but flatly attempt to deny the inevitable:

Juliet: Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day.
 It was the nightingale, and not the lark
 That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear.
 Nightly she sings in yond pomegranate tree.
 Believe me, love, it was the nightingale. ...

Romeo: Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death.
 I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
 I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,
 'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow
 (III.v.1 - 20)

2.2. THE PERCEPTION OF WORTH IN TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

The debate among the Trojan princes in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida (II.ii) over new promptings from Nestor to return Helen - and so end the war - does not occur in the Troy Book, but is very closely based on a comparatively early sequence in the poem where, after Antenor's fruitless mission to the Greeks, there is discussion of what further steps should be taken over the abduction of Priam's sister Hesione. As is always the case when the motives of the participants in the struggle are his subject, Lydgate's verse in this sequence (Book II.2063 - 3078) strongly reflects the attitudes and vocabulary of chivalry. After upbraiding his sons for their tardiness in avenging his sister's honour ('In knyȝtly wyse to gynne on hem a werre'¹⁸), for instance, Priam gives responsibility for the task to his eldest son with these words:

Hector, my trust & al my Ioye,
 Myn eyr also, likly to regne in Troye
 After my day, and be my successour,
 And named art þe verray sovereyn flour
 Of worþines, and of manhod welle
 And alle þi brethre in knyȝthod dost excelle,
 And in armys, liche a conquerour,
 Callid þe stock of worschip and honour,
 I hertly praye, þouȝ þou sitte stille,
 Be willy now my purpos to fulfille,
 To execute þat I desyre so.
 (II.2147 - 2157)

The misgivings of Hector and Helenus and the counter-arguments of Paris and Deiphebus are couched in similar terms, and Troilus makes the case for young knights to

- and continued throughout the scene, largely by exploiting the potential in the word 'worth'. Hector expresses his misgivings as an account that does not tally -

If we have lost so many tenths of ours
 To guard a thing not ours nor worth to us
 (Had it our name) the value of one ten,
 What merit's in that reason that denies
 The yielding of her up?

(II.ii.21 - 25)

- and is upbraided by Troilus for the meanness of spirit that his usage implies:

Fie, fie, my brother:
 Weigh you the worth and honour of a king
 So great as our dread father's in a scale
 Of common ounces? Will you with counters sum
 The past-proportion of his infinite,
 And buckle in a waist most fathomless
 With spans and inches so diminutive
 As fears and reasons? Fie, for godly shame!

(II.ii.25 - 32)

But Troilus is not as high-minded as he seems at first. As their debate continues it focuses upon what value is placed on honourable reputation, and on this matter it emerges that he, too, has the mind of an entrepreneur - though one more in the mould of the sort of sixteenth-century merchant-adventurer¹⁹ who could keep one eye on the romance of the wonders that he sees and another on their commercial value:

We turn not back the silks upon the merchant
 When we have soil'd them. ...

The seas and winds, old wranglers, took a truce
 And did him service: he touch'd the ports desir'd,
 And for an old aunt whom the Greeks held captive,
 He brought a Grecian queen, whose youth and
 freshness
 Wrinkles Apollo's and makes pale the morning.

Why keep we her? - The Grecians keep our aunt.
 Is she worth keeping? - Why, she is a pearl
 Whose price hath launch'd above a thousand ships
 And turn'd crown'd kings to merchants. ...

- why do you now
 The issue of your proper wisdoms rate,
 And do a deed that never Fortune did -
 Beggar the estimation which you priz'd
 Richer than sea and land?

(II.ii.70 - 93)

At the end of the scene it is made clear that the differences between the heroic brothers are more apparent than real. Hector acknowledges that their 'joint and several dignities' are more important than moral rectitude and Troilus explicitly scorns the simple values of his Troy Book prototype when he assures his brother that, in terms of reputation, the war's balance-sheet will reflect a substantial profit:

Troilus: Were it not glory that we more affected
 Than the performance of our heaving spleens,
 I would not wish a drop of Trojan blood
 Spent more in her defence. But, worthy Hector,
 She is a theme of honour and renown,
 A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds,
 Whose present courage may beat down our foes,
 And fame in time to come canonise us;
 For I presume brave Hector would not lose
 So rich advantage of a promis'd glory
 As smiles upon the forehead of this action
 For the wide world's revenue.

Hector: I am yours,
 You valiant offspring of great Priamus.
 (II.ii.196 - 208)

Because it sets out to redeem Trojan reputations the Benoît-Guido narrative (and all the texts it spawned) is remarkably dense with comparative estimations. Helen is weighed against Priam's abducted sister Hesione; Hector

against Achilles; Ajax against Achilles; Troilus against both Hector and Achilles; traded hostages and innumerable battlefield performances against each other - all of these leading to a favourable sizing-up of the fame and valour of the Trojans against that of the Greeks. And the counterpoise of his fidelity with her unfaithfulness is, of course, inherent in the story of Troilus and Criseyde.

In Troilus and Cressida Shakespeare directs our attention to this propensity within his subject matter through the frequent repetition of images of trade, references to units of measurement and point-by-point evaluations and comparisons of individuals - all of which combine to attach a quality of vulgar commercialism to the idea of personal worth that is at odds with the manner in which the characters esteem themselves. Within the first few seconds of a performance an audience hears Pandarus employing the vocabulary of the baker's trade -

Pandarus: He that will have a cake out of the wheat must tarry the grinding.

Troilus: Have I not tarried?

Pandarus: Ay, the grinding; but you must tarry the bolting.

Troilus: Have I not tarried?

Pandarus: Ay, the bolting; but you must tarry the leavening.

Troilus: Still have I tarried.

Pandarus: Ay, to the leavening; but here's yet in the word 'hereafter' the kneading, the making of the cake, the heating of the oven, and the baking: nay, you must stay the cooling too, or ye may chance burn your lips.

(I.i.14 - 26)

- and, soon afterwards, Troilus first demonstrates his fascination for the merchant trade, here as a metaphor for his wooing of Cressida:

Tell me, Apollo, for thy Daphne's love,
 What Cressid is, what Pandar, and what we.
 Her bed is India; there she lies, a pearl.
 Between our Ilium and where she resides,
 Let it be call'd the wild and wand'ring flood,
 Ourselves the merchant, and this sailing Pandar
 Our doubtful hope, our convoy and our bark.

(I.i.98 - 104)

The next scene begins with Cressida and her servant discussing the relative merits of Hector and Ajax, and turns to a ridiculous comparison of the attributes of Priam's three most famous sons with the arrival of Pandarus:

Pandarus: - and, you know, he has not past three or four hairs on his chin -

Cressida: Indeed, a tapster's arithmetic may soon bring his particulars therein to a total.

Pandarus: Why, he is very young, and yet will he within three pound lift as much as his brother Hector.

(II.i.112 - 118)

Then, for a brief while, the war becomes the equivalent of a modern team-sport as the leading players on the Trojan side pass over the stage and Pandarus, the know-all on the terraces, shouts out their statistics - building up to a head-to-head comparison of Troilus with the top scorers on the rival team:

Pandarus: I had rather be such a man as Troilus, than Agamemnon and all Greece.

Cressida: There is amongst the Greeks Achilles, a better man than Troilus.

Pandarus: Achilles? A drayman, a porter, a very camel.

(I.ii.249 - 253)

Elsewhere - to cite comparatively minor instances - Ulysses gives Agamemnon a detailed comparison of Troilus with Hector (IV.v.96 - 112) based on the word of Aeneas, who 'knows the youth/ Even to his inches', and when Hector and Achilles size each other up informally the latter does so with the anatomical meticulousness of a horse trader:

Hector: Stand fair, I pray thee; let me look on
thee.

Achilles: Behold thy fill.

Hector: Nay, I have done already.

Achilles: Thou art too brief: I will a second time,
As I would buy thee, view thee limb by limb.

Hector: O, like a book of sport thou'lt read me o'er
But there's more in me than thou understand'st.
Why dost thou so oppress me with thine eye?

Achilles: Tell me, you heavens, in which part of his
body
Shall I destroy him - whether there, or there, or
there -

That I may give the local wound a name,
And make distinct the very breach whereout
Hector's great spirit flew?

(IV.v.234 - 245)

This association of ideas is used to undermine the pretensions of Greeks and Trojans alike. By the end of the first three scenes we have good reason to suspect that beneath their differences of style they are effectively brothers of the same guild. The speech of Ulysses on degree, widely held as Shakespeare's own affirmation of a cardinal point of Elizabethan political belief²⁰, plays a crucial part in establishing the universality of this critique, guiding us through a crucial shift of focus that, at this early stage, helps to establish the very character of the play.

The first part of the scene in which the speech occurs does not correspond directly with any of the Greek assemblies described by Lydgate, but shares elements with a number of episodes²¹ where the Greeks are shown with their spirits at a low ebb. In terms of how it is structured, however, we can also recognise the closest approximation that Shakespeare makes to the events of the Iliad - where, in Book II, there is an initial speech by Agamemnon that is supported by Nestor and followed by contributions²² from Ulysses in which he admonishes the lower ranks, and Thersites in particular. However, the speeches by Agamemnon and Nestor here lack all suggestion of the overt romance of war that is so palpable in both the Troy Book and the Iliad, and instead create the sense that, in the Greek camp, stoic military virtue is expected to flourish unhindered by less austere considerations. The setbacks they are experiencing, Agamemnon says, should be expected in any enterprise, and are Jove's way of allowing their true worth to distinguish itself:

The fineness of which metal is not found
 In fortune's love? For then the bold and coward,
 The wise and fool, the artist and unread,
 The hard and soft, seem all affin'd and kin;
 But in the wind and temper of her frown,
 Distinction, with a broad and powerful fan
 Puffing at all, winnows the light away,
 And what hath mass or matter by itself
 Lies rich in virtue and unmingled.

(I.iii.22 - 30)

Ulysses' discourse on order continues their hard-edged thinking, arguing the need for firm and hierarchical efficiency. But when he suggests the answer to his grim 'tale of length' he proceeds, at equal length, to point us towards a far less respectful attitude that can be taken to the Greek leaders than the one they accord themselves. Each outraged report of the satires of Patroclus and the other young lions inadvertently whittles away at the heroic image of the leaders that they have only just established, and ends by including their entire approach to the war:

They tax our policy and call it cowardice,
 Count wisdom as no member of the war,
 Forestall prescience, and esteem no act
 But that of hand. The still and mental parts,
 That do contrive how many hands shall strike
 When fitness calls them on and know by measure
 Of their observant toil the enemy's weight -
 Why, this hath not a finger's dignity.
 They call this bed-work, mapp'ry, closet-war;
 (I.iii.197 - 205)

The scene's revisionist implications are complicated at this point by the entry of Aeneas to announce a challenge from Hector. He is not able to recognise a sufficiently ostentatious leader among the Greeks and, in turn, his decorative style of speech (which echoes the Troy Book) is so different from theirs as to be almost indecipherable:

Aeneas: I ask, that I might waken reverence,
 And bid the cheek be ready with a blush
 Modest as morning when she coldly eyes
 The youthful Phoebus.
 Which is that god in office, guiding men?
 Which is the high and mighty Agamemnon?

stands at the height of Fortune's wheel; he ought to ensure the permanence of his splendid reputation by coming to their aid once more -

That þe triumphe of þis hise victorie
 Be put in story and eke in memorie,
 And so enprinted, þat forȝetilnes
 No power have by malis to oppresse
 ȝoure fame in knyȝthod, dirken or difface,
 That shyneth ȝit so clere in many place
 (IV.1775 - 1780)

Achilles' response is a model of refined chivalric sentiment: if, as Ulysses says, the purpose of the war is the destruction of Troy, then it is a reckless undertaking -

To putte us alle þoruȝ indiscrecioun,
 Of rekleshed and hasty mocyoun,
 Of lyfe and deth in swyche Iupartye,
 And specially alle þe chevalrye
 Of Grekis lond, for so smal a þing
 (IV.1817 - 1821)

Further pursuit of the war is likely to destroy the world's entire nobility -

And cherles eke, with sorwe & meschaunce,
 In every lond shal lordis ben allone,
 When gentil-men slayen bene echone.
 Is nat Hector, þat was so noble a knyȝt,
 That was þis worldis verray sonne & liȝt,
 Of manhood flour, slayen pitously
 In þis werre?
 (IV.1852 - 1858)

- and he scorns Ulysses' appeal to his renown. He would rather be alive than famous, since he knows very well that Fame is ephemeral:

For worþines, after deth I-blowe,
 Is but a wynde, & lasteth but a þrowe;
 For þouȝ renoun & pris be blowe wyde,
 Forȝetilnes leith ofte a-syde

By lengþe of 3eris and obliuon
 Poru; enue and fals colluon.
 Þe laude of knyþhod & of worþines,
 Of wysdom eke, & of gentilnes,
 Fredam, bounte, vertu, & swiche grace,
 Forþetilnes can dirken and difface;
 And, þer-withal, malys and enue
 I-serid hath þe palme of chivalrie
 By fals report.

(IV.1871 - 1882)

He sends the delegation away with the recommendation that the Greeks should entreat for peace - advice that Nestor and Ulysses support when Agamemnon holds a council to debate his decision.

Shakespeare's version of the episode reverses Achilles' thinking completely. Now, as the Greek leadership passes carelessly by his tent, it is he rather than Ulysses who notes how well he stands in Fortune's graces - but he also shares the opinion often aired in the play (a matter that I shall return to in the subsequent section of this chapter) that worth has no meaning except as it is perceived by others:

What the declin'd is,
 He shall as soon read in the eyes of others
 As feel in his own fall; ...

Fortune and I are friends; I do enjoy
 At ample point all that I did possess,
 Save these men's looks; who do, methinks, find out
 Something not worth in me such rich beholding
 As they have often given.

(III.iii.76 - 92)

And it is Ulysses rather than Achilles who, building on this understanding, draws the moral of the ephemerality of reputation. But his image has none of the melancholy

romance that Lydgate gives to Achilles, disclosing instead a cynical acceptance that the pursuit of fame must be an endless and calculating struggle for a tawdry reward:

Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,
 Wherein he puts arms for oblivion,
 A great-siz'd monster of ingrattitudes.
 Those scraps are good deeds past, which are devour'd
 As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
 As done. Perseverance, dear my lord,
 Keeps honour bright: to have done, is to hang
 Quite out of the fashion, like a rusty mail
 In monumental mockery. Take the instant way;
 For honour travels in a strait so narrow
 Where one but goes abreast.

(III.iii.145 - 155)

3.1. CONCLUSION: THE SUBVERSIVENESS OF ROMEO AND JULIET AND TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

Views expressed by Roger Ascham in The Scholemaster (which was completed by 1566) on the sorts of texts exemplified by the Troy Book and Romeus and Juliet provide a useful historical marker against which Shakespeare's adaptations can be gauged. Though Ascham is scathing about medieval romances ('which, as some say were made in monasteries by idle monks or wanton canons.'²³) most of his anger is directed at what he sees as a dangerous vogue - the thin edge of a Papist wedge - for translations out of the Italian. Things were bad enough in the past, he says, with a work like Morte

D'Arthur - the whole point of which is 'open manslaughter and bold bawdry' - being more readily accessible to the prince himself than the Bible. But now he senses a cunning Italianate plot to infect the minds of the youth of England:

And yet ten Mort Arthurs do not the tenth part so much harm, as one of these books made in Italy and translated in England. They open, not fond and common ways to vice, but such subtle, cunning, new, and divers shifts, to carry young wills to vanity, and young wits to mischief, to teach old bawds new school points as the simple head of an Englishman is not able to invent, nor never was heard of in England before, yea, when papistry overflowed all.²⁴

Brooke would have been doubly at risk from this sort of criticism: not only is Romeus and Juliet a translation of an Italian tale, but it is done in a style that evokes medieval romance. However, either as a talisman to ward off censure or simply as one more instance of an Elizabethan writer's ability to shift his viewpoint drastically, the poem does come accompanied by a preface in which we are offered an interpretation of characters and events that is nowhere directly supported in the body of the text. Its observations against prodigal youth and papist decadence strongly anticipate some of Ascham's other observations that were cited in the previous chapter for their influence on the Euphuistic tradition of prose fiction:

And to this ende (good Reader) is this tragicall matter written, to describe unto thee a couple of infortunate lovers, thralling themselves to dishonest desire, neglecting the authoritie and advise of parentes and frendes, conferring their principall counsels with dronken gossypes, and superstitious friers (the naturally fitte

instrumentes of unchastitie) attemptyng all adventures of peryll, for thattaynyng of their wished lust, using auricular confession (the key of whoredom, and treason) for furtherance of theyr purpose, abusyng the honorable name of lawefull mariage, the cloke the shame of stolne contractes, finallye, by all meanes of unhonest lyfe, hastyng to most unhappy deathe.

(Romeus and Juliet, pp. 284 - 285)

The effect of Shakespeare's variations of the motifs of change in Romeus and Juliet is to bring into the heart of his play the suggestion of the lovers' prodigality that Brooke tags on to his poem in the preface. As we have seen, whatever his preface suggests, Brooke's lovers are in reality drawn in the pattern of medieval romance. The Romeo and Juliet of the play, however, have more in common with characters from the more contemporary literary form of Euphuistic fiction - with Rosalynde and Rosader or Dorastus and Fawnia, for instance, in the works by Lodge and Greene discussed in the previous chapter: their prodigality, though streaked with danger, is not denigrated but elevated to heroic stature - not so much betraying the society they offend as exposing its limitations.

Though Chaucer and Shakespeare would have had no clear reason to doubt the historical veracity of the Benoît-Guido narrative of Trojan history it is clear that, unlike Lydgate, they harboured misgivings over the values it enshrined. However, there are differences in the

nature of their misgivings and the manner in which they are communicated that are reflected in Shakespeare's two allusions to the final episode in Chaucer's poem.

In the first of these, when Troilus is confronted with the evidence of Cressida's fickleness (V.ii), there are three sets of perspectives in operation: Diomedes and Cressida see each other; Troilus, with his guide Ulysses, observes them with horror; and Thersites watches over all, his satirical mockery replacing the more forgiving laughter that Chaucer's apotheosised Troilus can afford:

Lechery, lechery, still wars and lechery! Nothing else
holds fashion. A burning devil take them!
(V.ii.193 - 194)

In effect, Shakespeare has flattened down Chaucer's elevated perspective, letting mortal foibles and the observation of them all take place on the same, mortal, plane. The charitable and spiritual alternative view has been removed, leaving only the prospect that our perceptions are deluded:

But if I tell how these two did co-act
Shall I not lie, in publishing a truth?
Sith yet there is a credence in my heart,
An esperance so obstinately strong,
That doth invert th'attest of eyes and ears,
As if these organs had deceptuous functions,
Created only to calumniate.
(V.ii.117 - 123)

Troilus' way of processing the information of his senses is to fall into the typical mode of perception of both parties to the conflict by totting up the several bits and pieces of worth that have to be balanced in order to calculate the appropriate revenge:

Troilus: Instance, O instance, strong as Pluto's gates;
 Cressid is mine, tied with the bonds of heaven itself:
 The bonds of heaven are slipp'd, dissolv'd, and loos'd;
 And with another knot, five-finger-tied,
 The fractions of her faith, orts of her love,
 The fragments, scraps, the bits, and greasy relics
 Of her o'ere-aten faith, are given to Diomed.

Ulysses: May worthy Troilus be half attach'd
 With that which here his passion doth express?

Troilus: Ay, Greek; and that shall be divulged well
 In characters as red as Mars his heart
 Inflamm'd with Venus. Never did young man fancy
 With so eternal and so fix'd a soul.
 Hark, Greek: as much as I do Cressid love,
 By so much weight hate I her Diomed.
 That sleeve is mine that he'll bear on his helm;
 Were it a casque compos'd by Vulcan's skill,
 My sword should bite it.

(V.ii.154 - 170)

There is a similar implication in the play's other allusion to the ending of Troilus and Criseyde. Because the details of the Benoît-Guido version of his death - the cunning strategy of Achilles and his Myrmidons to disarm him; the desecration of his corpse - have been transferred to the play's version of how Hector is killed, Shakespeare's Troilus is able to present us with an approximation of Chaucer's apotheosis episode in the last scene, when he reports his brother's fate:

He's dead, and at the murderer's horse's tail,
 In beastly sort dragg'd through the shameful field.
 Frown on, you heavens: effect your rage with speed;
 Sit, gods, upon your thrones, and smile at Troy.
 I say at once let your brief plagues be mercy,
 And linger not our sure destructions on.

(V.x.4 - 9)

But, although Troilus knows very well that all efforts to save Troy from destruction will be futile, at the end of

the play he is as intent on reputation and revenge as the characters in the play have been throughout. Thersites' sardonic 'Still wars and lechery' seems the inescapable conclusion, bearing a strong superficial resemblance to Ascham's view of medieval romances as celebrating 'open manslaughter and bold bawdry'.

However, the implication of the word 'still' is that what we are seeing onstage does not belong merely to the past but will always carry on. As studies by Lawrence Stone and others²⁵ have shown, the thirty-five years that separate The Scholemaster from Troilus and Cressida were crucial ones in the evolution of English society. The collapse of the aristocracy's military function, and their growth as an entrepreneurial force through the intensive exploitation of land resources and their involvement in overseas trade and settlement, make Ascham's literary and educational precepts (which presumed the chief role of the nobility to be 'the execution of great affairs, in the service of their prince and country'²⁶) seem, in retrospect, hopelessly rearward. In terms of the new roles that the aristocracy were creating for themselves, it is no small irony to find the family of John Talbot, the heroic figure in Shakespeare's 1 Henry VI, emerging by the end of the sixteenth century as the great material achievers:

In the Elizabethan period the most active entrepreneur in the country was not some busy merchant or thrusting member of the new gentry, but a peer of ancient stock, George Talbot, 9th Earl of Shrewsbury.

He was easily the largest demesne farmer of whom we have a record, he owned a ship which he employed in seeking out new trade and in exploration, and possibly two others for shipping his lead to London, he was one of the largest recorded ironmasters in the country, with three separate works under his control, he operated a steelworks, he sponsored technical innovations for refining his lead, he owned coal-mines and glassworks. ... In addition to all this Shrewsbury was an active investor in trading and exploring ventures, with a share in the Muscovy Company voyage in 1574, in Fenton's attempt to reach the East Indies in 1582, and Carleill's colonizing project of 1583.²⁷

It is against these developments in society that the satirical edge of Troilus and Cressida is seen most clearly. The play's revision of the Benoît-Guido narrative strips away any sense of heroism, leaving only an unending process of accumulating shoddy grandeur. The strong association that is built up between the values of commerce and the self-deluding perceptions of the characters in the play adds to the subversion - with the very last lines subtly blurring the distinction between ordinary trade and whore-mongering. If the inadvertent effect of Shakespeare's heightening of the romantic element in the source of Romeo and Juliet is to expose the limitations of society on one flank, another is brought under deliberate attack by his excision of romance from the sources of Troilus and Cressida.

NOTES

1. In the 1559 edition of Belleforest's Histoires Tragique, itself translating from the Italian of Bandello's Novelle (the tale is an addition, translated by Boaistuau). An English translation of Bandello was made by Geoffrey Fenton in 1567, but its variations from Brooke's narrative do not appear to have a bearing upon Romeo and Juliet.

2. The relationship of Guido's Historia to both Troilus and Criseyde and the Troy Book is studied in C. D. Benson's The History of Troy in Middle English Literature (1980); that of Benoît's Le Roman de Troie to Troilus and Criseyde in Barbara Nolan's Chaucer and the Tradition of the Roman Antique. (1992). My indebtedness to both of these works is strong.

3. Cf. Bullough, Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, vol. VI (1966), pp. 92 - 95.

4. A note on the texts that are cited frequently in this chapter: All quotations of Chaucer are cited from F. N. Robinson's edition of the complete works (1957). These include quotations from Chaucer's translation of Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy (the locations of which are given with Robertson's title Boece, though I refer to this text within the body of the chapter as the Consolation). References to Lydgate's Troy Book are to the EETS edition, ed. H. Bergen (1906). Brooke's Romeus

and Juliet is cited from Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare (vol. I), ed. G. Bullough (1961).

5. Benoît de Saint-Maure, Le Roman de Troie, ed. Leopold Constans (Société des Anciens Textes Français, 1907), ll. 21434 - 21446 (vol. III).

6. Cf. lines 10252 - 10362 of the medieval alliterative translation (The 'Gest Historiale' of the Destruction of Troy, ed. G. A. Panton and D. Donaldson, 1874. This work has in recent years been attributed to 'John Clerk'.).

7. J. M. Steadman, Disembodied Laughter (1972), pp. 3 - 5; 84ff.

8. Troilus and Criseyde, I.652 - 665 (the reference is to the Heroides)

9. The passages in question are Troilus and Criseyde, III.1625 - 1631 and Boece, Book II, Prosa 4.1 - 10.

10. Boece, Book III, Prosa 7. It is worth noting, in passing, that the hymn to the goodness of Love that allays Criseyde's doubts as she mulls over the appropriateness of reciprocating his love may have a superficial resemblance to the composition delegated to Troilus, but differs from it radically by being rooted entirely in the present (II.851 - 852: 'This is the righte lyf that I am inne./ To flemen all manere vyce and sinne.').

11. An exception must be made for his conceit of Fortune as apothecary (As Bergen's text is not based on Royal 18.DII, the spellings here differ slightly from those in the illustration on p. 184 above):

To somme sugre and honye sche distilleth;
 And of somme sche þe botel filleth
 With bitter galle, myrre, and aloes.
 (II.51 - 53)

12. The Swan at the Well (1985), p.xx.

13. Romeus and Juliet, 835 - 844; Troy Book, I.2824 - 2841.

14. Nolan, op. cit., p. 283.

15. The passage that is echoed is the fabrication of Fortune's argument by Philosophy at the start of Book II and, as such, runs against the general tenor of the Consolation.

16. Lines 1543 - 1700.

17. Romeus and Juliet, 925 - 928; Troilus and Criseyde, III.1428ff.

18. Troy Book II.2120.

19. The records in Hakluyt's Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries (1589 - 1600) offer many instances for comparison.

20. E.g., E. M. W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture (1943, repr. 1968), pp. 20 - 21; L. C. Knights, 'The Theme of Appearance and Reality in Troilus and Cressida', Some Shakespearean Themes (1959, repr. 1960), p. 60..

21. For instance, Troy Book II.4328ff (Agamemnon urges Menelaus to put on a cheerful disposition while revenge for the abduction of Helen is organised); II.6517ff (after the destruction of the port Tenedos, and before they move on to Troy itself, Agamemnon calls a council and suggests that they ought to send envoys to offer Priam the opportunity to return Helen); III.2682ff (he calls a council when the Greeks are disheartened by Hector's great exploits); IV.111ff (because of objections to his leadership raised by Pallamides, Agamemnon calls two councils, at the second of which he resigns).

22. The speeches by Ulysses are not part of the same council meeting but follow immediately after the confusion that Agamemnon causes by telling the gathered host - as a test of their mettle - that it is time to give up and go home.

23. Roger Ascham, The Schoolmaster, quoted from Works, ed. Giles (1864), p. 159.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 159 - 160.

25. See, for instance, Lawrence Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy (1558 - 1641) (1965, second, corrected impression, 1979); A. B. Ferguson, The Indian Summer of the English Chivalry (1960); J. W. Gough, The Rise of the Entrepreneur (1969).

26. Op. cit., p. 138.

27. Lawrence Stone, op. cit., pp. 375 - 6.

CHAPTER FIVE

OCCASIO ARREPTA, OCCASIO NEGLECTA: HAMLET AND MACBETH

My title for this chapter is borrowed from the treatise by Joannes David (1605), briefly mentioned earlier (above, p. 24) in relation to the various configurations of the Occasio - Fortuna - Time nexus of topoi. The title-page of David's treatise, which aptly shows a symmetrical array of contrasting motifs (the good and evil consequences of both seizing and neglecting Opportunity), is reproduced on p. 230. By considering the the sources of Hamlet and Macbeth together I hope to show that in some of the texts these are motifs of great significance for the direction in which our reading is guided. The third section of the chapter outlines the contrasting reactions that Shakespeare makes, in the plays, to the presence of these motifs in their sources.

1.1. HAMLET

The earliest version of the Hamlet story to be printed is in the Historiae Danicae, which was first issued in Paris in 1514, but written by Saxo Grammaticus around the end of the twelfth century. The task undertaken by Saxo was to draw Denmark's early heroic legends and its Christian history into an integrated narrative that would satisfy both dynastic and ecclesiastic needs, and his success is due in no small measure to the apparently uncritical manner in which he handles the ancient pagan legends.¹

Although the gods themselves are given a somewhat ambiguous and diminished status, it is only when Denmark hovers on the brink of adopting Christianity, in the middle of the work, that he allows Christian values to bear explicitly upon events: before then the magic forces, fantastical creatures and warrior ethos of legend are put under no obvious restraint. The exploits of Amleth do not involve anything overtly supernatural, but he is gifted with a 'brilliant reason transcending mortal faculties'² that makes it possible for him to systematically overcome his villainous uncle Fengi and regain his murdered father's province through a series of wonderful (and often crudely amusing) tricks.

The version of the story that Shakespeare used - the third tale³ in the fifth volume of Belleforest's Histoires Tragiques (1576) - differs quite significantly from Saxo's. Generally, Belleforest stays quite close to the narrative details of Saxo's account (and even to his expression) but surrounds them with such a degree of commentary and interpretation that it would be less correct to speak of his text as a translation than as an adaptation, re-focused upon the issues of his day.

The date of publication and some incidental comment at the start of the narrative suggest that it was composed during the lull that followed the fifth of the Wars of Religion that beset France in the later years of the sixteenth century. As a staunch supporter of the Catholic

monarchy during these conflicts, Belleforest could hardly be expected to pass on a story of treason thwarted without at least some comment. But he claims, indeed, to have chosen this remote, Danish, subject precisely in order to raise matters of contemporary importance without the unpleasantness that might follow from a more sensitive example:

Although in the beginning of this Hystorie I had determined not to have troubled you with any other matter than a historie of our owne time, having sufficient tragicall matter to satisfie the minds of men; but because I cannot wel discourse thereof without touching many personages whom I would not willingly displease, and partly because the argument that I have in hand, seemed unto me a thing worthy to bee offered to our French nobilitie, for the great and gallant accurences therein set downe, I have somewhat strayed from my course, as touching the tragedies of this our age, and, starting out of France and over Neitherlanders countries, I have ventured to visit the hystories of Denmarke, that it may serve as an example of vertue and contentment to our nation ... (p. 84)

With the burden of contemporary French politics thus imposed upon him, Belleforest's Amleth becomes something of a compound figure. Saxo's legendary hero is never completely repressed, but the effect of the commentary that surrounds his actions is to dress him up as a precursor of a Christian prince who defends ordained monarchy against the usurper:

I delight to speak of these strange histories, and of people that were unchristned, that the vertue of the rude people maie give more splendor to our nation, who seeing them so compleat, wise, prudent, and well advised in their actions, might strive not only to follow (imitation being a small matter), but surmount them, as our religion surpasseth their superstition, and our age more purged, subtill, and gallant, then the season wherein they lived and made their vertues knowne. (p. 124)

But this prince is one who smites the rebel mercilessly - and is happy to employ deception in order to do so. Amleth's stirring qualities of prudence and subtlety are stressed throughout, and he is as much a model Machiavellian as he is a Christian:

Neverthelesse, I must stay the time, meanes, and occasion, lest by making over great hast, I be now the cause of mine owne sodaine ruine and overthrow, and by that meanes end before I beginne to effect my hearts desire. Hee that hath to doe with a wicked, disloyall, cruell, and discourteous man must use craft and politike inventions, such as a fine witte can best imagine, not to discover his interprise; for seeing that by force I cannot effect my desire, reason alloweth me by dissimulation, subiltie, and secret practises to proceed therein. (p. 97)

A few years before the publication of this volume of the Histoires, in a spirited defence of Mary Stuart,⁴ Belleforest had expressed his revulsion for the Huguenots and their Scottish co-religionists by castigating them as Machiavellian atheists. That his own model prince should nevertheless resemble Machiavelli's so closely is a reflection of how deeply the ideas of the Florentine historians had passed into French political discourse in the second half of the century. Something very like the start of the following passage, with its allusions to the first Brutus and to David, could equally have been advanced by later Calvinists⁵ to argue for armed rebellion against a tyrannous king - and it is only through the subsequent qualification that it becomes clear that

Belleforest is pointing the nobility among his readership along a specifically royalist path:

And so, not onely Brutus, but this man and worthy prince, to whom wee may also adde king David that counterfeited the madde man among the petie kings of Palestina to preserve his life from the subtill practises of those kings. I shew this example unto such, as beeing offended with any great personage, have not sufficient meanes to prevaile in their intents, or revenge the injurie by them received. But when I speake of revenging any injury received upon a great personage or superior, it must be understood by such an one as is not our soveraigne, againste whome wee maie by no means resiste, nor once practise anie treason nor conspiracie against his life: and hee that will followe this course must speake and do all things whatsoever that are pleasing and acceptable to him who hee meaneth to deceive, practise his actions, and esteeme him above all men, clean contrarye to his owne intent and meaning (p. 90)

Neither Saxo's nor Belleforest's Amleth can be accused of delaying retribution - they both merely exercise cunning and prudence. But by constant emphasis Belleforest turns these qualities in his hero into the major theme of his narrative. When he despatches Fengon he is allowed to speak his own commendation:

A man (to say the trueth) hardie, couragious, and worthy of eternall comendation, who arming himself with a crafty, dissembling, and strange shew of beeing distract out of his wits, under that pretence deceived the wise, pollitike, and craftie, thereby not onely preserving his life from the treasons and wicked practises of the tyrant, but (which is more) by an new and unexpected kinde of punishment, revenged his fathers death many yeeres after the act committed: in such sort that directing his courses with such prudence, and effecting his purposes with so great boldnes and constancie, he left a judgement to be decyded among men of wisdom, which was more commendable in him, his constancy or magnanimitie, or his wisdom in ordring his affaires, according to the premeditable determination he had conceived. (p. 110)

2.1. MACBETH

Although the first comprehensive Scottish chronicles⁶ - those of John of Fordun and Andrew of Wynton - were both written around the end of the fourteenth century they differ very considerably, and not least in the versions they give of the story of Macbeth. Like Saxo Grammaticus, Andrew of Wynton does not shrink from the supernatural and, indeed, strong resemblances between some of the events he records with those to be found in the Historiae Danicae make it likely that the long-standing Scandinavian presence in Scotland led to an interpenetration of myths and folk-tales between the two societies.

In Wynton's chronicle Macbeth is the son of King Duncan's sister, fathered by a satanic being who promises that the child's life will never be taken by any man born of a woman. In his youth, while dwelling in the house of the king, Macbeth dreams a vision of the three weird sisters, who greet him in sequence as thane of Crwmbathy, thane of Mwrray, and as King. The idea of making a bid for his uncle's crown is engendered when he is granted the two thanedoms soon afterwards. As in the story of Amleth, there is an element of incest in this version, since Macbeth not only murders his uncle but marries his wife. Malcolm, like several of the avenging sons in the Historiae Danicae, has a distinctly unpromising

background: Wynton makes much of his bastardy (going into considerable detail over Duncan's liaison with a miller's daughter) but, when urged by Macduff to oppose Macbeth, his legitimate half-brothers prove cowardly and it is left to Malcolm to take up the responsibility.

In comparison, Fordun's chronicle is remarkable for the care he takes over both the elimination of supernatural causes from his narrative and the provision of plausible motivations and explanations for events. In this version Malcolm is Duncan's legitimate son, and Macbeth is no relation: he belongs instead to a family that has long harboured grudges against Duncan's family - and have been responsible for the murders of his grandfather and great-grandfather before him. Fordun deals briefly and prosaically with the assassination of Duncan, reserving most of his attention for Malcolm's three tests of Macduff's honesty (they are the subject of the six opening chapters of Book V).

Later histories of Scotland that have a more direct bearing on Shakespeare's play are discussed in the sections below.

2.2. HOLINSHED'S CHRONICLE AND HECTOR BOECE'S SCOTORUM HISTORIAE

It has long been accepted that Shakespeare's main source for Macbeth was the 'Historie of Scotland' that forms part of Raphael Holinshed's Chronicle, a work that was first published in 1577 (a year after the fifth volume of Belleforest's Histoires Tragiques) and reissued in a revised posthumous edition ten years later. From the evidence of other plays it is generally agreed that Shakespeare was most likely to have used the second edition.⁷ But in order to understand what is presented to the reader in Holinshed's 'Historie of Scotland' it is important to recognise that the work is not at all, as it at first seems to be, an impartial and carefully-checked chronicle of a neighbouring country written by an English historian comparatively late in the sixteenth century. Rather, it should be seen as essentially the embodiment of the historical and political outlook of a Scottish academic writing much earlier in the century.

By placing the name of Hector Boece at the top of his list of the authorities that were consulted Holinshed, perhaps, intended to acknowledge a paramount indebtedness to his Scotorum Historiae, which was published in 1526 and translated from Latin into Scots by John Bellenden in 1531. William Harrison, who contributed the 'Description of Scotland' that prefaces Holinshed's history admits frankly that his work renders the Scots version of this

work into English and, until Boece's narrative comes to an end (well beyond the period relevant to Macbeth, with the assassination of Scotland's James I), much the same can be said of the 'Historie of Scotland' itself. All of Holinshed's narrative detail is present in Bellenden's translation of Boece - and it is expressed in very similar language⁶ - with very rare qualifications on the strength of other authorities (usually Geoffrey of Monmouth or John Major, author of the Historia Majoris Britanniae et Scotiae, 1521). Indeed, Holinshed chooses to maintain Boece's narrative even when his own knowledge of English history alerts him to an error:

Thus farre out of Hector Boetius we have shewed of Suenos dooing in England, the which although it agree not in all points with our English histories, yet sith the historie of Scotland in this place seemeth partlie to hang thereon, we have thought good to set it downe as we find it in the same Boetius: but advertising the reader withall, that if our histories be true this which followeth touching Suenos invading of Scotland, chanced before that Etheldred, whome the Scotish writers name Eldred, was driven to flee into Normandie. (Holinshed, vol. V, pp 256 - 257)⁹

In my discussion of the narrative shared by these texts I will generally make reference to Boece (in Bellenden's translation) - doing so will make it much easier to be clear about the relationship to the complete history of the sequences that interested Shakespeare. One reason for doing so is that by suppressing Boece's division of his work into seventeen books Holinshed inadvertently blurs important features of the text. But our understanding can also benefit from the close scrutiny to which Boece's narrative has long been subjected.

After the systematic discounting of its credentials by Thomas Innes in the eighteenth century¹⁰ there has been broad agreement that Boece's history is largely a fabrication - shaped, perhaps, towards the purposes of supplying Scotland with a history old enough to match those of other nations, and its nobility with an ancient warrant for action against the king; but certainly also having the aim, acknowledged in the prefaces to the Latin text, of drawing exemplary lessons on the consequences of the behaviour of kings.¹¹ The last-mentioned of these ulterior motives dominates the presentation in the two books that contain the material that Shakespeare utilised. Thus, Kenneth III, unambiguously a good and effective ruler in both the Fordun and Wynton chronicles, now develops a secret crime - the murder of the rightful heir in order to ensure his own son's succession - to haunt him with the guilt¹² that Shakespeare transferred to Macbeth; and Kenneth's father (the King Duffus whose murder by his host Shakespeare incorporated into the play) virtually brings about his own downfall by his lax dealing with his nobles.

Boece appears to have felt the need for firmness in a king very strongly. Cullen, who succeeds Duffus, is shown to have the same failing - along with other vices - and at the start of Book XII, when the history traces a new family relationship for Duncan and Macbeth, the point is made that something mid-way between the mildness of

the one and the cruelty of the other would be ideal in a ruler:

On hir [Beatrice, the elder daughter of Malcolm III], wes gotten Duncane, quhilk succedit immediatlle efter him to the croun. The secound dauchter, namit Doada, wes gevin in mariage to Sinel, Thane of Glammis; on quhome wes gottin ane feirs and vailyeant man, namit Makbeth, richt ganand to have governit ony realme, wer nocht his strenth wes gevin ovir mekil to cruelte. Thocht Duncane and Makbeth wer sister sonnys, thay wer far different fra othir in maneris. For Duncane wes sa mercifull, that he apperit nocht abill to punis the vices of his pepill: be contrar, Makbeth wes gevin als mekill to cruelte as Duncane wes gevin to piete. And thairfore the peple desirit thair meneris to have bene temporat with otheris.

Duncane, in the beginning of his empire, governit the realme in gud peace and justice; for it wes governit be the same counsalouris that governit it during his faderis time. Thus levit the commonis mony yeris but ony injure or oppression of gret men. Yit the feble mind of Duncane, quhen it wes patent to the pepil, wes not only cause of gret seditionis amang the noblis, bot occasion to Danis to attempt new weris aganis the Scottis. (Boece, vol. II pp 252 - 253)

As Innes pointed out, Boece employs many 'fables' from Livy, and to the instances he cites¹³ we may reasonably add - for both the close relationship between Duncan and Makbeth and for the character of Makbeth's wife - the story of the Tullia sisters and the brothers of opposite character that they married.¹⁴

In terms of the concerns of this thesis the comparatively early date (that is, before 1526) of the composition of Boece's Macbeth narrative is of particular importance. Colin Kidd notes with some justice in his recent study of Scottish historiography that

Boece had a limited conception of what a 'humanist' history meant. Unlike the critical humanism of Polydore Vergil's history of England, Boece's was compatible with the retention of legends. Boece considered his role as a humanist was to dress the national mythology in Sunday-best Latin and, by couching it in the *speculum principis* genre, to give it an elevated ethical and political dimension.¹⁵

but Polydore Vergil's Anglica Historia was only published in 1534 and neither the methods nor the vocabulary of explanation employed in that watershed contribution to British historiography can be anticipated in a work that pre-dates it. By the very 'retention of legends' that Kidd notes - as well as his organisation of the individual books, the narrative details he incorporates, and his predominating sense that Scottish history displays a steady decay from its original hardy values - Boece demonstrates the uncritical absorption of the substance of classic histories (Livy in particular) that Myron Gilmore¹⁶ suggests distinguishes the concept of history of the earlier humanists from those who, after Machiavelli, sought to derive theoretical principles from the study of the past.

The 'Occasion' topos in its various formulations was described at some length in previous chapters of this thesis, as an intrinsic part of this newer historiography. As I noted then (p.22 - 23), its earliest introduction into English discourse as a topos with strong moral or political implications can be traced to Hall's Chronicle (1548) and the influence of Polydore Vergil. Use of the words 'occasion' and 'opportunity'

occurs commonly in the Scots translation of Boece's narrative, but never for the purpose of indicating a moment in history when a participant's choice had far-reaching effects on the future, or to carry the implications of the moral and political lessons that were set out in Blundeville's treatise.¹⁷ One cannot, of course, advance any etymological reason for Holinshed not being able to employ the later usage in his translation - and it is certainly much in evidence in other parts of his Chronicle. Yet, because he adheres so closely to the Scots version of Boece, this topos hardly intrudes¹⁸ into the 'Historie of Scotland'; and in his description of the assassination of Duncane he can be seen avoiding the word 'opportunity' when it is used in its more traditional sense in his model (the passage happens to be one of Holinshed's loosest renditions of Boece):

Attour, his wife, impacient of lang tary, as all wemen ar, specially quhare thay ar desirus of ony purpos, gaif him gret artatioun to persew the thrid weird, that scho might be ane quene: calland him, oft timis, febil cowart, and nocht desirus of honouris; sen he durst nocht assailye the thing with manheid and curage, quhilk is offerit to him be benivolence of fortoun; howbeit sindry otheris hes assailyeit sic thingis afore, with maist terribil jeoparddis, quhen thay had not sic sickernes to succeid in the end of thair laubouris as he had.

Makbeth, be persuasion of his wife, gaderit his freindis to ane counsall at Innernes, quhare King Duncane happinnit to be for the time. And becaus he fand sufficient opportunitie, be support of Banquho and otheris his freindis, he slew King Duncane, the vii yeir of his regne.

(Boece, vol. II, p.260)

The words of the three weird sisters also (of whom before ye have heard) greatlie encouraged him hereunto, but speciallie his wife lay sore upon him to attempt the thing, as she that was verie ambitious, burning in unquenchable desire to beare the name of a queene. At length therefore, communicating his purposed intent with his trustie friends, amongst whome Banquo was the chiefest, upon confidence of their promised aid, he slew the king at Enverns, or (as some say) at Botgosuane, in the sixt yeare of his reigne.

(Holinshed, vol. V, p. 269)

2.3. BUCHANAN'S RERUM SCOTICARUM HISTORIA

The close dependence of Holinshed's 'Historie of Scotland' on Boece is true of both editions, but there is one important difference in the second edition that should be mentioned. Beginning with the reign of Alexander III - well after the period relevant to Macbeth - Francis Thynne, who appears to have been delegated the task of revising Holinshed's Scottish section, makes frequent and sometimes lengthy incorporations (acknowledged in the margins) from the Rerum Scoticarum historia (1582)¹⁹ by George Buchanan, the tutor of James VI. Buchanan's Historia is thought by Bullough to be a 'probable source' for Macbeth; I will want to suggest that it is much more than that.

In his dedicatory preface to the Historia Buchanan expresses regret that age and ill-health have made it impossible for him to continue his former duties as tutor to the king, and offers the work as a substitute for his personal service. But he played too complex a role in

Scottish affairs and was too highly thought of across Europe both for his support of Calvinism and as a humanist scholar for this benign gloss to be taken at face value, and it is much more appropriate to see the Historia as part of his efforts - together with the Detection (1571) and the De iure regni apud Scotos (1579) - to secure his own political and religious agenda. The young king, at any rate, does not appear to have been much beguiled by the dedication: we learn from I. D. McFarlane's comprehensive study of Buchanan's life and work that by 1585 an Act of Parliament required existing copies of both the Historia and the De iure (1579) to be censored. Publication of both works was ceased in Scotland, but they continued to be printed abroad (an edition of 1583 is thought to have originated in London).²⁰

The international (and, especially, the French) dimension to Buchanan's readership was of considerable importance. In turn, each of the three works mentioned above supplies mutually-confirming moral, constitutional and historical particularities relating to Scotland to support the arguments of Calvinists everywhere - providing circumstantial and theoretical justification, for instance, for the execution of tyrants and for a democratic conception of sovereignty. Buchanan left France for the last time just before the first outbreak of the religious wars, but his intellectual connections with that country were particularly strong²¹: it is no coincidence that the

Detection, where he sets out a damning but factually suspect indictment of Mary Stuart, was available for reissue in the Huguenot centre of La Rochelle in the tense months that preceded the Massacre of St Bartholomew; and it is clear from the earlier parts of the De iure (which draws on the general history of Scotland as well as the specific case of Queen Mary to advance its constitutional arguments) that it was partly aimed at French attacks against the Detection.

Although Buchanan would seem to have had good reason to doubt the validity of Boece's narrative he certainly relied on it heavily since, as McFarlane observes, it 'served him not only in offering apparent historical support for certain political theses, but in advancing a political programme that was not all that different from his own'.²² However, the manner in which he utilises this narrative differs very much from Holinshed's and is attuned to the developments in historiography that were already taking place during his sojourns in Italy and France in the middle of the century. Unlike Boece, Buchanan isn't content to present his readers with a plain narrative (however shaped it may be). Instead, the study of historical events is directed towards the eliciting of the principles of natural law and government upon which the state depends for its stability - with the Historia and the De iure regnis functioning in tandem, each reinforcing the implications of the other.

Unfortunately, Buchanan appears to have been so utterly determined to uphold the cause of the Calvinist state that he was not above tailoring his material into conformity. It is not accidental that the principles that appeared to emerge from history - that sovereignty was vested in the people of Scotland, and embodied in an elected monarch who was chosen and counselled by the nobility; that the rule of children or women was contrary to natural law; that circumstances justified tyrannicide - condemned the reign of Mary Stuart and favoured a monarchy that was held in check by righteous counsellors. And, while the full extent to which Buchanan intervened in political affairs to engineer the downfall of the Queen cannot now be known, it is clear that much of the Historia is controlled by an unrelenting opposition to all that his former royal patron appeared to him to stand for, so that when his narrative eventually deals with her reign the ground-rules have long been established. For instance, his description of the proclamation of the marriage of Mary and Darnley (here named as 'Henry Stuart'), which took place without the counsel of her nobles, gains its effect from the many preceding examples of kings who suffered ill consequences from ignoring the will of the nobility, and of honourable opposition to the reign of tyrants:

On the 29th of July [1565], Henry Stuart, married Mary Stuart, which being announced to the public, was received by the multitude, with loud shouts of God save our sovereigns, king Henry, and queen Mary, and the day after, they were proclaimed in Edinburgh as king and queen. This proceeding greatly offended, not only the nobility, but likewise also the common

people, and some indignantly pronounced it a precedent of the worst description. Of what use is it, asked they, to assemble the estates for creating a king, if their advice be never asked, or their authority required? If an herald can answer the purpose of a meeting, and a proclamation be as effectual, as an act of parliament. In fact, such an assembly would not now be called for deliberation, but to try how far the Scots could endure tyranny.

(Book XXVII, ch. XLIV: vol. II, p.471)

The period of Scottish history relevant to Macbeth is crucial to Buchanan's exposition, and is dominated by the reign of Kenneth III. While he adheres closely to Boece's tale - of the otherwise excellent king who murders his nephew in order to ensure his own son's succession - in the style of mid-sixteenth century historiography that was described at some length earlier in this thesis,²³ he turns the incident into a focal point of history:

Had Kenneth continued in this course of life in which he had begun, he would justly have been esteemed among the best of princes, for he had so fulfilled the duties both of war and peace, that he had procured for himself the highest praise, for fortitude, constancy, and equity. But he stained the excellence of his former life by a most atrocious deed, which appeared the more infamous, being so incredible, and so little expected from one of his disposition, who had hitherto so severely punished any remarkable delinquency.

(Book VI, ch. XXXVI: vol. I, p. 306)

Resemblances between this passage, with its emphasis on Kenneth's squandered reputation, and the extract from Blundeville's Treatise quoted in the first chapter (pp. 25 - 26) are, perhaps, more than coincidental: McFarlane is able to place Buchanan during 1564 in the company of 'Jacopo Aconcio', none other (despite the variation in

spelling) than the very Giacomo Concio whose observations on the subject of historiography (entered in the Calendar of State Papers for August of the same year) were re-worked by Blundeville.²⁴

But for Buchanan the chief interest is in the political and constitutional repercussions of Kenneth's deed. By forcing a change in the rules of succession past his nobles, he is seen to have created the circumstances that permitted the many political crises that were to ensue later. After Kenneth's death a strong argument against direct lineal succession - repeated at other strategic points in the Historia²⁵ - is allotted to Constantine (who, as the son of the previous king, would have been a legitimate aspirant to the throne before the change):

For what could be more foolish than to withdraw that, which above everything else was the most important, from the decision and the suffrages of the wise, and commit it to the will of fortune; and to bind themselves to obey a child, forced upon them by the accident of birth, who might himself be ruled by any silly woman, while they drove, in the meantime, from the helm, men who were pre-eminent in virtue. What if the children of the king should labour under any disorder of body or mind, which would render them unfit for reigning? What if boys had governed in those times when we struggled so often with the Romans, the Britons, the Picts, the English, and the Danes, not for dominion, but for existence?

(Book VI. ch. XLII: vol. I, pp. 3211 - 312)

The argument is brought to a conclusion by evoking the sort of use of the Occasion (or Opportunity) topos that was noted earlier as being absent from the Boece narrative:

Wherefore, now, the tyrant being removed, let us resolutely recover that liberty of which we have been deprived by him, and abrogate that law, procured by violence, and accepted by fear, if it can be called a law, and not a shackling of the public liberty, and return, while we can, to our ancient institutions, which at first raised this kingdom almost from nothing, and advanced it from small beginnings, to such a magnitude, that it yields to none of its neighbours; yea, has so often, from the lowest extremity, exalted it to the highest pitch of glory. But if we do not embrace the present opportunity while it offers itself, when it has eluded our grasp, hereafter we may seek it in vain.

(Book VI. ch. XLII: vol. I, p. 312)

The murder of King Duncan, the tyrannical reign of Macbeth and his deposition by Malcolm are the subject of Book VII of the Historia. Buchanan begins this Book with an over-view of the ensuing events (reproduced as an appendix to this chapter), tracing responsibility for them to the actions of Kenneth III and his son Malcolm, that is remarkably consonant with Shakespeare's play. His reference to 'the plots of their relations against the reigning kings' and

the dark suspicions of the reigning kings against their relations, both of whom nature and law ought to have rendered most dear to each other

anticipates Macbeth's

He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed

(I.v.12 - 14)

but, more significantly, it is part of a wider pattern that Buchanan draws of individual ambition opposing

nature in a hopeless bid for eternal benefit. Lines 39 - 54 of the extract are a virtual paraphrase of the views that his acquaintance Concio expressed on the ill-considered seizing of Occasion,²⁶ here formulated in a manner that supports Buchanan's line of reason in the De iure. But - in contrast to the parallel narrative given by Boece and Holinshed - they also evoke the sense of tragic futility that is communicated in Shakespeare's play.

3.1. MACBETH AND HAMLET

There are many similarities between the Macbeth and Hamlet stories. As I have pointed out earlier, they are particularly close in the respective versions given by Saxo Grammaticus and Andrew of Wynton - both could be summarised adequately along these lines: a legitimate ruler is assassinated by a close kinsman, who usurps his position and takes his wife as his own consort; in time, and after a series of tricks, his distinctly unpromising son returns from exile (in England in both cases) to avenge his death and inherit the kingdom.

The resemblance continues in the versions offered in the second half of the sixteenth century by Belleforest and

Buchanan but, because of the interpretations that these authors impose upon the events they describe the narratives are tilted out of their previously near-perfect alignment. Belleforest's Amleth narrative is presented as the story of a brave prince who restores just rule by plotting for and seizing opportunity. In presenting the Macbeth episode as a consequence of Kenneth's actions, on the other hand, Buchanan deploys a related but contrasting lesson of history: that the endeavour of a tyrant to dominate the future by a criminal act will inevitably be frustrated.

Before turning to the question of how Shakespeare manipulated his sources it is worth pointing out that in their versions of the Hamlet and Macbeth stories Belleforest and Buchanan come very near to contradicting the positions they actually held. Belleforest, who staunchly upheld the principle of an absolutist monarchy, seems to be providing a blueprint for Machiavellian regicide through his ruthless prince. Buchanan, on the other hand, systematically undermined the same principle over many years, but nevertheless gives the impression of upholding it when he shows God's judgement to fall on the tyrants in this particular sequence of history.²⁷ In the case of Hamlet this ambiguity necessitated some radical departures from the source: but in relation to the composition of Macbeth it allowed Shakespeare to impose a pattern strongly influenced by Buchanan upon the narrative he found in Holinshed's Chronicle.

3.3. MACBETH

In The Rape of Lucrece, more than a decade before he wrote Macbeth, Shakespeare had set out a sequence of historical events as the consequences of one opportunity for an act of evil that was seized upon, and in the course of doing so had dwelt at length on Opportunity itself (which, it will be remembered, was interchangeably known by the Latin name *Occasio*; and as an explanatory topos - more accurately, a nexus of explanatory topoi - encompassed some of the attributes of Time and Fortune). But it is only in Macbeth that he again resorted concertedly to the ruthless *Occasio Arrepta* configuration of the topos (inextricably associated, by the late sixteenth-century, with the name of Machiavelli), to give defining qualities to the central actions of the play.

When the audience first hears of Macbeth it is in relation to an equivocal Fortune. In the sergeant's report Fortune at first smiles on rebellious Macdonwald's enterprise - but her favours prove typically fleeting, and he is defeated. At this point Macbeth is presented as opposing the forces of chance with heroic virtue:

Disdaining Fortune, with his brandished steel
Which smok'd with bloody execution,

Like valour's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave.

(I.ii.16 - 20)

And when, in the next scene, Macbeth is himself first tempted with the prospect of greatness, he can recognise (lines 130 - 131) the equivocation in the temptation: 'This supernatural soliciting/ Cannot be ill, cannot be good.' His two asides at this point ('If chance will have me king, why chance may crown me/ Without my stir.' and 'Come what come may/ Time and the hour run through the roughest day.' - lines 144 - 145; 147 - 148) are the sentiments of one who resists opportunity, knowing very well that to attempt to seize it is to oppose oneself to the inexorable flux of chance and time - in Buchanan's words, 'to strive against the nature of things'.

Almost immediately, Macbeth's resistance to temptation falls away. But his tragedy enthralls us because Shakespeare delays the moment when he loses his sight of this understanding - or, rather, discards it - until very late in the play, when the futility of his actions is already becoming apparent to the audience. This happens soon after the last of the apparitions conjured up by the Weird Sisters has shown that it is upon Banquo's line that enduring sovereignty will devolve, when he learns of Macduff's escape to England. Macbeth now embraces the Machiavellian formulation of the Occasion topos without misgivings, persuading himself that scruples rather than the inherent wrongness of the actions have hindered him:

Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits
 Thy flighty purpose never is o'ertook
 Unless the deed go with it. From this moment,
 The very firstlings of my heart shall be
 The firstlings of my hand.

(IV.i.144 - 148)

Until this point his persona has been imbued with a strange duality, so that we are kept aware of the terrifying implications of Macbeth's descent into evil largely through the outpourings of his own conscience. Now he joins the ranks of the run-of-the-mill tyrants described by Buchanan (who 'endeavoured to preserve the illustrious names of their families, of whom not a vestige now remains on the face of the whole world, which they had conquered') and for the brief remainder of the play comes to share their blind pursuit of personal ambition, only to arrive at a tragic understanding of the futility of his efforts:

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
 To the last syllable of recorded time;
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
 Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
 And then is heard no more: It is a tale
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
 Signifying nothing.

(V.v.19 - 28)

The objections Macbeth raises to his own deeds in the preceding sequence strongly resonate with Buchanan's overview of Kenneth's actions and their aftermath - for example, in the first part of his 'If it were done, when 'tis done' soliloquy (I.vii.1-12), but more generally in

his constant evocation of Nature as the creative force that he is violating. Nevertheless, it is important to keep the degree of dependence within proportion. Shakespeare had already drawn the antithetical connection between the processes of Nature and an act of personal will in The Rape of Lucrece, and had also raised it in the specific context of Love in Venus and Adonis. By evoking the laws of Nature in support of what is essentially a constitutional argument Buchanan certainly did not introduce a novel element into Shakespeare's understanding: rather, he provided an interpretation that was more compatible with the dramatist's sensibilities than the more superficial rendition of events in the Holinshed version.

3.2. HAMLET

Any attempt to trace the relationship between Hamlet and its sources is complicated by the fact that one of them has been irretrievably lost. All that can be said with certainty of the earlier Hamlet play is that it was performed between 1589 and 1596, that it had a ghost whose cry of 'Hamlet, revenge' had become quite famous, that it featured 'handfuls of tragical speeches' in the style of Seneca, and that it was very probably the work of Thomas Kyd, the author of The Spanish Tragedy.²⁸ We can, however, safely presume that it was based on

Belleforest's narrative even if we cannot state this as a categorical fact. My comments here will be limited to the relationship between Belleforest's version and Shakespeare's, but it is worth saying in passing that although the author of the ur-Hamlet clearly must have introduced some details of his own, he would have found that the hero of the previous versions - who embraces the exercise of retribution with such elan - was highly suited to the vogue for revenge plays in which his work participated.

In Shakespeare's version, however, the quality of the hero that had previously been most striking - the cunning foresight with which he prepares for vengeance upon his foes - has been removed completely. Instead, Hamlet's very lack of the quality that Belleforest thought so worthy of praise becomes a prominent feature of the play, and the manipulation of occasion remains essentially the technique of the villain:

Laertes: I'll touch my point
with this contagion, that if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King: Let's further think of this,
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape. If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'Twere better not essay'd. Therefore this project
Should have a back or second that might hold
If this did blast in proof.

(IV.vii.145 - 153)

By transferring the play's events out of the pagan ethos that Belleforest had stressed, and into an explicitly Christian milieu, Shakespeare surrounds his hero with

issues that reduce him, for much of the action, to a passive victim of events who lacks even the solution that Lucrece was able to find: he may not take his own life because it is against Christian doctrine (I.ii.131 - 132); he may not assassinate Claudius because the Ghost that prompts him to do so may be the agent of the Devil (II.ii.594 - 595); and even when he does stage-manage matters to make certain of Claudius' guilt he still may not kill him because 'a is a-praying' and the deed could ensure his salvation (III.iii.73 - 78). Nevertheless, the 'Occasion' topos (most frequently spoken of within the play in terms of Fortune) has a great deal of relevance to what goes on in the play, with three of Hamlet's soliloquies projecting his dilemma through its terms.²⁹

In the first of these (II.ii. 544 - 601: 'O what a rogue and peasant slave am I') he is prompted by the First Player's ready show of emotion to rant against his own passivity:

Yet I,
 A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak
 Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
 And can say nothing - no, not for a king,
 Upon whose property and most dear life
 A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
 (II.ii.561 - 566)

In the second (III.i.56 - 88: 'To be or not to be') he embarks upon a philosophic discourse on active and contemplative values (adapted from Belleforest's introductory remarks on the impulse that has driven men to strive for political power). Hamlet's conclusion

abjures the active life, but he has at least discarded thoughts of a self-inflicted death, and sees the option as lying between accepting Fortune's slings and arrows or putting one's life at hazard by opposing them:

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

(III.i.83 - 88)

However, he eventually resolves upon determined action when he chances upon the evidence of Fortinbras' exaggerated response to provocation:

What is a man
 If his chief good and market of his time
 Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.
 Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,
 Looking before and after, gave us not
 That capability and godlike reason
 To fust in us unus'd. ...

Witness this army of such mass and charge,
 Led by a delicate and tender prince,
 Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd
 Makes mouths at the invisible event,
 Exposing what is mortal and unsure
 To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
 Even for an eggshell. ...

O, from this time forth
 My thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth.
 (IV.iv.32 - 39; 47 - 53; 65 - 66)

In all of Hamlet's meditations, however, the prospect that he will assume the Machiavellian cunning of his previous incarnation is never raised. His first inclination was to promise abrupt retribution -

Hamlet: Haste me to know't, that I with wings as swift

As meditation or the thoughts of love
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost: I find thee apt.
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf
Wouldst thou not stir in this.
(I.v.29 - 34)

- and in the various soliloquies mentioned above it is the older concept of heroic virtue overcoming Fortuna (or seizing the moment of opportunity) rather than the Florentine revision of skill manipulating her (or creating the opportunity) that is implied.

In fact, the plot is contrived in such a way that it never becomes necessary for Hamlet to commit a premeditated act. The manner in which he contrives the deaths of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is retained from Belleforest, but Shakespeare gives the report of the episode a different emphasis: it was performed, as Hamlet says,

Rashly -
And prais'd be rashness for it: let us know
Our indiscretion sometime serves us well
When our deep plots do pall; and that should learn us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will -
(V.ii.6 - 11)

When he eventually does kill Claudius he does so swiftly and without contemplation, turning the instruments that have been contrived for his own death upon the perpetrator:

Laertes: Hamlet, thou art slain
No medicine in the world can do thee good;
In thee there is not half an hour's life.
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and evenom'd. The foul practice

Hath turn'd itself on me. Lo, here I lie,
 Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd.
 I can no more. The King - the King's to blame.

Hamlet: The point envenom'd too! Then, venom, to thy
 work.

[Wounds the King]

All: Treason! treason!

King: O yet defend me, friends. I am but hurt.

Hamlet: Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,
 Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?
 Follow my mother.

Laertes: He is justly serv'd
 It is a poison temper'd by himself.
 (V.ii.319 - 333)

4.1. CONCLUSION: NATURE AND OCCASION IN HAMLET AND MACBETH

Although the source-texts that I have concentrated upon in this chapter have different emphases the particular configuration of the Occasion topos that underlies their narratives is essentially the same. Both Belleforest and Buchanan utilise the Machiavellian discrimination of opportunity that can be manipulated to the historical agent's purpose: Belleforest does so positively, while Buchanan exploits its sinister implications. That Shakespeare should have followed Buchanan and drastically adapted Belleforest is, in itself, simply a practical matter of dramatic construction, and in the foregoing sections I have attempted to present it as such. In doing so, however, I have - unavoidably, I think - skipped over the vast difference between a discursive narration of a

set of events and a dramatic (and poetic) re-enactment of them, however closely it may be related to the narrative. One important qualification to make is that for Belleforest and Buchanan the Occasion topos served as a device of explanation in contexts where explanation itself was their chief purpose - and, quite appropriately, it is deployed in a manner that is very apparent to the reader. For Shakespeare, on the other hand, its presence in the structure and the language of their narratives constituted part of the raw material that was to be re-formed as drama - but it would have been counter-productive for this explanatory device to continue into the plays with the same degree of obviousness. They are, after all, plays and not treatises.

Variations of the Occasion topoi do persist, however, though the language in which they are expressed softens their impact upon us. When Lady Macbeth exclaims 'Nor time, nor place,/ Did then adhere, and yet you would make both' (Macbeth, I.vii.51 - 52) and Claudius suggests that he and Laertes should 'Weigh what convenience both of time and means/ May fit us to our shape' (Hamlet, IV.vii.148 - 149), or when Hamlet (IV.iv.32 - 66) and Macbeth (IV.ii.144 - 149) assert new determination, and Fortinbras makes a gracious acceptance of his sudden elevation to the throne of Denmark (Hamlet, V.ii.394 - 395) they may speak, variously of time, occasion and fortune but their utterances form a common nexus.

That there is a significant internal coherence to the use of these topoi in each play emerges clearly when the projection of Nature in Hamlet and Macbeth is also taken into account. Both plays communicate a strong sense of a relentless process that is untroubled by human endeavours. But the process is characterised very differently in each work. In Hamlet the abiding sense is of death, rot and decay, stated complacently by Claudius

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father,
But you must know your father lost a father,
That father lost, lost his ...

(I.ii.87 - 90)

- but turning more virulent in Hamlet's frequent images of rankness.

Towards the end of the play the sense of Nature as a process of decay becomes the dominant subject for a time, in the graveyard scene (preceding Ophelia's burial), where the skulls that are thrown up give a superfluity of evidence of mortal insignificance:

Hamlet: Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i'th'earth?

Horatio: E'en so.

Hamlet: And smelt so? Pah! [Puts down the skull]

Horatio: E'en so, my lord.

Hamlet: To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why, may not the imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander till 'a find it stopping a bung-hole?

(V.i.191 - 198)

But everything that Hamlet says in this episode implies an acceptance of the process, stated with more reverence in the following scene, when Horatio offers to forestall the impending duel with Laertes:

Not a whit. We defy augury. There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come. The readiness is all. Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows aught, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

(V.ii.215 - 220)

In Macbeth, as was noted earlier, it is Nature's benevolent aspect that predominates - and while there is an element of similarity in the manner in which the two protagonists express their understanding of her inexorability, it is the surface resemblance of polar opposites. Hamlet, whose dilemma was underscored by the negative configuration of the *Occasio Neglecta* topos comes to recognise that human endeavour can be redeemed from Nature's apparently all-consuming process by just actions that comply with her; Macbeth, on the other hand, shifts from much the same understanding at the start of his play into the negative configuration of *Occasio Arrepta* - and comes to learn that to attempt to manipulate Nature's creative purpose ultimately reduces human endeavour to a nullity.³⁰

It has been the implicit presumption in what I have written above that, for Shakespeare and his English

audience in the first years of the seventeenth century, the specific political considerations that prompted Belleforest and Buchanan to impose their interpretative patterns upon the stories of Hamlet and Macbeth would not have had the same immediacy as the patterns themselves. Nevertheless, at the times of the engendering of these two plays (that is, on either side of the accession of James I), closely related issues were pressing urgently upon English society, and it is not far-fetched to see both Hamlet and Macbeth as, in part, embodying responses to these circumstances. Shakespeare's selection from the Hamlet material available to him, and his invention of the role of Fortinbras, gives the events of his play an entirely new direction that would have been particularly apt in the last years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, when the question of her successor was a crucial issue: the end of one legitimate line of rule and the acceptance of the importation of another.

But by June of 1604 it had become necessary for the House of Commons to submit a reminder to King James of the readiness with which they had affirmed his succession. The honeymoon between the king and his subjects, it seems, was being soured by the conflict of his need (stemming from his Scottish experience) to assert the absolutism of his Divine Right with Parliament's concern to protect 'the ancient rights of the subjects of the realm'.³¹ The tone of their memorandum is firm, but also extremely conciliatory. The king is provided with a

crash-course in English government, but also assured that it was not fear of civil discord, or even the justice of his claim to the throne, that had won their acclamation so much as

the great and extraordinary love which wee bear towards your Majesty's most royal and renowned person, and a longing thirst to enjoy the happy fruits of your Majesty's most wise, religious, just, virtuous, and gracious heart; whereof not rumour but your Majesty's own writings had given us a strong and undoubted assurance.

For from hence, dread Sovereign, a general hope was raised in the minds of all your people that under your Majesty's reign religion, peace, justice, and all virtue should renew again and flourish ...³²

Macbeth, I think, gains from being seen in the context of this conciliatory memorandum - asserting both the hallowed nature of the Crown and the devolved rights of the subjects - and it is unlikely to have escaped the attention of King James that the interpretation put upon events by Buchanan, his tutor and intellectual nemesis, had been twisted so far from its ulterior purpose.

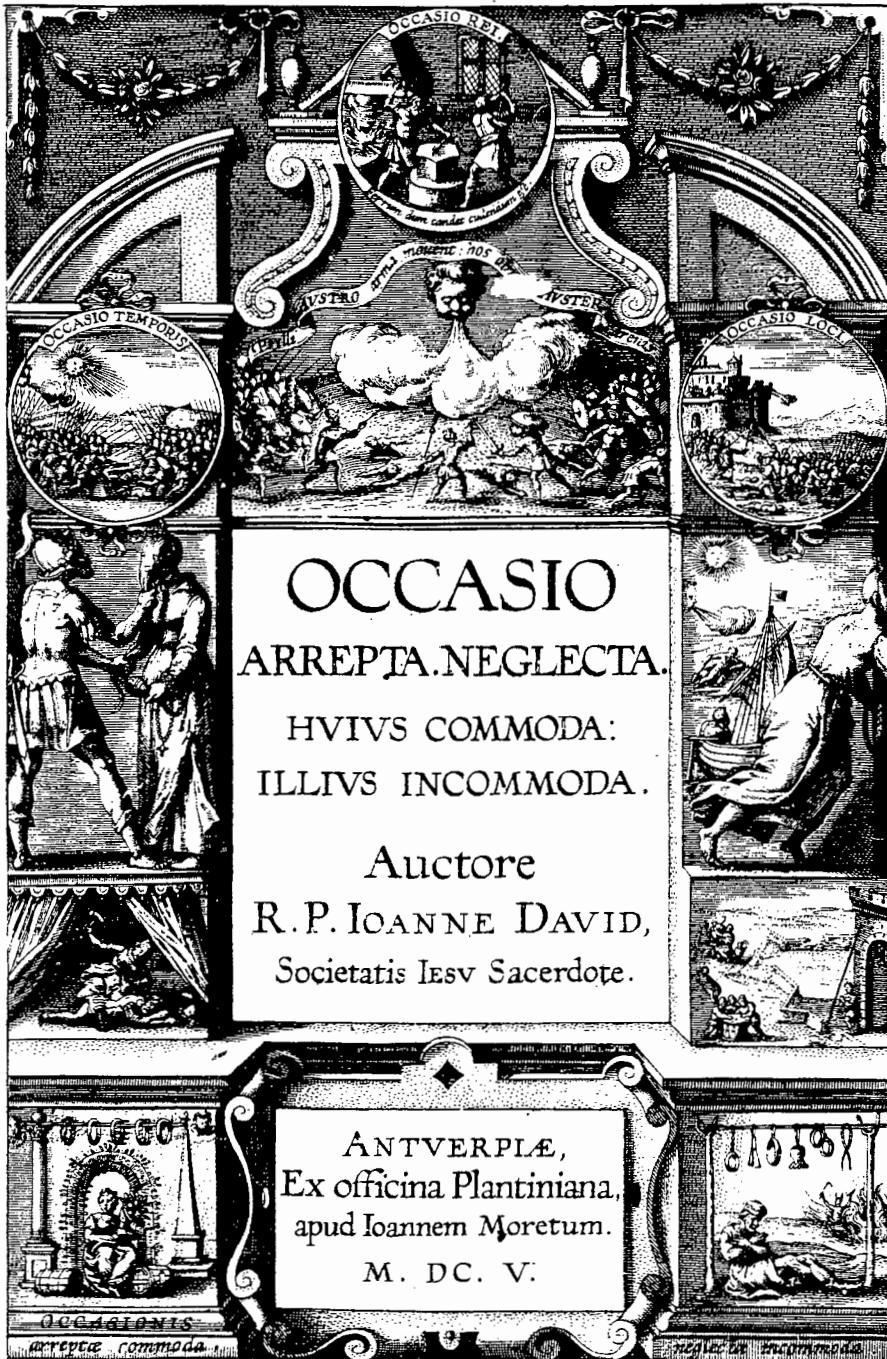
APPENDIX

(From Buchanan's Rerum Scotticarum historia, translated by J. Aikman, Book VII, ch. I: vol I, pp. 324 - 325)

I have shown in the former book, the keen perspicacity with which Kenneth, and his son Malcolm endeavoured to fix the hereditary succession to the throne, with what success will appear in the sequel. This, however, is certain, neither the public benefit promised to the kingdom, nor the hopes of private advantage held out to the king, were ever realised by the new law. The utility which would arise to the public, from establishing the succession, was ostentatiously displayed - it would [10]prevent, it was alleged, seditious murders, and intrigues, among royal relatives, ambition among the nobles, and other mischiefs which usually sprang from these sources. On the contrary, in inquiring into the causes of public misfortune, and comparing ancient and modern times, it appears to me, that all those evils which we wished to avoid by the new law, have not only not been extinguished by the abrogation of the old, but have been increased by the enactment of the new. For, not to mention the plots of their relations against the [20]reigning kings, nor the dark suspicions of the reigning kings against their relations, both of whom nature and law ought to have rendered most dear to each other - all which will appear afterwards in the course of the history - the collected disasters of former ages appear light and tolerable, compared with the calamities

which followed the death of Alexander III. I pass over, also, the fact, that this law weakens authority of public council without which, no legitimate government can exist; that by it we willingly create those evils, which [30]all our legislators particularly deprecate; we constitute those as our kings, over whom other governors must be appointed, and commit the power over the whole people, to such as have no power over themselves; we require those who reluctantly obey excellent and experienced princes, to submit to any shadow of a king, and inflict upon ourselves, those punishments with which God threatens his despisers, that we be subject to children, boys or girls, whom every law of nature and nations declare ought to be in subjection to others. As [40]to the private advantage which the kings seek to derive from this law, by rendering their family and name perpetual, how vain and fallacious such an expectation is, not only ancient example, but even nature itself might teach them, if they would reflect by how many laws and rewards, the Romans endeavoured to preserve the illustrious names of their families, of whom not a vestige now remains on the face of the whole world, which they had conquered. And I think, this happens deservedly to those who strive against the nature of things, and [50]endeavour to give to that which is naturally weak, fluctuating, and obnoxious to every accident, an eternity, which they neither have themselves, nor can expect to have, and endeavour to attain their object by these means, which are evidently most opposed to it. For

what is less likely to be eternal than tyranny? Yet this new law prepares a step to it. But a tyrant is as a mark set up for the universal hatred of mankind, which cannot stand long, and he, when he falls, involves along with him all his family in his ruin. God sometimes to punish [60]this foolish attempt of man gently, and sometimes to expose it to public scorn, as an attempt to rival his prerogative, of which procedure of the divine will, I do not know whether it be possible to produce a stronger, or more pertinent example, than that of which we at present treat. For Malcolm, who laboured so strenuously, that the law enacted by his father, almost by force, for substituting the children of the king in the room of their deceased father, should be confirmed by the suffrage of the people, left no male descendant. He had, [70]however, two daughters, one named Beatrix, whom he gave in marriage to Crinus, a nobleman, thane of the western isles, and chief of the thanes, who was in that age, called the abthane, the other named Doaca, he married to the thane of Angus, whence was born Macbeth, or Macbed, of whom I shall speak afterwards.



OCCASIO
ARREPTA. NEGLECTA.
HUIUS COMMODA:
ILLIUS INCOMMODA.

Auctore
R. P. IOANNE DAVID,
Societatis Iesv Sacerdote.

ANTVERPIÆ,
Ex officina Plantiniana,
apud Ioannem Moretum.
M. DC. V.

NOTES

1. For a summary of recent assessment of Saxo's narrative aims and achievement, see the essay by Hilda Ellis Davidson that accompanies the modern English translation of the first nine books of Saxo's text: Fisher, P. and Ellis Davidson, H., Saxo Grammaticus: The History of the Danes (1979), vol.II, pp. 1 - 16. I have relied on this translation, with comparison against Saxo's complete text in Alfred Holder's edition (Saxo Grammatici Gesta Danorum, Strassburg, 1886).

2. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 90.

3. The tale's full title is as follows: 'Avec Quelle Ruse Amleth, qui depuis fut Roy de Dannemarch, vengea la mort de son pere Horvendille, occis par Fengon son frere, & autre occurence de son histoire.' Quotations from this tale are given in the text of the anonymous 1608 translation as reproduced in Geoffrey Bullough's Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, vol. VII (1973). Page references are to this edition. The text has been compared with the original, but I have not found it necessary to amend the quotations - though, as Harold Jenkins points out in his Arden edition of Hamlet (pp. 89 - 90) there are signs at some points that the translation has been influenced by the play. Other references to the contents of this volume of the Histoires are to the 1576 edition.

4. L'innocence de la tres illustre tres-chaste, et debonnaire princesse, Madame Marie Royne d'Escosse, Paris, 1572. See, especially, sig. aii - ciiii; Vi - Vii^v.

5. See J. W. Allen, Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century, Part III (pp. 271 - 444) and, especially, pp. 320 - 331.

6. John of Fordun's Chronica, ed. W. F. Skene (1871); The Original Chronicle of Andrew Wynton, ed. F. J. Amours (1903 - 1914).

7. See, for example, Bullough, op. cit., p.447 and the entry for Holinshed in A Shakespeare Encyclopaedia, ed. O. J. Campbell (1966), p. 365.

8. It is necessary to observe at this point that the references to the Bellenden translation in Bullough's Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, vol. VII are misleading. The text he uses (ed. R. W. Chambers and C. Bathos, STS, 1938 - 1941) is based on a manuscript that varies to a considerable degree from the printed edition used by Holinshed in both language and detail (in this edition of Boece, for instance, Banquo is not implicated in the murder of Duncan; in the printed text, as in Holinshed, he is). The edition of 1822 (vols. I and II of The Works of John Bellenden, ed. T. Maitland) is

preferable, as accurately reflecting the printed text used by Holinshed, and is the source of my quotations.

9. Quotations from Holinshed's Historie of Scotland are taken from Volume V of Ellis' edition of the Chronicle (1808 - 1809).

10. A Critical Essay on the Ancient Inhabitants of the Northern Parts of Britain, or Scotland (1729).

11. Thomas Innes, op. cit. See also C. Kidd, Subverting Scotland's Past (1993), pp. 101 - 107.

12. (a) Boece:

... for it is gevin be nature to ilk creature, that quhen he is guilty of ony horribill crime, be impulsion of his conscience, to interpret every thing that he seis, to sum terrour of himself. In the samin maner, thocht Kenneth had his realme in gud tranquillite, but ony invasion of ennimes, yit he had gret trubill in his mind. At last, quhen when he was lyand in his bed, he hard ane voce, as apperit be sum vision, sayand to him in this maner: 'O Kenneth, beleif not that the cursit slauchter of Malcolme Duffe is hid to God! O thow unhappy tyrane! quhilk, for desire of the crown, hes slane ane innocent, invading thy nichtbour with treasonabill murdir: quhilk thow wald have punist with maist rigour, gif it had bene done be ony othir person than thyself. And thairfor, thow hes incurrit sic hatrent of God, that baith thow and thy son sal be haistely slane; for now sindry of thy noblis ar conspirit in thy deith, traisting, quhen thow and thy son ar slane, to reiose the crown at thair pleseir.' The king was sa affrayit be this voce, that he past the remanent nicht with gret noy and displeseir. (Bellenden's translation of Boece, ed. T. Maitland, 1822, vol. II, p.226)

(b) Holinshed:

For so commeth it to passe, that such as are pricked in conscience for anie secret offense committed, have ever an unquiet mind. And (as the fame goeth) it chanced that a voice was heard as he was in bed in the night time to take his rest, uttering unto him these or the like woords in effect: 'Think not Kenneth that the wicked slaughter of Malcome Duffe by thee contrived, is kept secret from the knowledge of the eternall God: thou art he that didst conspire the innocents death, enterprising by traitorous meanes to doo that to thy neighbour, which thou wouldest have revenged by cruell punishment in anie of thy subjects, if it had beene offered to thy selfe. It shall therefore come to passe, that both thou thy selfe, and thy issue, through the just revenge of almightie God, shall suffer woorthie punishment, to the infamie of thy house and familie for evermore. For even at this present are there in hand secret practises to dispatch both thee and thy issue out of the waie, that other maie enjoy this kingdome which thou doost indeavour to assure unto thine issue.'

The king with this voice being striken into great dread and terror, passed the night without anie sleepe comming in his eies. (Vol. v, p. 247)

13. As one of his proofs against Boece's veracity Innes asserts that his work is stuffed with fables copied

from the Roman and other histories; such as the Scottish women married to the Picts interceding between their husbands and parents, like the Sabine in Titus Livius; King Mainus like Numa establishing the sacred rites; the tables of laws made by Fergus I, Dornadilla, and others; and all politick deliberations and fine harangues he puts in his Scottish grandees mouths, from the same Titus Livius and others. (op. cit., p. 250)

14. Livy, Book I, chapters XLVI - XLVII.

15. C. Kidd, Subverting Scotland's Past, 1993, p. 18.

16. M. P. Gilmore, 'The Renaissance Conception of the Lessons of History', Facets of the Renaissance, ed. W. H. Werkmeister and T. E. Strevey (1959).

17. The passage quoted above (p. 201), contrasting Duncane and Makbeth, provides an example.

18. The two instances I have been able to find (p. 297 and p. 329) occur outside the sections relevant to Macbeth.

19. I will subsequently refer to this work as the Historia. Quotations are taken from the translation by J. Aikman (1827).

20. I. D. McFarlane, Buchanan (1981), pp. 436 - 437.

21. See McFarlane, *op. cit.*, and Buchanan's own record of his life, prefaced to Aiken's edition of the Historia.

22. McFarlane (*op. cit.*, pp. 419 - 420) suggests that the first three books of the Historia are an attempt by Buchanan to paper over the criticisms of Boece's veracity by Humphrey Lluyd (published in 1573).

23. See, especially, chapter 1, pp. 22ff.

24. McFarlane, *op. cit.*, p. 228. See also note 19 to Chapter One, and Hugh G. Dick's introduction to his

edition of Blundeville's Treatise in The Huntington Library Quarterly, No. 2 (1940), pp. 151.- 152. For an edition of Concio's treatise, 'Delle osservazioni et avvertimenti che haver si debbono nel legger le historie' see Andrea Galante, 'Il Saggio di Jacopo Acconcio', Pro Cultura, fasc. VI, 1911, pp. 1 - 13.

25. Towards the conclusion of the Historia, when dealing explicitly with events relating to Mary Stuart (vol. II, pp. 601 - 611) and at the start of Book VI (vol. I, pp. 324 - 325). The latter passage, which begins his narrative of the events in Shakespeare's play, is discussed later in this chapter.

26. See Concio, op. cit., pp. 10 - 11 and Blundeville's English version (Blundeville, op. cit., pp. 168 - 169, part of which I have quoted in chapter 1 on pages 25 - 26.

27. These contradictions, of course, are more apparent than real: for Buchanan, but not for Belleforest, a hereditary monarch could also be construed a tyrant.

28. See Harold Jenkins' introduction to his Arden edition of Hamlet, pp. 83 - 84.

29. Cf. R. M. Frye, The Renaissance Hamlet (1984), pp. 111 - 131. Though independent of it, my reading of Hamlet has much in common with that offered by F. Kiefer in

Fortune and Elizabethan Tragedy (1983), pp. 252 - 262, but diverges significantly in distinguishing a range of Occasion topoi.

30. The paragraphs that follow benefit from a reading of David Norbrook's article on 'Macbeth and the Politics of Historiography' in Politics of Discourse, ed. K. Sharpe and S. N. Zwicker (1987), pp. 78 - 116.

31. 'To the King's most excellent Majesty: From the House of Commons assembled in Parliament', dated 20 June, 1604. (Quoted from J. R. Tanner, Constitutional Documents of the Reign of James I (1961), p. 220.

32. Ibid.



CONCLUSION

In 'Shakespeare and the Exorcists' Stephen Greenblatt distinguishes his analysis of the relationship between Harsnett's A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures (1603) and King Lear from earlier approaches to the study of sources as follows:

[Shakespeare's] borrowings have been carefully catalogued, but the question of their significance has not only been unanswered but unasked. Until recently, the prevailing model for the study of literary sources, a model in effect parcelled out between the old historicism and the new criticism, blocked such a question. As a free-standing, self-sufficient, disinterested art-work produced by a solitary genius, King Lear has only an accidental relationship to its sources: they provide a glimpse of the 'raw material' that the artist fashioned. In so far as this 'material' is taken seriously at all, it is as part of the work's 'historical background,' a phrase that reduces history to a decorative setting or a convenient, well-lighted pigeonhole. But once the differentiations upon which this model is based begin to crumble, the source study is compelled to change its character: history cannot simply be set against literary texts as either stable antithesis or stable background, and the protective isolation of those texts gives way to a sense of their interaction with other texts and hence to the permeability of their boundaries.'¹

This would provide an excellent rationale for the integration of the study of sources with other preoccupations of contemporary literary criticism, except for one awkward fact. Most of Shakespeare's sources - unlike Harsnett's Declaration - are not contemporaneous with his plays. Of the texts that have been discussed in this thesis, the shortest interval that ought to be taken

into account is the nine-year period between Rosalind and As You Like It; there are more than forty years between Hall's Chronicle and the Henry VI plays, twenty-three between Pandosto and The Winter's Tale, twenty-nine between the 1577 edition of Holinshed's Chronicle and Macbeth, and twenty-five between the relevant volume of Belleforest's Histoires and Hamlet.² As we have seen in the previous chapter, moreover, the last two examples present added complications: the cultural milieu most relevant to Holinshed's narrative is that of Hector Boece's Scotland early in the sixteenth century and Belleforest was writing in the context of France's mid-century religious wars.

Evidence of the dangers of ignoring the cultural shifts in the periods involved is provided by an essay ('Speculations: Macbeth and Source') by Jonathan Goldberg that seeks to advance a more rigorous version of Greenblatt's argument. Goldberg's case hinges on his rejection of the broadly-held view that Shakespeare intended a clear moral distinction between Macbeth and Duncan. Both the dramatist and Holinshed, he suggests, permit some transferability of the characteristics of kings and usurpers - and thus align themselves with a subversive strain in the thought of the times that called the norm of male power-acquisition into question. The basis for including Shakespeare in this generalisation is that he gives Duncan apparently innocuous attributes that belong, in Holinshed, to more sinister figures:

As another example of specular contamination, consider this episode from *Holinshed: King Kenneth*, successor to King Duff and murderer of his son and heir, suffers guilt and sleeplessness; he is told by prophetic voices that he will die and that the heir he has named will not succeed to the throne. His murder is accomplished by Fenella, avenging the death of her son, another child killed by the guilty monarch. Knowing 'that the king delighted above measure in goodlie building' (Bullough, 1973, 486), she constructs an elaborate tower covered with engraved flowers and other images. 'In the midst of the house there was a goodlie brasen image also, resembling the figure of king Kenneth' (p. 487) holding in his hand a golden apple which, if plucked, activates crossbows aimed at the taker. The king succumbs to the lure and is killed. Whose career is this in Macbeth, Macbeth's ... or Duncan's?³

The first point that should be made about this passage is that Goldberg's sense of a homogeneous cultural undercurrent flowing between source and play has inadvertently been strengthened by fudging the summary of *Holinshed*. Kenneth was not the successor of King Duff; nor was he a killer of children. By the institution of tanistry (that, according to the Boece-*Holinshed* narrative, he strove to eradicate) he succeeded Cullen - and murdered Malcolm, the adult son of King Duff, who had been chosen to follow him. Fenella's son was not 'another child killed by the guilty monarch' but, again, an adult who was executed for rebellion and the murder of his own grandfather. Even if this summary were accurate, however, we ought to recognise that it is intended to support an interpretation of the play that could never be achieved from an unmediated reading of the play itself: the intervention of the

literary critic is required (about this Goldberg is adamant), to lay before us the subtleties of the 'historial' context within which the play must be seen - offered to us as the play's true 'source' and, indeed, the main focus of attention.

The instance of Macbeth and its sources does not provide firm ground on which to build such an argument. Since the twenty-nine years between the compiling of Holinshed's text and the composition of Macbeth hardly constituted a political doldrum in England, it would indeed be remarkable for a subversive sub-text to be shared between them. But if, as I have argued in the previous chapter, Holinshed's history of Scotland substantially represents the viewpoint of Hector Boece then the common 'historial' context must somehow be made to stretch across the distinct preoccupations of two separate nations at moments in their history that are set apart by more than eighty years - and the notion becomes too elastic to be of much use as a tool of criticism.

In the preceding chapters I have attempted to guard against simplistic differentiation between sources and plays somewhat differently, on the basis that if we choose to allow knowledge of the sources to affect our perception of the plays at all, then we ought to recognise that we are attempting to decipher and correlate two stages of textual reception.⁴ There is, on the one hand, one's own experience of the play and, more

remotely, there is Shakespeare's reception of a source-text that has its own cultural matrix.

A parallel approach was taken by Norman Rabkin in Shakespeare and the Problem of Meaning (1981). Central to this study is a series of comparisons of the responses elicited by plays composed after the Restoration and the plays by Shakespeare that stand in a source-relationship to them, in which the later texts are shown to have a clarity of rational meaning that is notably absent in their Shakespearean antecedents: the Shakespearean texts are seen as manifesting instead 'an approach to experience in which ... radically opposed and equally total commitments to the meaning of life coexist in a single harmonious vision'.⁵ While he may share the inclination of the 'new historicists' like Greenblatt and Goldberg to question established positivist interpretations of the plays, however, Rabkin contributes to an expanding body of criticism that does this by demonstrating the inherent ambivalence of Shakespeare's texts themselves. From this perspective (in contrast to Goldberg's) it is the poet rather than the critic who creates the enigma.⁶

The implications of the preceding chapters of this thesis offer some support to this line of criticism. All of the texts that have been considered, of course, pre-date the onset of modern scientism, and are not troubled by the incompatibilities of contradictory explanations of

change; and differences in terms of both cultural milieu and literary preoccupation between the source-texts are reflected in the manner in which potential incompatibilities are accommodated or exploited within them. It is crucial to Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde (c. 1385) that the divine and human perceptions of change are different. But in Lydgate's Troy Book (c. 1420) and Brooke's Romeus and Juliet (1562) - which, it will be recalled, is influenced by Lydgate's style - Fortuna and her wheel and the movements of the heavenly bodies are used largely to decorative or rhetorical effect. Hall's Chronicle (1548) shifts between a wide range of secular and contemplative viewpoints that are determined primarily by the contingencies of the narrative; but in Greene's Pandosto (1588) and Lodge's Rosalynde (1590) the predicament of youth caught between the claims of the contemplative and secular ways of life, and the assaults of Fortune as they move towards the latter, are themes determined by the Euphuistic tradition from which they derive.

So too with the range of topoi associated with Occasion, Fortune and Time that were identified in the first chapter: they are used incidentally and eclectically by the English writers Hall and Green; but in Belleforest's Amleth narrative (1576) and Buchanan's Scottish history (1582), which are grounded on opposite sides of the political and religious controversy affecting both France and Scotland, sharply-defined positions are taken - the

one endorsing, and the other deploring, the seizing or creating of opportunity to obtain power.

But the analysis in the previous chapter of Shakespeare's handling of this aspect of his Hamlet and Macbeth material disclosed a characteristic that has broader relevance to his adaptations: in both plays, to a remarkable extent, the sense of change most relevant to what is enacted is communicated to us by a substantial emphasis on its antithesis.

Similar characteristics emerged from each preceding analysis of the relationship between source-text and play. Hall's unqualified glorification of the Talbots (for instance) is not refuted, but becomes tinged with intimations of death and decay; the comparative superficiality of the courtly pastorals by Lodge and Green is transformed by the inclusion of wider and more profound implications of pastoral and the Euphuistic tradition that had no place in their designs; and the decorative rhetoric of the movements of the cosmos shared by Lydgate and Brooke is given a sinister edge.

Considered simply as an aspect of the guiding of our responses, Shakespeare's tendency - or, rather, ability - to make simultaneous evocations of contradictory concepts of change can be seen to impose upon an audience the gratifying task of wrestling with the text for its meaning: a task, perhaps, that is made more intuitive as

more natural images take precedence over Fortune to represent the transcendent forces against which the aspirations of his characters are pitted.⁷ But the centrality to both Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece of the same characteristic of intrinsic complexity argues that it is in the deepest corners of Shakespeare's poetic sensibilities, as much as in his technical skills as a dramatist, that this enigmatic manner of accounting for change is rooted.

NOTES

1. Op. cit., in Shakespeare and the Question of Theory ed. P. Parker and G. Hartman (1985), p. 165.
2. These estimates are based on the earliest dates conjectured for the plays in A Shakespeare Encyclopaedia, ed. O. J. Campbell and E. G. Quinn (1966).
3. Op. cit., in Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology, ed. J. E. Howard and M. F. O'Connor (1987), p. 250.
4. See above, pp. 1 - 4.
5. Op. cit., p. 113.
6. Works of criticism that have fostered this approach include William Empson's Seven Types of Ambiguity (1930) and Some Versions of Pastoral (1935); A. P. Rossiter's 1951 lecture on 'Ambivalence: The Dialectic of the Histories', included in Angel With Horns, ed. G. Storey (1961); Ernest Schanzer's The Problem Plays of Shakespeare (1963) and Rabkin's earlier Shakespeare and the Common Understanding (1967). More contemporary examples would include Robert Grudin, Mighty Opposites (1979) and A.R.Humphreys, 'Shakespeare and History', in Fanned and Winnowed Opinions, ed. J. W. Mahon and T. A. Pendleton, 1987.

7. It would need a study of a different sort - based on the chronology of Shakespeare's plays, and examining a wider range of texts - to pursue this point more assertively.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

The year of publication of the First Folio is used as a dividing-line between the first two lists of entries. List A gives details of all editions consulted, with those used as the source for quotations marked with an asterisk (with modern editions preferred for this purpose wherever it is warranted by their accuracy and completeness). Unless stated otherwise, the place of publication is London. For some texts in List A the place of publication is unknown or doubted.

List B is confined to texts that are referred to within the thesis. List C includes works that have been influential during the compilation of this thesis, but which have not been directly cited in it.

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