SHAKESPEAREAN REVISIONS:
MEASURE FOR MEASURE, KING LEAR AND *PERICLES*,
FROM SOURCE TO ADAPTATION

by

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Theories of revision have been advanced ever since Shakespearean Studies became a specific area of learning within the Humanities. It is however only recently that editors have started to appreciate the consequences these theories have on the actual editing of Shakespeare's plays. The critical implications of regarding Shakespeare as a reviser of his sources and of his own works, and as source of inspiration for later playwrights, on the other hand, have not been fully assessed yet.

In this thesis, I explore the impact the unprecedented popularity enjoyed by revision theories since the early 1980s has on the current notion of source, text and adaptation. According to a romantic, essentialist concept of creativity, a source provides the raw material the author moulds into a new, original work of art; according to the revisionists' view of the writing process, a source instead provides a pattern of meaning which is appropriated and revised by the author. By the same token, I suggest that Restoration and early Augustan adaptations should also be regarded as later stages in the rewriting of far-travelled stories, against which, Shakespeare's own contribution stands out more clearly.

In my introduction, I briefly review recent theories which, along with the hypothesis of Shakespearean revisions, call for a redefinition of the concept of source. The three main chapters of my thesis, devoted respectively to *Measure for Measure*, *King Lear* and *Pericles*, show the advantages of studying a play in relation to interrelated texts, which share common motifs and conventions. Whereas conventional source studies aim at identifying direct sources, probable sources and analogues, my approach allows us to establish the specific perspective each text adopts in relation to a shared motif, and, consequently, provides fresh evidence to disentangle both critical and textual cruxes, such as the characterisation of the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, or the relationship between Quarto and Folio *King Lear* and between *Pericles* and Wilkins' homonymous novel. This new method of analysis also offers new insight into Davenant, Gildon, Tate and Lillo's role as both "revisers" and "editors" of Shakespeare. The Appendix investigates Tate's critical "editing" of his source text(s) for *The History of King Lear* in detail, and questions the traditional distinction between "editor" and "adaptor".

This thesis is based on my own research and does not exceed the permitted length, including footnotes and appendix, but excluding preliminary matter and bibliography. The contents are original and have never been submitted before as part of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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INTRODUCTION

> 'This shameless, this execrable piece of dementation. Tate improve Lear? Set a tailor at work, rather, to improve Niagara! Withered be the hand, palzied be the arm, that ever dares to touch one of Shakespeare's plays' H.N.Hudson, *Lectures on Shakespeare.*[1]

Hudson immortalized his resentment against Nahum Tate and his 1681 adaptation of *King Lear* by coining the dramatic term 'Tatification', which has ever since been used to indicate any attempt to tamper with the unparalleled perfection of a masterpiece. Hudson vented his censure of the once esteemed poet laureate and his efforts to 'improve' and 'rectify' Shakespeare only ten years after Macready restored the original *King Lear* to the stage in 1838. The harshness of Hudson's comments is symptomatic of a drastic change in the way Shakespeare and his works came to be viewed in the 19th century. Recent reconstructions of the establishment of the Shakespeare myth and of Shakespearean criticism as an autonomous area of learning, like Jonathan Bate's *Shakespearean Constitutions* and Michael Dobson's *The Making of the National Poet,*[2] help identify the root of Hudson's disgust. While most of the Shakespearean adaptations which flourished on the English stage during the Restoration enjoyed an intense but brief popularity,[3] Tate's *The History of King Lear*, although considerably modified to bring it closer to Shakespeare,

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[1]H.N.Hudson, *Lectures on Shakespeare II*, quoted in C.Spencer, *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), p. 8.

[2]J.Bate *Shakespearean Constitutions: Politics, Theatre, Criticism, 1730-1830* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); M.Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

[3]Colley Cibber's *The Tragical History of King Richard III* and Davenant's *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* are notable exceptions: Cibber's *Richard III* endured even longer than Tate's *Lear*, and Davenant's adaptations continued to influence 19th century acting texts.

miraculously survived the age of Garrick and Colman, who actively contributed to the shaping of the Shakespeare myth. However, by mid 19th century Shakespeare had become fully institutionalised and there remained no space for those like Tate who had dared compete with the 'giant race'.

The canonisation of Shakespeare had the immediate effect of elevating his works above the rest of the English dramatic tradition: whereas Shakespeare had most fortunately 'revised' his sources and turned the original material into masterpieces of the rarest kind, Shakespeare's 'perfection' could not be 'revised' or 'adapted', let alone 'perfected'. Any change would be a change for the worse. For centuries to come English poetry and drama would be greatly affected by Shakespeare,[4] but his works would only be referred to by means of allusions, echoes and suggestions. Recent 'rewritings' of *King Lear*, like Bond's *Lear* or Kurosawa's *Ran,* should however make us wonder whether Hudson's anathema is still affecting our attitude towards Shakespearean adaptors, in that they might be indicative of a crucial change in the way we 'appropriate' Shakespeare today. Although these brave adaptors have been accused of making *Lear* either too univocally pessimistic or too abstractly metaphysical, their efforts have been welcomed by a fairly large consensus and genuine curiosity. One should consequently wonder whether the term 'revision', especially when associated with Shakespeare, has lost its pejorative connotation and regained its primary meaning of re-vision, i.e. that endless process of re-writing and re-working whereby far-travelled 'stories' are continuously adapted to meet or reshape their audience's expectations.

A positive breakthrough in the conception of the idea of 'revision' within Shakespearean studies has indeed occurred, but not as a direct consequence of a theatrical renaissance of the long despised genre of the adaptation.[5] A new theory of revision was advanced by textual scholars after a close investigation of Shakespeare's text and the mode of its production and transmission. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a group of textual scholars, later referred to as the 'revisionists', advanced the hypothesis that the 1608 Quarto and the 1623 Folio editions of *King Lear* represent two different versions of the play, the

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[4]See, for example, J.Bate, *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

[5]See, for example, John Barton and Peter Hall's *Wars of the Roses*, or Charles Marowitz's twenty-eight minute *Hamlet* collage.

former more 'literary' and closer to the author's foul papers, the latter more 'theatrical' and derived from the annotation of a quarto copy with a revised theatrical manuscript.

The idea of revision was not completely new: Bradley, among others,[6] wondered whether the inconsistencies he had highlighted in the plot of *King Lear* were due not so much to inaccuracy as to some sort of revision. In his 'Did Shakespeare Shorten *King Lear*?', Bradley contemplates this possibility:

> [S]ome of the defects to which I have drawn attention might have arisen if Shakespeare, finding his matter too bulky, had (a) omitted to write some things originally intended, and (b), after finishing his play, had reduced by excision, and had not, in these omissions and excisions, taken sufficient pains to remove the obscurities and inconsistencies occasioned by them.[7]

Bradley's extraordinary intuition places him far ahead of his time. Bradley must have been aware of its implications because he hastily retracted: 'I do not mean, by writing this note, that I believe in the hypotheses I suggest in it. On the contrary', he continues, 'I think it more probable that the defects referred to arose from carelessness and other causes'.[8] Many years later, E.A.J Honigmann took up Bradley's half-voiced suggestion and explored the 'serious editorial implications of "second thoughts"' in his ground-breaking *The Stability of Shakespeare's Text.*[9] Although Honigmann never formulated the hypothesis of large scale revision, he laid the foundations for the idea of a revising author:

> I envisage, in short, two copies of a play, each in the author's hand, disagreeing in both substantives and indifferent readings: the play being regarded as finished by Shakespeare in each version though not therefore beyond the reach of afterthoughts.[10]

The advancement of the hypothesis of full scale revision in relation to the main differences between Quarto and Folio *Lear* was discussed and supported by a large body of evidence in

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[6]For a fuller discussion of the textual history of *King Lear* and a detailed account of the theories of authorial revision prior to 1970-1980, see S.Wells, 'The Once and Future *King Lear*', in *The Division of the Kingdoms: Shakespeare's Two Versions of 'King Lear'*, ed. by G.Taylor and M.Warren (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 1-22; and G.Ioppolo, *Revising Shakespeare* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991).
[7]A.C.Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy* (London: Macmillan, 1904), p. 381.
[8]Bradley, p. 383.
[9](London: Arnold, 1965), p. 151.
[10]Honigmann, p. 2.

Taylor and Warren's 1983 *The Division of the Kingdoms*,[11] and culminated with Wells and Taylor's 1986 Oxford edition of Shakespeare's *Complete Works*, where the Quarto and the Folio are published separately. In the following passage from *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader*, Stanley Wells probably meant to address those who, like Honigmann, had refuted the old dogma of Shakespeare's 'unblotted papers', but had incongruously denied the possibility of 'wholesale revision':

> I [do not] see any consistency in an editorial tradition which allows us to accept and act upon the hypothesis that Shakespeare altered his original conception when his first and second thoughts sit side by side in a single text ..., but which does not allow us to admit the hypothesis of Shakespearean revision when the first and second thoughts occur in different texts.[12]

The hypothesis of revision has had far-reaching editorial and critical consequences. If instead of a conflated *King Lear* the Oxford reader is now offered two *King Lears*, our conception of the creative process whereby Shakespeare produced his works has changed too. Implied in the hypothesis of a revising author is the idea that Shakespeare did not conceive his works *ex nihilo*, but through a fecund intercourse with his contemporaries and his predecessors. Whereas great efforts have been made to adjust editorial policies to the new theory of a multiple text, the idea of re-vision as a synthesis of memory and creativity, imitation and imagination, originality and continuity, is still shunned, as if catching a genius at work would diminish our appreciation of his exceptional uniqueness.

My thesis undertakes to explore this new idea of revision in relation to Shakespeare's use of his primary and indirect sources in *Measure for Measure*, *King Lear* and *Pericles*. The idea of looking at the sources to gain a better insight into Shakespeare's works is obviously not new. Source studies, however, are, in terms of their theoretical premises, currently way behind other areas of Shakespearean criticism and desperately need to confront the challenge of recent literary and dramatic theories. Russian formalism and more recent structuralist studies, for example, have shown how mythologies and folktales, the most common fictive sources used by Renaissance playwrights, are not merely unique

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[11] See p. 3, n. 4; henceforth referred to as *The Division*.

[12] S. Wells, *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 112.

samples of an infinite range of variant stories, but rather variant manifestations of similar patterns of action. Such patterns, or structures, can be decomposed in smaller constituent units, which have been variously described as 'mythemes'[13]or 'functions'.[14] The advancement of structuralism has therefore determined a radical redefinition of the concept of source and of its relation to derivative texts. As Robert Miola perceptively observes:

> if one assumes, traditionally, that a text flows *from* its "source", then one posits a direct and immediate relationship between the two. Accordingly verbal echoes and repetitions become significant as proofs of relationship. If one assumes, [on the other hand], as many now do, that a text can derive from a source indirectly (source as tradition, background, subtext etc.), then other kinds of evidence become important. [15]

The decline of an essentialist concept of authorship, affected, on the one hand, by Kristeva and Barthes' notions of intertextuality[16] and their definition of text as "palimpsest", i.e. 'tissue of quotations without quotation marks',[17] and, on the other hand, by Greenblatt, Dollimore and Sinfield's renewed sense of historical distance and their re-assessment of the relationship between "text" and "context", has also determined a revision of the concept of source and, consequently, a redefinition of the scope and objectives of source studies as a whole.

The main contributions in this area, Geoffrey Bullough *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (1957-75) and Kenneth Muir *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays* (1977), carried out the ground work of identifying the primary sources of Shakespeare and establishing their derivation. Their traditional approach, however, is based on a restrictive, by now outdated, conception of what constitutes a source. As Linda Woodbridge pointed out in 1988, in both studies 'sources' means 'readings', that is the texts Shakespeare

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[13]C.Levi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (London: Basic Books Inc., 1963), *passim*.
[14]V.Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), *passim*.
[15]R.S.Miola, 'Shakespeare and his Sources: Observations on the Critical History of *Julius Caesar*', in *Shakespeare Survey*, 40 (1987), p. 69.
[16]See J.Clayton and E.Rothstein, 'Figures in the Corpus: Theories of Influence and Intertextuality', in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, ed. by J.Clayton and E.Rothstein (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), p. 16. Clayton and Rothstein point out how, whereas a traditional concept of source as influence centres on the author as 'intentional agent', Kristeva's notion of intertext centres on the reader: 'a given book or idiom that has served to influence the writer can only apply to the reader as *intertext*, a section of a pattern in terms of which he or she makes sense of what is now read.'
[17]Friedman, S.S., 'Weavings: Intertextuality and the (Re)Birth of the Author', in *Influence and Intertextuality*, p. 149.

consulted and appropriated as raw material for his plays and narrative poems. This definition of source implies that the text is a finished product, a property transmitted from one author to the next. Woodbridge spots the imprint of an old-fashioned, author-centred ideology behind this definition:

> Such a notion of literary influence is at home in a capitalist world: a work is private property, branded with an author's name. An author borrows from another as from a bank; stylistic improvements repay the capital with interest. A freely circulating oral tradition, tales created and modified, and sent forth by anonymous tellers, as gifts to the world with no hope of capital gain, seems by contrast a kind of creeping socialism.[18]

Woodbridge aptly emphasises that a failure to expand and emancipate the current notion of source from the old essentialist idea of the author as creator and owner of his work impairs the very possibility of defining a fresh route into Shakespeare, but her criticism bypasses the concept of authorship altogether. Rejecting essentialist doctrines in favour of an author-phobic approach will not help us understand Shakespeare better. Woodbridge's implication that an author is merely the unwitting medium through which circulating stories and motifs are captured and fixed into definite if unstable forms does not account for their differences in quality and significance.

Since 1988, timid efforts have been made to revise the concept of source: while Woodbridge focused on the ideological inadequacy of the current ideal of source, Claire McEarchen stressed its limitations as a working category:

> Traditionally the relationship between Shakespeare and his literary source has been imagined as linear and determinative, an empirical matter of additions and subtractions, in which Shakespeare finds and rejects or accepts details of plot-structure, character or style.[19]

As Bate reminds us, a more important question than that of "intention" is that of "effect";[20] in other words, after identifying the provenance of a motif or a detail, and its original

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[18]L.Woodbridge, 'Patchwork: Piecing the Early Modern Mind in England's First Century of Print Culture', in *English Literary Renaissance*, 23 (1993), p. 8.

[19]C.McEarchen, 'Fathering Herself: A Source Study of Shakespeare's Feminism', in *Shakespeare Quarterly* 39 (1988), p. 269.

[20]*Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination*, p. 33.

function and connotation, critics should determine not only what was borrowed but also what was left out, how the original was modified to fit into a new context, what function the borrowings play in relation to the new material, and how their presence affects the reception of the new text as a whole.

My thesis updates source studies by investigating the "effects" of the sources on Shakespeare, and by replacing an essentialist definition of source with the more comprehensive concept of interrelated texts, that is texts which share motifs, plot-components and dramatic conventions, among which Shakespeare's own represent only a stage, if an outstanding one, in the endless process of their rewriting. A redefinition of the concept of source is however only the first step towards a revision of source-studies. Innovative investigations of Shakespeare's use of his sources, like Leah Scragg's book *Shakespeare's Mouldy Tales: Recurrent Plot Motifs in Shakespearian Drama,* are still affected by Hudson's tendency to consider Shakespeare's works as the final and finest stage of a dramatic tradition, which assumedly came to its natural end after Shakespeare:

> The plot motifs on which Shakespeare draws in the constructions of his plays are thus not concerned with fanciful, never-never land predicaments but with perennial fears and aspirations. Rather than presenting his audience with 'husks' devoid of intellectual value, the dramatist offers the spectator new insights into the concerns that are common to every generation through his imaginative engagement with paradigmatic situations.[21]

In order to assess Shakespeare's role within the wider context of Renaissance and Restoration Drama and to overcome a tendency to universalize Shakespeare, which is the direct consequence of the establishment of the Shakespeare myth in the 18th and 19th centuries, my thesis explores not only Shakespeare's contribution as a reviser, but also his role as a source of inspiration for later revisers.

Restoration adaptations have recently been the object of unprecedented attention. Norman Rabkin, for example, in his 'Tragic Meanings: The Redactor as Critic', analyses five Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare, starting from the assumption that every redaction is a form of critical interpretation, which, among other things, '[enables] us to

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[21] L.Scragg, *Shakespeare's Mouldy Tales: Recurrent Plot Motifs in Shakespearian Drama* (London: Longman, 1992), p. 194.

locate the source of the play's significant and irreducible multivalence'.[22] Alan Dessen similarly realised how the changes introduced by adaptors and directors can serve as major clues to what separates us from the age of Shakespeare and how adaptations can help us pinpoint the distinctive vision of a particular play.[23] The role of later rewritings and adaptations in the interpretation of a play text is also the starting point of William Nigel Dodd's '*Richard II*, i Critici, Nahum Tate e la Resistenza del Testo'. More than a new rationale for the interpretation of dramatic texts, Dodd provides a forcible example of an innovative, practical, stage-centred method of analysis, based on the close comparison of the original text with later adaptations. His analysis is specifically intended to throw light on long debated issues in the play, such as Bolingbroke's ascendancy to the throne of England, or York's role in the conspiracy:

> L'adattamento del *Richard II* eseguito da Nahum Tate e messo in scena brevemente a cavallo degli anni 1680-1, servirà da cartina di tornasole per controllare "dal vivo" dove possono portare certe scelte interpretative e per individuare meglio quali elementi testuali sembrano proporsi, nella strategia implicita di Shakespeare, come "resistenze" a certe tentazioni di lettura.[24]

If Rabkin, Dessen and Dodd have shown how a contrastive analysis of a Shakespearean play and a later adaptation can provide new insight into both, my thesis will show how a sense of historical perspective can be regained by considering Restoration and early Augustan adaptors as revisers. As C. Spencer points out, Restoration adaptors treated Shakespeare like a source 'which they followed closely at times, but in which [they] made changes that are keys to [their] visions of the potentialities of story, character and theme.'[25] Being active well before Shakespeare was institutionalised, Restoration adaptors admired his work, but, at the same time, felt entitled to change it and to adjust it to their own ends.

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[22]N.Rabkin, 'Tragic Meanings: The Redactor as Critic', in *Shakespeare and the Problem of Meaning*, by N.Rabkin (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 63.

[23]A.C.Dessen, 'Modern Productions and the Elizabethan Scholar', in *Renaissance Drama*, 18 (1987), pp. 205-23.

[24]W.N.Dodd, '*Richard II*, i Critici, Nahum Tate e la Resistenza del Testo', in *L'Altro Shakespeare*, ed. by A.Marzala (Milano: Guerini Studio, 1992), p. 83. 'The adaptation of *Richard II*, carried out by Nahum Tate and briefly performed around 1680-1, ... will be used as a touchstone first to find out where specific interpretative choices lead, and, second to identify what textual elements, in Shakespeare's implicit strategy, seem to consititute resistances to certain critical readings.'

[25]*Five Restoration Adaptations*, p. 10.

Restoration adaptations therefore provide a privileged viewpoint from which we can read Shakespeare historically, i.e. as part of a larger dramatic tradition through which meaning was constructed and constantly challenged and revised. By including Restoration and early Augustan adaptations in a study of Shakespeare's use of his sources, we can appreciate Shakespeare's greatness without abstracting it from the context within which it originated and within which it was appropriated before the establishment of the Shakespeare myth elected his work to represent a timeless and universal paradigm of perfection.

My thesis uncovers a crucial gap between theory and practice in the current state of Shakespeare studies and tests a new method to bridge it. Its three main chapters, devoted to an investigation of the interrelation between source, text and adaptation in *Measure for Measure, King Lear* and *Pericles*, are aimed at reconstructing the larger dramatic context within which these three plays where produced and revised. The ultimate objective of this wide-ranging exercise of comparative analysis is to provide a solid basis for interpretation and to avoid what Eco calls 'overinterpretation'. As Eco reminds us, the critic's task is uncovering the *intentio operis*, and not offering his own *intentio lectoris;* as opposed to the reader, the critic should interpret the text, and avoid using it for other purposes than that of identifying its 'internal coherence':

> I can certainly use Wordsworth's text for parody, for showing how a text can be read in relation to different cultural frameworks, or for strictly personal ends (I can read a text to get inspiration for my own musing); but if I want to *interpret* Wordsworth's text I must respect his cultural and linguistic background.[26]

By replacing the old concept of 'source' with that of 'context', my analysis provides that 'cultural background' which Eco regards as an indispensable premise for interpretation. The results obtained will hopefully vouchsafe theoretical credibility to this experimental method and justify my wish to extend the present investigation to a larger number of plays in the canon and to produce a more comprehensive and most needed follow-up to Bullough and Muir.

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[26]U.Eco, 'Between the Author and the Text', in *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, ed. by S.Collini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 68-9.

The choice of the primary material examined in this thesis - *Measure for Measure, King Lear* and *Pericles* - was determined by some relevant similarities in the composition and transmission of these three plays. All three of them have removed direct sources, both geographically and temporally speaking: over two centuries separate Shakespeare's *Pericles* from John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (1393), and two of the three main sources of *Measure for Measure* are Italian. But these three plays were also written and performed either immediately after, or, in the case of Wilkins' novel *The Painfull Adventures of Pericles Prince of Tyre,* immediately before,[27] contemporary revivals and "re-appropriations" of the primary stories upon which they are based. Although it is true that George Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*, the English source of *Measure for Measure*, was entered in the Stationers' Register about thirty years before Shakespeare revised it, Shakespeare's play is contemporary to the so-called 'disguised ruler plays', which flourished on the Jacobean stage around 1604 - 1605, and to which *Measure for Measure* is undoubtedly related. Similarly, the anonymous romance, *The True Chronicle History of King Leir*, an old play performed in 1594 by the Queen's and the Sussex's Men, and first printed in 1605, was either read in manuscript by Shakespeare immediately before he wrote *King Lear*,[28] or was still fresh in his memory from seeing it performed, or from acting in it.[29] Although the origins of George Wilkins' novel are still uncertain (source, reported text or adaptation?), *Pericles* also reflects a widespread preoccupation with the motif of incest in association with royal dynasties and the transmission of power.[30] These three plays are therefore particularly suitable to illustrate how Shakespeare's imagination was engaged by both the 'past' of his most remote sources, and the 'present' of contemporary theatrical hits, stage fashions and contemporary dramatic models.

The transmission of *Measure for Measure, King Lear and Pericles* reveals another interesting parallelism. Although only *King Lear* and *Pericles* were revived at least once

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[27]The relationship between Shakespeare's play and Wilkins' novel is still a matter of dispute. For more details, see Chapter III, Part II below.

[28]W.W.Greg, 'The Date of *King Lear* and Shakespeare's Use of Earlier Versions of the Story', in *The Library*, 20 (1939-40), pp. 377-400.

[29]W.Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. by K.Muir (London: Methuen, 1952, rev. 1972), p. xxix.

[30]See B.T.Boehrer, *Monarchy and Incest in Renaissance England: Literature, Culture, Kinship and Kingship* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992) for a full list of all the Jacobean plays where the motif of incest is a central concern.

after the London theatres reopened in 1660,[31] these three plays were all adapted to conform to the changed stage conditions and dramatic conventions of Restoration and early Augustan theatres. *Measure for Measure* was revised twice, once in 1662 by William Davenant, who merged the original plot with the Benedick-Beatrice sub-plot from *Much Ado About Nothing*, and appropriately renamed the play *The Law against Lovers*, and subsequently by Gildon in 1700. Gildon restored the original plot but increased the number of songs and musical entertainments first introduced by Davenant, and changed the title of his operatic version into *Measure for Measure: Or Beauty the Best Advocate.* Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* was never performed between 1662 and 1700, but it was restored to the stage soon after the beginning of the 18th century, although it was mistakenly attributed to 'the famous Beaumont and Fletcher' [sic!].[32] *Pericles* was revised by George Lillo in 1738, and staged on 1 August of the same year at Covent Garden. The first two acts of the Shakespearean original were omitted and the title was changed into *Marina,* in accordance with the shift of focus from the father's sea voyages to the daughter's misadventures in Mytilene. Tate's *The History of King Lear,* as mentioned above, proved the most successful adaptation of all: it displaced Shakespeare's *King Lear* from the stage for over one hundred and fifty years and was the starting point of Garrick and Colman's popular adaptations.[33]

The reception and critical history of *Measure for Measure, King Lear* and *Pericles* are also characterised by similarly enduring textual and interpretative cruxes. The apparently irreconcilable views of the Duke as a providential figure or a meddling busy-body in *Measure for Measure*, for example, makes it impossible to decide how to regard the other main characters and the play as a whole. As Louise Schleiner effectively remarks, 'no other Shakespeare play has left us in doubt whether the hero is God or a poor man on the

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[31] *Pericles* was staged once in 1660, at the Cockpit, Drury Lane, by the Rhodes' Company. *King Lear* was staged twice, the first time in late January 1664, the second time on 24 June 1675, on both occasions by the Duke's company at Drury Lane. See, *The London Stage: 1660-1800, Part 1: 1660-1700*, ed. by W. van Lennep, E.L.Avery and A.H.Scouten (Carbondale, Illinois: Illinois University Press, 1965).

[32] According to *The London Stage*, Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* was first restored to the stage on 26 April 1706 at the Queen's Theatre, and then revived a few years later, on 22 November 1729, at Lincoln's Inn Fields. *Measure for Measure* enjoyed a proper revival only towards the end of the first half of the 18th century, but after then its popularity increased and it was regularly staged until the turning of the century.

[33] D.Garrick, *King Lear: A Tragedy* (1756), in *The Plays of David Garrick*, ed. by H.W.Pedicord and F.L.Bergmann, 6 vols. (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981), III, pp. 301-90; G.Colman, *The History of King Lear* (1768), (London: Cornmarket Press, 1969).

verge of nervous collapse.'[34] In 1930, George Wilson Knight read the play as a Christian allegory where mercy and forgiveness eventually prevail, because he regarded the Duke as a fundamentally positive character in the first place:

> The Duke, lord of this play in the exact sense that Prospero is the lord of *The Tempest*, is the prophet of an enlightened ethic. He controls the action from start to finish, he allots, as it were, praise and blame, he is lit at moments with divine suggestion comparable with his almost divine power of fore-knowledge, control, and wisdom.[35]

This view was consolidated by critics, such as Leavis, Sisson, Bradbrook, and more recently Battenhouse, although strenuously contrasted by an opposing school of critics who regard *Measure for Measure* as a dark comedy with a problematic open ending, mainly because of their sceptical reading of the key character of the Duke. It is worth quoting Clifford Leech's reading of the Duke, because Leech too compares Vincentio to Prospero, but the comparison is now unflattering:

> Vincentio and Prospero are not only men of power: they are also, we may say, formally on trial as rulers - much more profoundly so than the overseen Angelo - and Shakespeare observes their fantastic tricks with unease as well as mockery.[36]

As Rosalind Miles suggested in 1976, 'the time has come to see how both [these] views are grounded in the contemporary dramatic traditions and practices, in order to assess the elements of truth present in each.'[37]

The enormous amount of literature produced by Shakespearean scholars on *King Lear* similarly hinges on a double dilemma, the textual issue of the origin of the Quarto and Folio variants and the critical question of what constitutes Lear's tragedy, a question for which, as Stanley Cavell claims, 'any critic is likely to feel compelled to provide his own

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[34]L.Schleiner, 'Providential Improvisation in *Measure for Measure*', in *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America,* 97 (1982), p. 227.
[35]G.Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire: Essays in the Interpretation of Shakespeare's Sombre Tragedies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1930), p. 81.
[36]C.Leech, 'The Meaning of *Measure for Mesure*', in *Shakespeare Survey*, 3 (1950), p. 69.
[37]R.Miles, *The Problem of 'Measure for Measure': A Historical Investigation* (London: Vision, 1976), p. 166.

solution'. [38] These two problems, apparently unrelated, are in fact closely intertwined, in that most of the evidence upon which the theory of revision relies is derived from the revisionists' interpretation of the significance of the Quarto and Folio variants, rather than on an independent review of the bibliographical and textual evidence already available. [39] By comparing *King Lear* with its main direct sources and Tate's *The History of King Lear* I will offer a new answer to "Cavell's question", i.e. why Shakespeare turned chronicled history and romance into tragedy and what determines the tragic outcome. My hypothesis will also provide fresh evidence to support the theory of revision, in that it will show how Shakespeare himself seems to have changed his mind about the nature of Lear's fatal mistake (or tragic flaw) and the kind of tragic experience Lear undergoes.

Pericles, like *Lear*, presents a double challenge for the textual and the theatre critic. Very early on critics, editors and adaptors started to express their dissatisfaction with the overall quality of the 1609 Quarto, but especially with the first two acts, which are remarkably inferior to the last three. Some critics have accounted for this discrepancy in style and dramatic diction by resorting to the theory of mixed authorship or collaboration.[40] Others have alternatively argued that the Quarto text reflects a wholly Shakespearean play, but that, being a reported text, the differences in style are due to the different skills and personal limitations of two different reporters.[41] The issue of *Pericles*' authorship has prevented critics from appreciating the theatrical and dramatic complexity of this early romance; a contrastive analysis with its direct sources, Wilkins' novel and Lillo's adaptation will instead highlight the play's originality, its theatrically experimental nature, and its relevance to the topical issue of the nature and perpetuation of monarchical authority, a theme with which Shakespeare had often engaged before. The other question I address in my thesis is whether *Pericles* is actually little more than a 'mouldy tale', as Ben Jonson derogatorily described it, or, in other words, whether *Pericles*, which shows the

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[38]S.Cavell, 'The Avoidance of Love: A Reading of *King Lear*', in *Must We Mean What We Say?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 271.

[39]P.W.K.Blayney, a supporter of the theory of revision, is a noticeable exception. His book *The Texts of 'King Lear' and their Origins: Nicholas Okes and the First Quarto*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) provides fresh traditional evidence to confute Greg and Bowers' theory of the 'lost original' on typographical and bibliographical grounds.

[40]See, for example, S.Wells and G.Taylor, with J.Jowett and W.Montgomery, *William Shakespeare:A Textual Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 556-60.

[41]See, among others, W.Shakespeare, *Pericles*, ed. by P.Edwards (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), p. 38.

signs of a gradual retreat from the public and political issues of the tragedies to the private sphere of family relationships of the romances, actually fails to achieve the graceful complexity of Shakespeare's later works. Again, as with *Lear*, the textual and the critical areas of the current debate on *Pericles* will prove to be closely interrelated.

Given their vexed textual and critical history, these three plays provide the ideal ground for testing a new, alternative method of analysis of a play text. Far from attempting to offer definitive answers to unresolved, and maybe unsolvable, dilemmas, my method will provide fresh evidence to gain a better insight into the original perspective and 'internal coherence' of these three plays. Objectivity is utopic, but utter relativism is detrimental. My thesis offers a new standpoint from which to interrogate the past and makes available a considerable amount of as yet unused evidence which can help us make up our minds more discerningly.

CHAPTER ONE

'Measure for Measure' in Perspective:

Dealing with Paradox

Measure for Measure belongs to the distinctive dramatic category of Shakespeare's "problem plays", which was first theorised by F.S.Boas in *Shakespeare and his Predecessors* in 1896. 'Ever since the term was invented ...', as Terence Hawkes remarks, 'critics have been unhappy with it.'[1] The definition "problem play" has been revised several times, in the attempt to overcome its ambiguity. According to Boas, for example, the peculiar feature of a problem play is either a moral, a psychological or an interpretative perplexity.[2] W.W.Lawrence, in his *Shakespeare's Problem Comedies*, argues that the nature of the dilemma is in fact primarily moral.[3] E.M.W.Tillyard, for his part, resigns himself to the fact that plays like *Measure for Measure* defy classification, because they are, in his own words, 'radically schizophrenic'.[4] Hawkes avoids generic definitions and observes that the main distinctive feature of a problem play is an internal dichotomy which has no "right" side. He then however reduces its assumedly vexing complexity to the worn out adage, *virtus in medio stat*: 'the choice of one side or the other does not seem to make much difference; either side is vulnerable without the other's support'.[5] Earnest Schanzer's definition of a "problem play" is still the most popular and most widely accepted:[6] he describes a "problem play" as

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[1]T.Hawkes, *Shakespeare and the Reason: A Study of the Tragedies and the Problem Plays* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 73

[2]F.S.Boas, *Shakespeare and his Predecessors* (London: J.Murray, 1896), *passim.*

[3]W.W.Lawrence, *Shakespeare's Problem Comedies* (New York: Ungar, 1931), *passim.*

[4]E.M.W.Tillyard, *Shakespeare's Problem Plays* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961), p. 2.

[5]Hawkes, p. 99.

[6]The debate around the term "problem play" recently rekindled, after Northrop Frye claimed that *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well That Ends Well* are not problem plays, but romantic comedies, which, like Shakespeare's early comedies, have a festive ending. According to Frye, what distinguishes these two later comedies from Shakespeare's earlier production is only a 'larger infusion of irony'. (N.Frye, *The Myth of Deliverance: Reflections on Shakespeare's Problem Comedies* (Brighton: Harvester, 1983), p. 61)) A connection between *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Troilus and Cressida* was soon reestablished by Vivian Thomas. (V.Thomas, *The Moral Universe of Shakespeare's Problem Plays* (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1987)) By resorting to traditional arguments, according to which a problem play defies generic classification and moral certainties, Vivian brought the debate back to Schanzer.

> a play in which we find a concern with a moral problem which is central to it, presented in such a manner that we are unsure of our moral bearings, so that uncertain and divided responses to it in the minds of the audience are possible or even probable.[7]

Schanzer, unlike his predecessors, detected a dilemma in the audience's divided response to a problem play: whereas the characters make their choices 'single-mindedly' and 'free from doubts', the audience is left 'divided' and 'wavering'.

By shifting the focus from the character to the audience, Schanzer did not overcome the problem of defining the peculiar character of a play like *Measure for Measure*, but rather magnified it. If a moral perplexity is far from a distinctive trait in a dramatic character, a divided response in the audience is typical of a certain kind of drama which, instead of encouraging a sympathetic, undivided reaction in the audience, highlights contradictions and inconsistencies in order to provoke thought and deeper understanding. This kind of drama, although definitively Shakespearean, is not Shakespeare's exclusive domain, let alone the distinctive trait of some of his plays.

Schanzer's definition of "problem play" is therefore too general and when applied to *Measure for Measure* decidedly misleading, in that it conveys the idea of a divided audience response and dramatic indefinition simultaneously. Schanzer's idea of divided response rests on the assumption that Shakespeare himself refrained from taking sides, or, in other words, that plays like *Measure for Measure* illustrate a moral dilemma impartially. If Schanzer can assume the theoretical possibility of a neutral perspective in drama, he finds it more difficult to provide practical examples. When dealing with one of the central dilemmas in *Measure for Measure*, that is Isabella's choice to preserve her virginity and sacrifice her brother, Schanzer suggests that Shakespeare leaves it 'sufficiently unobtrusive to allow the audience to respond to it in an uncertain, divided, or varied manner.' At the same time, though, he cannot help noticing that 'by depicting the inhumanity of Angelo's legalism, ... and then showing Isabella's legalistic view of Divine Justice, Shakespeare is ... strongly suggesting his own attitude towards her choice.'[8] At the end of his essay on *Measure for Measure*, maybe sensing the inconsistency in his argument, Schanzer mitigates his position concerning Isabella's choice: 'by the orientation of his material and the manipulation of our responses, Shakespeare seems to me to

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[7]E.Schanzer, *The Problem Plays of Shakespeare* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 6.
[8]Schanzer, p. 106.

suggest, *strongly but not compulsively*, his siding against the choice which is made.'[9] (added emphasis) In order to demonstrate that *Measure for Measure* invites a divided response, Schanzer denies the presence of any prevailing perspective in the play. Though it is undeniable that spectators are *individually* challenged by moral issues, and it is a certain degree of ambiguity which allowed the King's Men to stage *Measure for Measure* at the Globe first and then at Court on 26 December 1604, it is my intention to prove that *Measure for Measure* engages its audience *collectively,* by offering a specific and identifiable perspective on the events, which results from the dramatist's careful orchestration of all its "voices".

In order to identify this perspective, I have read the play in relation to earlier and later dramatic texts, which share *Measure for Measure*'s main themes and dramatic conventions. Of the three main plot-components upon which *Measure for Measure* is based - "the corrupt magistrate", "the ruler in disguise" and "the bed trick"[10] - only the first one derives from its main direct sources, the fifth *novella* of the eighth decade in Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* (1565), along with its dramatic rendition *Epitia* (1573), and Whetstone's play *Promos and Cassandra* (1578).[11] Traditional source studies fail to account for the origin and influence of the other two main plot-components that Shakespeare added to the original story.[12] After comparing Shakespeare's handling of the motif of "the corrupt magistrate" with the main direct sources (Part I), I analyse other sources from which Shakespeare might have derived the motifs of "the ruler in disguise" and "the bed trick", and discuss their influence on *Measure for Measure*. (Part II and III) The last part of this chapter investigates the development of these three plot-components in Restoration versions of the play: although still present in Davenant's *The Law against Lovers* and Gildon's *Measure for Measure: Or Beauty Best Advocate*, they were heavily

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[9]Schanzer, p. 131.

[10]W.Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, ed. by J.W.Lever (London: Routledge, 1965), p.xxxv.

[11]All page-references to Cinthio and Whestone follow Geoffrey Bullough's reprint of the original texts and translations in *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, 8 vols (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957-75) II. The 16th century analogues listed by Bullough, Thomas Lupton's *Too Good to be True* (1581) and Barnaby Riche's *The Adventures of Brusanus, Prince of Hungaria* (1592), will not be analysed systematically, but occasionally referred to, when directly relevant to the main topics discussed in this chapter.

[12]Although Bullough acknowledges that contemporary theatrical conventions might have affected Shakespeare while he was writing *Measure for Measure*, he subordinates "theatrical" to "textual" influence, and consequently attributes a more relevant role to Riche's *The Adventures of Brusanus, Prince of Hungaria* (1592), where the king disappears and then returns in disguise to spy on his courtiers and his son, than to contemporary stage satires.

revised.[13] (Part IV) It is mainly through a thorough readjustment of these three plot-components that Davenant and Gildon managed to impose their re-vision of *Measure for Measure* upon Shakespeare's original perspective. My analysis, aimed at highlighting the angle from which Shakespeare rewrote these three traditional plot-components, will provide some fresh evidence to reject Schanzer's definition of *Measure for Measure* as a "problem play" and to show that, if critical judgement cannot be exercised unless we are prepared to take sides, we can take sides without being 'simple'.[14]

[13]The motif of the bed trick was omitted altogether by Davenant as a consequence of major readjustments in plot and characterisation. For more details, see Part IV.

[14]Schanzer, p. 97.

PART I

The Indecent Proposal

According to Nigel Bawcutt, the motif of "the corrupt magistrate" must have become culturally relevant and, consequently, extremely popular with Elizabethan and Jacobean reformed audiences because of the rigour with which justice is eventually carried out against abuse: 'whatever the 20th century reader may feel,' Bawcutt explains, 'Protestant theologians of the 16th century had no difficulty whatever in accepting the story'.[1] If Bawcutt's analysis is right, we should also wonder whether the Duke's peculiar concept of mercy made *Measure for Measure* less immediately delectable and gratifying to a contemporary audience. Major changes in the characterisation of the supreme authority, his substitute and the heroine suggest that *Measure for Measure* actually contravened the expectations of an audience familiar with the original motif of the corrupt magistrate.

In all the known sources of *Measure for Measure*,[2] the ruler represents the principle of infallible divine justice. His substitute's failure is instead paradigmatic of the inadequacy and fallibility of human justice. This opposition between heavenly and human justice is heavily stressed at the beginning of Riche's *The Adventures of Brusanus, Prince of Hungaria*. Although King Leonarchus' son, Dorestus, will prove a worthy substitute of his father, the king's disappearance is lamented as an irreparable loss:

> The lamentable clamours are universal, the grave Counsailers sheddes their teares for the losse of their prince, the father of their counselles, the very stay and principall piller of all their consultations; the gallant courtiers have left off their costly colours, betaking themselves to mourning hewe, hanging their heades, wringing their handes, lamenting the lacke of him that was a prince to defend them, a father to care for them, a companyon in their pleasures, a friend to relieve their wants.[3]

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[1]W.Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, ed. by N.Bawcutt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 134.
[2]For a full list, see Bullough, II.
[3]Bullough, p. 527.

In the other sources, the allegory of the loss of the divine paragon upon which human justice relies is less evident. Whereas Riche explicitly suggests an absent divine father and his mourning child, mankind, the characters in the other sources are entirely secular, generally a king or a emperor and his ministers. However, the distinction between fallible and infallible justice never fails.

In the earlier versions of the story, the ruler either disappears or simply appoints a new governor in the province where the action takes place. In Shakespeare, the Duke's departure becomes a matter of primary interest. The Duke leaves Vienna because he has failed to enforce the law, which, as a result, has become an ineffectual 'o'ergrown lion' (*Measure* 1.3.22),[4] and now 'liberty plucks justice by the nose.' (*Measure* 1.3.29) To the Friar's gentle reproach, 'It rested in your grace/ To unloose this tied-up justice when you pleased' (*Measure*, 1.3.31-2), the Duke replies: 'Sith 'twas my fault to give the people scope,/ 'Twould be my tyranny to strike and gall them.' (*Measure* 1.3.35-6). The *incipit* of *Measure for Measure* provides an unprecedented example of an inept ruler. The Duke, when compared to his predecessors, appears visibly human and fallible. As a consequence, the distinction between divine and human justice is no longer clear-cut, and the Duke and Angelo become disturbingly similar.

The Duke's decision to appoint Angelo and the peculiar circumstances of the appointment reinforce the impression that Angelo is more than a substitute. In none of the earlier versions of the story is power so absolutely and urgently delegated to the substitute. When Angelo is appointed, he becomes 'at full' the Duke himself. Unlike his predecessors, the Duke abdicates his power to let Angelo perform what he himself had failed in. Moreover, there is no reason to believe, as some critics do,[5] that the Duke appoints Angelo as his substitute while he is away simply because he wants to put him to the test. In most of the sources the appointment of the substitute is either part of the fixed pattern of the story or it takes place off-stage before the story begins, and the higher authority does not intervene until much later on. Cinthio's *novella* is the only exception. Probably because of the special attention devoted to the appointment of Juriste, Bawcutt regards Cinthio as 'the model for Shakespeare's opening scene in *Measure for Measure*'.[6] The differences are in fact quite consequential and should not be overlooked.

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[4]Quotations from *Measure for Measure* are followed by line reference to Bawcutt (1991).
[5]J.Black, 'The Unfolding of *Measure for Measure*', in *Shakespeare Survey*, 26 (1973), pp. 119-28.
[6]Bawcutt, p. 17.

Juriste, the substitute in Cinthio's *novella*, is not only put to the test by the Emperor, but by the brief description of his character we can also predict that he is going to fail: 'Juriste was more pleased with the office to which the Emperor called him than sound in knowledge of his own nature.'[7] Angelo, aware of the responsibilities his commission implies, asks the Duke to make 'some more test of [his] mettle' (*Measure*, 1.1.49). The Duke evades Angelo's request and hastily silences him: 'No more evasion.' (*Measure*, 1.1.51) In Cinthio, Emperor Maximian himself warns Juriste against the risks of his new position:

> If therefore you do not feel it incumbent on you to behave in this way I urge you (since every man is not good for every thing), do not take up this charge, but rather remain here at Court, where I hold you dear, in your accustomed duties.[8]

The Duke's perplexity, 'What figure of us think you he will bear?' (*Measure*, 1.1.17), is outweighed by the urgency with which Angelo is appointed. Angelo's attempt at delaying the Duke's departure - 'Yet give leave, my lord,/ That we may bring you something on the way' (*Measure*, 1.1.61-2) - is foiled by the Duke's dismissive, 'My haste may not admit it.'(*Measure*, 1.1.63) The shift of emphasis from the Emperor's decision to put his substitute to the test in Cinthio to the Duke's necessity of finding a substitute who can make up for his own mistakes in Shakespeare suggests that the Duke is more concerned with the outcome of his stratagem than with the risks it implies for Angelo.

The substitute punctually fails. In the sources, the substitute's abuse of power is always double: he sacrifices the law to his own desires, and commits the same crime he is prosecuting by raping his victim. In Shakespeare, both infractions undergo significant revision.

In many of the sources, the necessity of enforcing the law is constantly in the foreground. In *Epitia*, for example, the additional character of the Podestà is especially devised to advocate the absoluteness and infallibility of the law. When Juriste contemplates the possibility of sparing Epitia's brother, the Podestà opposes his decision by arguing that 'The law is the law',[9] and that an act of mercy would undermine the

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[7]Bullough, p. 421.
[8]Bullough, p. 421.
[9]Bullough, p. 433.

foundations of retributive justice. It is interesting to notice that the Podestà compares justice to 'a pure, chaste, young virgin' in the hands of the city ruler. Juriste's "act of mercy" would therefore lead not only to the actual violation of Epitia's body, but also to the perversion of the spirit of justice. The association of rape with an offence against a public institution in the motif of the corrupt magistrate recalls the recurrent image in English Renaissance drama of rape as the violation of a country's independence (See, for example, *The Rape of Lucrece*, *Titus Andronicus*, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* or *The Warres of Cyrus*). This association, however, has a purely figurative value. When the seriousness of the two crimes is judged from a purely legal point of view, the comparison is no longer tenable. In *Epitia*, the Emperor considers Juriste's failure to carry out his side of the deal and marry his victim a worse crime than rape, because whereas rape is only (sic) regarded as an offence against an individual, Juriste's breach of the agreement with Epitia is an open contravention of the law. R.A.Houlbrooke, in his book *The English Family 1450-1700*, explains that

> [a]lthough Church, community and the couple themselves expected the process of marriage to be completed by a public ceremony, its indispensable core lay in words of consent which could be exchanged privately. On this law and popular custom agreed.[10]

The agreement between Juriste and Epitia had the same legal status of a marriage contract. Hence the Emperor's shocking remark,

> Emp. Less monstrous had it been if he had raped
> Her only, and not offered her the outrage
> Of faithful marriage promises; he then
> Merely her modesty had violated. Now
> Not only her has he offended, but
> The King of Heaven, good faith and righteousness,
> The laws of marriage both divine and human.[11]

Law is here the direct projection of a universal order, a guarantee against chaos, and far more important than the rights and welfare of an individual. Law is enforced and order is unfailingly restored.[12]

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[10]R.A.Houlbrooke, *The English Family: 1450-1700* (London: Longman, 1984), pp. 80-1.
[11]Bullough, p. 440.

This is clearly not the case in *Measure for Measure*. Angelo uses the Podestà's arguments to justify his initial rejection of Isabella's pleading: real mercy, he explains to Isabella, coincides with the enforcement of the law. The same arguments are endorsed by the Duke's wise old councillor, Escalus:

> Justice: Lord Angelo is severe.
> Escalus: It is but needful.
> Mercy is not itself that oft looks so;
> Pardon is still the nurse of second woe.
> (*Measure,* 2.1.269-71)

Angelo, however, soon changes his mind. Although still determined to execute Claudio before the Duke comes to his rescue, Angelo is no longer convinced that the law should be enforced at all costs. Temptation opens the way to doubt. Once Angelo has given '[his] sensual race the rein' (*Measure for Measure*, 2.4.161), laws become to him like empty vessels, echoing a voice he no longer recognises:

> Ang. When I would pray and think, I think and pray
> To several subjects. Heaven hath my empty words,
> Whilst my invention, hearing not my tongue,
> Anchors on Isabel; Heaven in my mouth,
> As if I did but only chew his name,
> And in my heart the strong and swelling evil
> Of my conception. The state whereon I studied
> Is like a good thing, being often read,
> Grown seared and tedious;
> (*Measure*, 2.4.1-9)

God and the state are no longer absolute certainties from which the law derives the reason of its existence. Angelo has by now come to see the law as an inadequate, man-made remedy for human imperfection, which can be used to one's own advantage. Angelo realises that laws are not divine, and their legitimacy is determined by mutable circumstances:

> Ang. O place, O form,

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[12]Cinthio's novella is exceptional in that Juriste is forgiven despite his responsibility in the execution of Epitia's brother. In *Epitia* and *Promos and Cassandra*, however, law is never blended with mercy; the magistrate is forgiven only when the overlord finds out that the heroine's brother is still alive.

How often dost thou with thy case, thy habit,
Wrench awe from fools and tie the wiser souls
To thy false seeming! Blood, thou art blood.
Let's write 'good angel' on the devil's horn,
'Tis now the devil's crest.
(*Measure* 2.4.12-7)

Human justice, once the divine paragon is lost, becomes a paradox, a practical impossibility. It is ironic that Angelo should use approximately the same words to argue first that the fallibility of human judges does not impair the effectiveness of the law - 'I not deny/ The jury passing on the prisoner's life/ May in the sworn twelve have a thief or two/ Guiltier than him they try.' (*Measure* 2.1.18-21) - and then, exactly the opposite point - 'O let her brother live!/ Thieves for their robbery have authority/ When judges steal themselves.' (*Measure*, 2.2.178-80).

One might object that this sceptical view of the law is used by Angelo as an excuse to give way to his lust and force Isabella to accept his proposal, and not a view the play encourages its audience to consider seriously. An analysis of Shakespeare's revision of the second crime committed by the substitute in the sources provides enough evidence to meet this objection and to reinforce the hypothesis that Shakespeare, while adapting the motif of "the corrupt magistrate", imposed on the original material a new sceptical view of the law and of its efficacy in securing justice.

Angelo is the first "corrupt magistrate" whose plans are foiled, and Isabella is the first victim to escape rape. Shakespeare's unprecedented introduction of the motif of the bed trick offers Isabella a chance her predecessors had never had before. Why did Shakespeare go to such a great length in changing the plot of the original story? And why should rape be avoided? What makes Isabella different from her predecessors?

In the sources, the term 'rape' is used to define the judge's offence against the heroine, but there is no sense of physical violation, and the heroine refuses to comply with the judge's proposal for reasons of a social, rather than a moral or personal, nature. As Cinthio's heroine explains, she '[does] not wish to put [her] honour in danger'.[13] The heroine refuses because rape, i.e. unlawful sex, would destroy her reputation and her future marriage prospects. What matters is not autonomy and self-respect, but honour and reputation. It is therefore not surprising that Epitia and Cassandra, unlike Isabella, accept

[13]Bullough, p. 424.

the deal as soon as the magistrate promises that marriage will follow to legalise their relationship. Isabella's predecessors accept marriage to their rapists even if they are physically repelled by them, because marriage is seen as a viable, honourable solution to rape. In the sources, the heroine does not only get married to her rapist, but also pleads for his life.[14] The woman accepts her new role and when her husband is sentenced to death she overcomes her 'natural' aversion and performs her marital duty by invoking mercy on his behalf:

> Cass. Nature wyld mee my Brother love, now dutie commaunds mee
> To preferre before kyn or friend my Husbands safetie.
> ...
> And shall I seeke to save his blood, that lately sought his lyfe?
> O yea, I then was sworne his foe: but nowe as faithfull Wife
> I must and wyll preferre his health, God sende me good successe:
> For nowe unto the King I wyll, my chaunged minde to expresse.[15]

In the sources the heroine's attitude changes from fierce impulsive desire for revenge, to utter devotion and loyalty. Her forgiveness stems from the overruling supremacy of social duties over private feelings.

In *Measure for Measure*, this necessity of enforcing the law at all costs and restoring order in society is defused by Isabella's formidable stature. A close analysis of the way in which Shakespeare expanded and strengthened her character will show why the traditional legal remedies to physical violation proposed by the sources could not have provided an acceptable compensation for Isabella.

The first major alteration occurs in the two pleading scenes at 2.2 and 2.4. Pleading, unlike locutionary acts, that is simple acts of speech through which information is exchanged between the speaker and the addressee, belongs to the category of illocutionary acts, that is 'performative acts' of speech, which, apart from the primary end of communication, perform a proper action.[16] Pleading is a form of persuasion or

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[14]Thomas Lupton's *Too Good to be True* differs from the rest of the direct sources and analogues by having the heroine rejoice at the news that her new husband will be sentenced to death. Here, however, the heroine is not a "spoilt virgin", but a widow, whose former husband had been killed by the corrupt magistrate: by refusing to plead for her new husband she proves faithful to the memory of her former husband, and reinforces the sacredness of the marital contract nonetheless.

[15]Bullough, p. 506.

[16]For a fuller discussion of the functions of speech and speech acts in Shakespeare, see J.A.Porter, *The Drama of Speech Acts: Shakespeare's Lancastrian Tetralogy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979).

seduction. In its etymological meaning, se-duction indicates the speaker's power to draw somebody towards one's own position, one's own argument, one's own body, ultimately towards oneself.

In *Hecatommithi*, Juriste is attracted by the young virgin's beauty as much as by her 'very sweet way of speaking':[17] Epitia's speech is therefore only incidentally "seductive". Cinthio reduced the emphasis on the heroine's rhetorical skills even more in *Epitia*, by turning Juriste into a victim of unrequited love: as the Argument suggests, 'Epitia pleads with Juriste, Governor of Innsbruck, a noble Lord, to spare her brother's life. He, *being in love with her*, promises to give her Vico free ...'.[18] (my italics) In *Promos and Cassandra*, the heroine insists on her inferiority and dependence on the magistrate's good will, and she manages to "move" him, mainly because she unwittingly excites fantasies of aggression and conquest:

> By proofe I finde no reason cooles desire,
> Cassandraes sute suffised to remove
> My lewde request, but contrarie, the fire
> *Hir teares* inflam'd, of lust and filthy Love.
> And having thus the *conquest* in my *handes*,
> No prayer serv'de to worke restraint in mee:
> But needes I woulde untye the precious bandes
> Of this fayre Dames spotles Virginitie.
> The *spoyle* was sweete, and *wonne* even as I woulde.[19]
> (added emphasis)

Isabella's use of pleading as a discursive strategy is unique in that, through her competence as a speaker, she quickly rises from a position of inferiority as a petitioner to Angelo's level. Lever perceives the power of Isabella's speech but identifies it with an overt appeal to Angelo's senses:

> Her plea for spiritual charity towards Claudio is transparently motivated by strong natural affection. Ethical principles are argued with hot-blooded passion. The *ad hominem* call for Angelo to acknowledge his own natural guiltiness is all too plainly *a femina* and inadvertently suggestive.[20]

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[17]Bullough, p. 421.
[18]Bullough, p. 431.
[19]Bullough, p. 468.
[20]Lever, p. lxxvii.

Lever therefore concludes that Isabella, like Angelo, is self-deceived. According to Lever, both hardly know themselves and their desires. This analysis applies to Angelo, but not to Isabella.

A closer analysis of her speeches in the two pleading scenes reveals how Isabella's power over Angelo is rhetorical rather than sexual, stemming from her competence as a speaker rather than from any unwitting sexual appeal. Unlike her predecessors, Isabella adopts an "offensive" strategy during their first encounter and challenges Angelo's sense of personal identity through a subtle use of deictic pronouns. She imperceptibly moves from an initial stage where Angelo is asked to identify himself with the convict - 'If he had been as you, and you as he,/ You would have slipped like him.' (*Measure*, 2.2.64-5) - to an intermediary stage where Angelo is invited to be Isabella - 'I would to heaven I had your potency,/ And you were Isabel' (*Measure*, 2.2.67-8) - to a final association of Angelo with Everyman - 'How would you be/ If He which is the top of judgement should/ But judge you as you are?' (*Measure*, 2.2.76-8). Isabella seduces Angelo from his safe position as reformer of human frailties to imagining himself as a common man among men, fallible and liable to be judged himself. The result of Isabella's speech is a complex sequence of substitutions: Angelo for Claudio, Angelo for Isabella, Angelo for Everyman. It is the last substitution, functional to Isabella's strategy - if Angelo can see himself as "fallen", he will probably forgive Claudio's slip - which forces Angelo to come to terms with his 'natural guiltiness':

> Isab. Go to your bosom,
> Knock there, and ask your heart what it doth know
> That's like my brother's fault; if it confess
> A natural guiltiness, such as is his,
> Let it not sound a thought upon your tongue
> Against my brother's life.
> (*Measure*, 2.2.138-43)

Angelo soon feels the pangs of his 'natural guiltiness', but such discovery does not make him reasonable and merciful. Once Angelo has been forced to look inside himself, he can no longer remove his gaze from what he sees.

The second pleading scene also differs significantly from the sources, where male solicitation is simply a wicked blackmail. In *Measure for Measure*, Angelo resumes the

rhetorical confrontation initiated by Isabella. Isabella tries to ignore the meaning of Angelo's words when he argues that there is no responsibility in 'compelled sins': 'Might there not be a charity in sin/ To save this brother's life?' (*Measure* 2.4.63-4). Isabella avoids this strait-jacket by selecting a different referent for Angelo's words: 'compelled sins', according to Angelo, refers to Isabella's compliance with his wishes. In Isabella's reply, 'Please you do't,/ I'll take it as a peril to my soul/ It is no sin at all, but charity' (*Measure*, 2.4.64-6), 'compelled sins' clearly refers to Angelo's charitable pardon of a criminal. This forces Angelo to restate his proposal: 'Nay, but hear me./ Your sense pursues not mine' (*Measure*, 2.4.73-4). He is aware of, and visibly irritated by, Isabella's attempt to defy his authority as a speaker: 'either you are ignorant,/ Or seem so craftily, and that's not good.' (*Measure*, 2.4.74-5) Isabella's reluctance to acknowledge the referent of his speech forces Angelo to 'speak more gross' (*Measure*, 2.4.82). Angelo resumes his attack, but pretends to speak on behalf of somebody else: 'Admit no other way to save his life - ... But, ... that you, his sister,/ Finding yourself desired of such a person/ Whose credit with the judge ... /Could fetch your brother from the manacles/ ... What would you do?' (*Measure*, 2.4.88-98). Angelo's ambiguity allows Isabella to regain momentum and launch herself into her famous speech, 'The impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies, ...' (*Measure*, 2.4.101). Angelo sets off on a fresh route, and uses Isabella's denial to question her notion of charity. Isabella retorts by defying Angelo's sense yet again. She points out that what Angelo proposes is 'foul redemption' and not 'lawful mercy'. Angelo is now ready to return the challenge and questions Isabella's view of the 'law' as a 'tyrant', and of her brother's 'sliding' as a 'merriment' rather than a 'vice'. Isabella is finally cornered; she is forced to admit that sometimes 'we speak not what we mean' (*Measure* 2.4.119). For the first time, Isabella is forced to surrender to Angelo's superiority as a speaker. Angelo then makes Isabella renounce her strength as a speaker and acknowledge her frailty as a woman: 'I do arrest your words. Be that you are,/ That is, a woman; if you be more, you're none.' (*Measure*, 2.4.135-6) As Angelo was forced by Isabella to acknowledge his 'natural guiltiness', Isabella is now forced to acknowledge her femininity and to conform to a conventional definition of womanhood. Her last desperate attempt to preserve her virginity significantly coincides with a reassertion of her autonomy as a speaker: 'I have no tongue but one; gentle my lord,/ Let me entreat you speak the former language.' (*Measure*, 2.4.140-1). Angelo's final remark, 'My words express my

purpose' (*Measure,* 2.4.149), sanctions his supremacy and Isabella is forced to choose between her brother's life and herself.

If we restrict our analysis to the issues debated during the two pleading scenes, we end up subscribing to the traditional interpretations of Isabella as a flawed character, guilty of 'cold-blooded self-regard'[21] and 'self-love',[22] and as extreme and inhuman a legalist as Angelo because, unlike her predecessors, she refuses to give up her body to ransom her brother's life. But if we consider the speakers' rhetorical confrontation, we realise that, apart from debating the difficult balance between strict legalism and mercy, Angelo and Isabella are both trying to manipulate each other's sense of identity through language, and, simultaneously, to resist manipulation themselves. By defying Angelo's identity as a ruler, Isabella turns a speech act like pleading, usually indicative of inferiority and dependency in the sources, into an extremely powerful assertion of her autonomy as a speaker. Whereas in the sources, identity is reduced to its social dimension, in *Measure for Measure* there is a gap between social and personal identity, which the speaker struggles to preserve.

This new conception of subjectivity also emerges from Isabella's distinctive reaction to male solicitation. As Lever points out,

> Isabella's dismay when she perceives Angelo's drift is as natural as the responses of Cassandra, Epitia and the others. What makes her conduct unique is her inability to surmount this initial reaction.[23]

It is also worth noting that Angelo never mentions marriage to Isabella, because what stops Isabella from accepting his proposal evidently has nothing to do with honour and reputation. The theme of marriage as a way to make rape socially acceptable is transferred to the Mariana subplot. The exchange between Mariana and the Duke in Act 5,

Duke:	... , are you married?
Mariana:	No, my lord.
Duke:	Are you a maid?
Mariana:	No, my lord.
Duke:	A widow then?
Mariana:	Neither, my lord.

[21]Lever, p. lxxiv.
[22]G.Bradshaw, *Shakespeare's Scepticism* (Brighton: Harvester, 1987), p. 202.
[23]Lever, p. lxxviii.

Duke: Why, you are nothing then: neither maid, widow, nor wife?
(*Measure*, 5.1.171-8)

is very similar to Cassandra's reflections upon her new predicament: 'I monster now, no mayde nor wife.'[24] The division of the primary story into the Mariana and the Isabella sub-plots stresses the difference between the necessity of "acting" conventional roles in society, and a deeper, specifically female, concern with personal autonomy. The body of a virgin is transformed from a commodity, bartered in the sources for the title of "wife", into the focal point of female subjectivity.

A comparison of *Measure for Measure* with its sources therefore confutes those readings of Isabella, like Schanzer's, according to which her refusal of the proposal is determined by a legalistic respect of religious principles. Significantly enough, those critics who subscribe to Schanzer's theory cannot account for Isabella's enthusiastic acceptance of the bed trick: 'The image of it gives me content already, and I trust it will grow to a most prosperous perfection.' (*Measure for Measure*, 3.1.260-1). How can Isabella, who according to Schanzer is as rigidly legalistic as Angelo, possibly accept the idea of tricking Angelo into bed with a woman, who is *not* his wife? How could Isabella let Angelo commit the same crime as Claudio and call it 'a prosperous perfection'?

James Black indirectly justifies Isabella's reaction by arguing that since Mariana's selfless sacrifice is the best example of the characters' increasing willingness to prefer action to ideals, communion to seclusion, no negative connotation should be attached to the bed trick.[25] Nuttall alternatively explains that Isabella's reaction is not meant to reflect her psychology but to provoke a similarly positive reaction in the audience.[26] The bed trick, in other words, is only a means to an end, and the end justifies it. More convincing is Wentersdorf's theory according to which Isabella's apparently contradictory attitude toward pre-nuptial relationships is due to the fact that clandestine marriages represented a delicate, legally doubtful issue at the time when *Measure for Measure* was written. Whilst considered illicit but morally acceptable by the canon law, clandestine marriages were illegal according to the civil law. Given the legal complexity of the case, Wentersdorf

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[24]Bullough, p. 469.
[25]'The Unfolding of *Measure for Measure*', pp. 124ff.
[26]A.D.Nuttall, '*Measure for Measure*: The Bed-Trick', in *Shakespeare Survey*, 28 (1975), p. 55.

argues, there is no real inconsistency in Isabella's reactions.[27] All these theories are plausible but ultimately irrelevant, because they overlook what the bed trick happens to replace in the sources. The bed trick, after all, is an alternative to rape, and Isabella's acceptance, yet again, reveals a new sense of the self. The revision of the pleading scenes produced a new heroine, whose main trait is not so much an absolute respect for the letter of the laws of God, as an absolute respect for her chastity and spiritual integrity. Isabella's acceptance of the bed trick is therefore perfectly in keeping with her character and with the changes Shakespeare introduced in the pleading scenes. Only when analysed out of context does the bed trick appear as a *novella*-like device, at odds with the crude reality of the Viennese underworld, or as a trial to test Isabella's Christian abnegation. When analysed within the context of the play, Shakespeare's introduction of the bed trick appears dramatically necessary to reinforce the idea of the inadequacy of marriage as a compensation for the heroine's loss of her virginity. The bed trick, the only viable alternative to rape in Shakespeare, must prevent rather than compensate that loss.

The question of Isabella's pardon in Act 5 has also been misinterpreted as a consequence of a more general misreading of her character. In the sources, the heroine forgives her rapist only because she becomes his wife. In *Measure for Measure*, Mariana is in love with Angelo, and her benevolent attitude towards him is to be attributed to her feelings more than to a sudden change of social status. Isabella's pardon, on the other hand, ever since R.W.Chambers' influential 1937 British Academy Lecture 'The Jacobean Shakespeare and *Measure for Measure*', has been repeatedly read as an unprecedented example of purely disinterested Christian forgiveness. This interpretation, like the traditionally negative perception of Isabella's involvement in the bed trick, relies on an assumed priority of religious and moral concerns over the other crucial issue of personal autonomy highlighted by Shakespeare's revision of the pleading scenes. Bullough, probably because he is aware of the radical differences between Isabella and her predecessors, rejects a Christian interpretation of Isabella's pardon:

> She pardons; she says Angelo was probably sincere until he met her; she admits that Claudio was justly condemned; she distinguishes between the

[27]K.P.Wentersdorf, 'The Marriage Contracts in *Measure for Measure*: a Reconsideration', in *Shakespeare Survey*, 32 (1979), pp. 129-44.

> act and the intention; but this is not fully Christian forgiveness. She does not love her enemy; nor should we wish it.[28]

Isabella *does* pardon Angelo, but only because, unlike her predecessors, she has escaped rape. If she is able to forgive Angelo, it is partly because she knows that her brother was guilty of the crime he was sentenced for, but most of all because Angelo has not prevailed upon her, and has failed to make her wear the 'destined livery': 'Be that you are,/ That is, a woman.' (*Measure* 2.4.135-6).

The alterations introduced in the earlier stages of the play impair our reception of the happy ending. The disturbing resemblance between the overlord and his substitute in Act 1 had resulted in the loss of a divine paragon of justice and reinforced a sceptical view of the law. If in the sources the law was divine and unquestionable, the law in *Measure for Measure* is too strict and inflexible and its enforcement can be tyrannical. In the wrong hands, power becomes manipulative and threatens the subject's autonomy. How can we possibly assume, then, that the final reinforcement of the law in Vienna reflects the unfolding of divine Providence through the action of the supreme ruler, as it does in the sources? When the Duke finally manages to restore justice, his accomplishments are far from satisfactory. He forces Lucio to marry a prostitute and Angelo a woman he has obviously never loved, and then reduces Isabella to a stunned silence by advancing his own proposal, thus reinforcing his initial resemblance with Angelo. It is hard to believe that the Duke's mercy is welcomed by the characters who receive it. For Isabella in particular, the Duke's final act of mercy represents yet another challenge to her sense of personal autonomy as a virgin. The comic resolution at the end of *Measure for Measure* fails to communicate a real sense of relief because there is no actual development in the play. In the sources, from an initial situation of order, the audience is led through disorder and distress back to stability and legality; in *Measure for Measure* the action opens on a distressed leader who cannot rule his country properly, and closes on an act of mercy which, apart from leaving the situation in Vienna virtually unchanged, denies those very values that Shakespeare's revision of his sources had highlighted in the previous four acts.

The conclusions reached at the end of this analysis of Shakespeare's handling of the motif of "the corrupt magistrate" openly contradict both Christian and generally

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[28]Bullough, p. 416.

"optimistic" readings of the play, like Schanzer's, who sums up *Measure for Measure* into a mildly humanistic, but profoundly conservative, lesson: 'the poet's plea', Schanzer reassures his reader, 'seems to be for a more humane and less literal interpretation of the law, both man-made and divine, ... and for the seasoning of Justice with Mercy'.[29] Schanzer attributed to Shakespeare a vision of justice which in fact belongs to other humanistic writers of the time, such as Thomas Elyot or Francis Bacon.[30] According to the present analysis, Shakespeare's view of justice was much more cynical and disillusioned than that offered by either Elyot or Bacon. Shakespeare's view of justice in *Measure for Measure* can be more safely compared to that of a successor. In his masterpiece, *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes reflects quite closely Shakespeare's ideas about human justice as they are expressed in *Measure for Measure*:

> The finall Cause, End, or Designe of men, (who naturally love Liberty, and Dominion over others,) in the introduction of that restraint upon themselves, (in which wee see them live in Common-wealths,) is the foresight of their own preservation, and of a more contented life thereby; that is to say, of getting themselves out from that miserable condition of Warre, which is necessarily consequent ... to the naturall Passions of men , when there is no visible Power to keep them in awe, and tye them by feare of punishment to the performance of their Covenants.[31]

It is only the 'foresight of their own preservation' which leads individuals to renounce unrestrained freedom and obey laws, and it is only the 'feare of punishment' which impels subjects to obedience. Laws are, according to Hobbes, man-made and therefore imperfect, and it is only a voluntary act of submission which makes laws infallible.

This sceptical view of society is completely absent from the sources: in the sources society is blessed by the final attainment of justice, and the state of nature is abhorred. In *Promos and Cassandra*, Andrugio, who is forced to repair to the forest to hide from Juriste, clearly associates the state of nature with savagery and loss of dignity:

> Andr. A hollow Cave for house and bed in worth Andrugio takes.
> Such sorie foode as fortune sendes he syldome nowe forsakes.
> I am my selfe forsoothe nowe Butcher, Cooke, Cater and all:

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[29]Schanzer, p. 117.
[30]Schanzer, p. 119.
[31]T.Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. by R.Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 117.

Yea, often tymes I fall to sleepe with none or supper small.[32]

Society, on the other hand, regulated and informed by laws and social conventions, is seen as the 'natural' state of the Free Man: 'Then who is he so mad, that friendes and freedome doth enjoye,/ That wyll adventure breach of lawe to lyve in this annoye?' (*Promos and Cassandra*, p.502)

This "optimistic" vision of society disappears when the story is rewritten by Shakespeare in *Measure for Measure*. Whilst Cinthio and Whetstone encourage their audience to believe in the existence of universal principles and moral values, embodied by the law and protected through its enforcement, Shakespeare's scepticism in *Measure for Measure* anticipates a modern liberal view of justice. Modern democracies are based on the principle of negative freedom. Every one, in other words, is free provided that they do not interfere with somebody else's equal right to freedom. Law is no longer seen as the projection of a divine, infallible authority, but as a man-made, fallible (and hence perfectible) remedy against chaos. Similarly authority is also seen as a human construction instead of a metaphysical necessity, and can therefore be criticised and the standards of human justice improved. Whereas Schanzer's traditional interpretation of the play reduces Shakespeare's extremely modern vision of power to that of his contemporaries and predecessors, a wider-scoped analysis of his direct sources highlights those aspects of *Measure for Measure* which make Shakespeare one of the great forerunners of liberalism.

One might object that reading *Measure for Measure* as a democratic manifesto is as misleading as reading this play as a Christian allegory of mercy and forgiveness, or as badly anachronistic as reading it as a romantic parable of social benevolence, on a par with Cinthio and Whetstone. My conclusions, however, are not at odds with the anti-democratic lesson we learn from Shakespeare's Roman plays. The ideal society that the Duke fails to recreate in Vienna at the end of the play is still strongly class-orientated, hierarchical and authoritarian, i.e. led by a powerful ruler who guarantees order and stability to his countrymen. What my analysis has highlighted is a profoundly "democratic" concern for personal identity and individual rights, which are under threat in a strongly authoritarian society which is starting to lose its legitimacy. King James's efforts to reinforce the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings are indicative of the strain Renaissance humanism

[32]Bullough, p. 502.

and the Reformation had put on the metaphysical foundation of monarchical absolutism. If *Measure for Measure* was actually written to voice the political ideas James had expressed in his *Basilikon Doron* and *True Law of Free Monarchies*, as D.L.Stevenson and Elizabeth Pope, among others, have claimed,[33] it cannot possibly have been written to flatter the king as a straight compliment. If Shakespeare had meant to flatter the king he would probably have preferred the encomiastic genre of the court masque to the realistic mode of comedy. Given the quality of Shakespeare's revision of his sources it seems more likely that *Measure for Measure*, if written with James in mind, was intended to engage the king's attention by voicing his ideas but also by testing them against the strong undercurrent of anxiety and trepidation with which the new foreign monarch was saluted on his accession to the throne of England.

[33]D.L.Stevenson, 'The Role of James I in Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*', in *ELH*, vol.26 (1959), pp. 188-208; E.Pope, 'The Renaissance Background of *Measure for Measure*', in *Shakespeare Survey*, 2 (1949), pp. 66-82.

PART II

Architect of his own Ruin ?

The Ruler in Disguise in 'Measure for Measure'

A contrastive analysis of *Measure for Measure* with its direct sources has highlighted a few interesting departures from the far-travelled motif of the corrupt magistrate: a new heroine who refuses to sacrifice herself to save her brother; a new villain, who has lost the evil single-mindedness of his predecessors to acquire the stature of a tragic character; and, a new overlord, who can no longer afford to rely on the heroine's self-effacing sacrifice to guarantee the restoration of social harmony and order at the end of the play. Vincentio's task is most unfortunate. Like his predecessors, he must re-establish order by punishing vice and rewarding virtue, but, unlike his predecessors, he can only devise a happy ending which provides no satisfactory answers to the central issues *Measure for Measure* explores through Angelo and Isabella, i.e. the paradoxical inadequacy of human justice and a new concept of the self which exceeds the limits of the social.

A thorough evaluation of the character of the Duke cannot however rely solely on a comparison of *Measure for Measure* with its direct sources. Since Shakespeare added the motif of the "disguised ruler" to the original story, it is crucial to trace the origins of this stock character and establish what use Shakespeare made of it before we can pass any reasonable judgement on the Duke.

The sweeping popularity of this conventional character in contemporary dramatic satire must have influenced Shakespeare as much as the romantic tradition of the direct sources. A considerable number of plays staged in London around 1604-1605 includes a ruler in disguise among their characters. Among these, Middleton's *The Phoenix* (1604), Marston's *The Malcontent* and *The Fawn* (1604) and Edward Sharpham's *The Fleire* (1604-5), are still widely read and studied. Despite substantial differences, these plays form a distinctive group. The figure of authority in disguise manages without fail to unmask scheming courtiers, usurpers and venal lawyers, to expose crimes, foil plots and redress all sorts of abuses against order and justice. By taking on a disguise, the ruler enhances his power. Disguise enables him to see through

deception and neutralise his adversaries. In 1976, Rosalind Miles was among the first to assess the central role of disguise in *Measure for Measure* and to establish its affiliation with the "disguised ruler plays":

> This full and free-ranging use of disguise must have afforded some food for thought to Shakespeare. The connection between the disguised duke, *irony* and *social satire* which was made in 1604 and 1605 had revitalised a stock figure and turned it into an important part of the contemporary drama.[1]

The element of irony, satire and transgression, ignored by Chambers and his followers, was now forcibly brought to light. Miles' approach was adopted by Thomas Pendleton, who also stressed the necessity of establishing the function of the prominent feature of disguise in *Measure for Measure*: 'it is by means of the disguised duke structure that Shakespeare transformed the monstrous ransom plot into the play we have.'[2] In line with Miles and Pendleton is Brian Gibbons, who, after a quick review of the traditional sources, devoted a considerable part of the introduction to his 1991 Cambridge edition of *Measure for Measure* to both Middleton and Marston. An allusion to *Promos and Cassandra* in *Love's Labour's Lost* led Gibbons to assume that if Shakespeare had known one of the main sources of *Measure for Measure* for a long time before he decided to use it, 'external events and circumstances [must have] prompted his decision to base a play on it now, in 1603-4'.[3]

A comparison with the other rulers in disguise highlights a lack of charisma and leadership in Shakespeare's Duke. Miles noticed that although the Duke overall 'conforms to the traditional figure of the wise ruler spying in disguise,' his character fails to captivate our sympathy because of some obvious shortcomings:

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[1]Miles, p. 160.
[2]T.A.Pendleton, 'Shakespeare's Disguised Duke Play: Middleton, Marston and the Sources of *Measure for Measure*', in *"Fanned and Winnowed Opinions": Shakespearean Essays Presented to Harold Jenkins*, ed. by J.W.Mahon and T.A.Pendleton (London and New York: Methuen, 1987), p. 80.
[3]W.Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, ed. by B.Gibbons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 12.

> [t]he Duke's lack of involvement with the other characters, and his failure to emerge as a convincing agent of reform, mean that he does not measure up to contemporary standards of the benign and committed disguised duke.[4]

Pendleton, who, like Miles, considered the satirical tradition of Marston and Middleton a more direct source of inspiration for Shakespeare than the romantic tradition of the sources, expresses the same dissatisfaction with the Duke and the comic resolution:

> To submit the anguishes of Angelo, Isabella and Claudio to the superintendance of an observer in the style of Phoenix is to lessen their force, to trivialise them. And to allow the readjustment and rehabilitation of such natures to become the substance of the plot is to reduce the social observation and correction - for which the disguised duke frame ostensibly exists - to virtual inconsequentiality. ... The examples of Marston's *Malevole* and Middleton's *The Phoenix* provide no solution to the problems and difficulties of Vincentio's characterisation; rather they suggest he is not so much a stage duke as a failed stage duke.[5]

Soon after 1605 Jacobean dramatists suddenly stopped writing satirical plays where the main character is a figure of authority in disguise. The convention however survived, although it was employed in different dramatic contexts and for different purposes. After 1605 the stock character of the disguised ruler evolved in two different directions: the idealised disguised monarch in Jacobean court masques, and the grotesque, disguised justice of the peace in Jacobean city comedies. The convention had also had important precedents prior to 1604. Miles realised that a few Elizabethan history plays, Shakespeare's *Henry V* among them, also made use of this stock character, and that they should be studied in relation to *Measure for Measure* because 'they help to suggest the pattern of behaviour of the disguised duke in the Elizabethan period, a pattern against which Shakespeare's Duke shows up somewhat strangely'.[6]

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[4]Miles, p. 180.
[5]Pendleton, p. 90, 97.
[6]Miles, p. 136.

Following Miles, I have studied *Measure for Measure* in relation to a wide range of dramatic texts dated from around 1590 up to 1615, which either present the character of the ruler in disguise or explore the motif of disguise in relation to the administration of power and justice. These dramatic texts, which range from Elizabethan history plays, to a significant sample of the so-called "disguised ruler plays", to later Jacobean masques and city comedies, reflect the main stages of the evolution of the convention of the ruler in disguise and can help us contextualise the use of this convention in *Measure for Measure*. For clarity's sake, I have examined these texts in a loosely chronological order, and I have arranged my discussion around four main topics: the identity of the disguiser, the quality and function of his disguise, and the outcome of the disguiser's endeavours.

2.1. *The Convention of the Disguised Ruler on the Elizabethan Stage*

Elizabethan history plays have often been studied in relation to Shakespeare's own histories, but hardly ever in relation to *Measure for Measure*. Two relevant exceptions are Leonard Tennenhouse and Anne Barton. The former has compared the use of disguise on the Elizabethan stage with Shakespeare's Duke in *Measure for Measure,*[7] whereas the latter has studied the festive encounter between a king in disguise and his humble subjects in Elizabethan history plays in relation to Shakespeare's adaptation of this *locus classicus* in *Henry V*, Act 4 sc.1, when the king visits his troops incognito to test their morale before Agincourt.[8] Tennenhouse concludes that despite belonging to the same dramatic tradition, the early histories and *Measure for Measure* offer distinct views of kingship. Anne Barton similarly underlines Shakespeare's distance from his models. In the earlier histories, she argues, the 'king's disguise

[7] L.Tennenhouse, 'Representing Power: *Measure for Measure* in its Time', in *The Power of Forms in English Renaissance*, ed. by S.Greenblatt (Norman, Oklahoma: Pilgrim Books, 1982), pp. 139-56.
[8] A.Barton, 'The King Disguised: Shakespeare's *Henry V* and the Comical History', in *Essays Mainly Shakespearean* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 207-33.

demands to be seen as a romantic gesture,' and represents the 'essential prerequisite for the ease and success of the meeting between the private man and the king'.[9] In *Henry V* disguise is instead perceived by the soldiers as a form of deception, because the encounter with the disguised king, Barton continues, fails to generate 'harmony, good fellowship and mutual understanding'.[10]

Tennenhouse and Barton effectively underline Shakespeare's original use of the convention, but they overlook the complexity and problematic character of the earlier histories. Barton, for example, limited her investigation to the encounter between the disguised king and his subjects; however, a wider-scoped analysis of the several different aspects of the motif of disguise reveals no stark contrast, as Barton propounds, but interesting parallels between early Elizabethan histories and *Henry* V (and *Measure for Measure*), which can help us establish Shakespeare's own use of this motif more carefully and in more detail.

The disguiser in Elizabethan histories represents the highest authority in the play, generally a king, but he is not necessarily a positive or likeable character. Thomas Heywood's King Edward IV (1600),[11] for example, is first described as a 'wanton king' (*Edward IV,* p.5) by his mother, the Duchess of York, for preferring a lusty young widow of undignified origins to the daughter of the king of France, and then as a 'ling'ring king' (*Edward IV,* p.27) by his political opponent Falconbridge, for leaving the Lord Mayor and a bunch of faithful citizens to withstand the siege of London.

The disguiser hardly ever adopts disguise 'for reasons that are fundamentally exploratory and quixotic, ... much in the spirit of Haroun al Raschid, the caliph of the *Arabian Nights* who liked to walk the streets of Baghdad incognito, in search of the marvellous and the strange', as Barton would have us believe.[12] Romance motivates William the Conqueror to put on a disguise and travel to the Danish court in *Fair Em* (*c.*

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[9]Barton, p. 212.
[10]Barton, p. 216.
[11]T.Heywood, *The First and Second Part of King Edward IV*, ed. by Barron Field (London: The Shakespeare Society, 1842).
[12]Barton, p. 212.

1590).[13] Sheer lust and a predictable concern for his reputation lead Edward IV to conceal his identity during his furtive visits to Mistress Shore's lodgings. Duke Vincentio's irritated denial, 'No, holy father, throw away that thought./ Believe not that the dribbling dart of love/ Can pierce a complete bosom.' (*Measure*, 1.3.1-3), and his unexpected proposal to Isabella in the last scene reveal a possible link between *Measure for Measure* and these two history plays. This parallel is all the more significant, given that none of the rulers in disguise in the contemporary "disguised ruler plays", nor any of the overlords of the direct sources share this romantic trait with Shakespeare's Duke.

The decision of putting on a disguise is often seen as morally condemnable by the other characters in the play: in *King Edward The First* (1593),[14] Edmund tries to convince the king his brother that wandering around in disguise does not become a king. Later on in the same play, disguise is associated with deception: when the king, disguised as a friar, finds out the truth about his unfaithful queen, he unmasks in order to stress that his pain is genuine -'Hence faigned weedes, unfaigned is my griefe.' (*Edward The First*, l.2800) It is also interesting to notice that Edward's choice of disguising as a friar - 'ile be *ghostlie Father* for this once' (*Edward I*, l.2619; my italics) - is not only imitated by Shakespeare's Duke - 'And to behold his sway/ I will, as 'twere a brother of your order,/ Visit both prince and people.' (*Measure*, 1.3.43-5) -, but also echoed in Abhorson's line, 'Look you, sir, here comes your *ghostly father*' (*Measure*, 4.3.45). This verbal parallel is merely suggestive, because the adjective 'ghostlie' was commonly associated with religious or holy figures, in charge of a penitent or one near death.[15] But there is a slight chance that it might derive from Shakespeare's first hand knowledge of the play, or from a distant memory of this character.[16] If so, the Duke's choice to disguise as a friar and this verbal parallel might indicate a similar uneasiness

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[13] *Fair Em* (New York and London: Garland, 1980).

[14] G.Peele, *King Edward the First*, Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911).

[15] *Oxford English Dictionary*, 'ghostly', a., 1.c..

[16] *King Edward the First* must have been quite popular around the time when Shakespeare started his career as a man of the theatre. A play called *Longshank* was repeatedly performed by the Admiral's Men at the Rose around 1595-96. Although the identification of *Edward the First* with *Longshank* is doubtful (See, N.Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 68-9), the fact that Peele's play was published twice, the first time in 1593 and then again in 1599, confims its popularity.

in both *Edward The First* and *Measure for Measure*, associated with the trespass of secular figures into the spiritual domain of religion (Edward I, like the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, does not only wear the habit but he also performs the sacrament of Confession at his wife's death-bed).

In *Edward IV*, disguise is again negatively connotated. The king rejects Howard's advice not to "dress down" as a common serving-man, and dismissively replies: 'Good cousin Howard, grudge not at the jest, ... I must have my humour.' (*Edward IV*, p.48) Disguise is a 'jest', a caprice, and retains that traditionally negative connotation it inherited from its association with the character of the Vice in medieval moralities.

The use the ruler makes of disguise is also questionable. Edward I ignores the mystery and secrecy attached to confession and deviously gains access to his wife's death bed, and Edward IV uses disguise to protect his reputation while busy harassing Mistress Shore. In *Edward IV* we learn from Shore that 'When kings themselves so narrowly do pry/ Into the world, men fear' (*Edward IV*, p. 80). Instead of serving a social or political purpose like in the later "disguised ruler plays", disguise is condemned as a sinful practice that, as Emersley remarks, keeps the king from more important matters of state: 'He [the king] can be spared from these great affairs,/ And wonder here disguised in this sort.' (*Edward IV*, p. 80) Far from enjoying a 'power that comes from peering into the secret recesses of [his] subjects' souls',[17] the king in *Edward IV* represents a real threat to his subjects. After the disguised king has persuaded Shore's wife to move to court, Shore realises that he should have kept his 'treasure' away from the '*gazer's eye*' (*Edward IV*, p.69; my italics). Instead of guaranteeing protection and order, the ruler's gaze intrudes his subjects' privacy and spoils their private happiness. Even if Shore condemns open disobedience, 'I'll not examine his [the king's] prerogative,' he condemns the double standard that allows the king to infringe the law and remain unpunished. Shore's complaint - 'a mighty one, like him,/ Whose greatness may gild over ugly sin' (*Edward IV*, p. 80) - anticipates a

[17]Tennenhouse, p. 144.

concern which will become central to Lear's reflections on the paradox of power and human justice in Shakespeare's later tragedy. Shore's complaint also recalls the motif of the corrupt magistrate in the direct sources of *Measure for Measure*, but with a substantial difference: in the sources, only the substitutes use their authority to hide their crimes, and they are eventually unmasked and punished for it by the overlord; in a play like *Edward IV*, it is the highest authority on earth, the king himself, who takes advantage of his position to get away with breaking the law.

As with *King Edward The First*, there are striking verbal parallels between *Edward IV* and *Measure for Measure*, which suggest Shakespeare's possible, if not direct, derivation, of the motif of the ruler in disguise from Heywood. Friar Peter's defence of Friar Lodovick, *alias* Vincentio, 'I know him for a man divine and holy,/ Not scurvy, nor a temporary *meddler*,' (*Measure*, 5.1.144-5) echoes Shore's line, 'When kings are *meddlers*, meaner men must rue.' (*Edward IV*, p.81) Shore's harsh arraignment of his wife 'Thou art nor widow, maid, nor wife' (*Edward IV*, p.86) is also reproduced almost *verbatim* in the Duke's arraignment of Mariana in *Measure for Measure*: 'Why, you are nothing then: neither maid, widow, nor wife?' (5.1.178) A possible indebtedness to *Edward IV*, where the act of disguising is so negatively connotated, inevitably casts a dark shadow on the Duke in *Measure for Measure*.

As a whole, disguise in Elizabethan history plays is far from being the legitimate and romantic device described by Barton. The only play to which this principle applies is *George a Greene* (*c.* 1590),[18] where a sense of unanimity of opinion and mutual respect are actually successfully achieved when the king and the pinner of Wakefield get together. But in the other Elizabethan history plays analysed here, the possibility of a miraculous encounter between the ruler and the ruled is obfuscated by the host of negative traits associated with disguise. In *Edward IV*, for example, Hobs, like George a Green, refuses to be knighted, but not because his gesture is meant to reassert the legitimacy and the *raison d'être* of the hierarchy. Hobs, like Shore, is simply trying to

[18]?R.Greene, *George a Greene: The Pinner of Wakefield*, in *The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene*, ed. by J.Churton Collins, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), II, pp. 159-217.

keep his 'treasure', that is his humble but contented life, away from the 'gazer's eye'. Similarly, the 'structural interdependence of monarch and state'[19] highlighted by Tennenhouse in his analysis of Elizabethan history plays is not a political axiom, but the focus of the dramatic tension.

The similarities in the use of the convention of the disguised ruler in early Elizabethan history plays and *Measure for Measure* are illuminating: they throw light on the characterisation of the Duke and emphasise the distance between *Measure for Measure* and the contemporary theatrical phenomenon of the "disguised ruler plays". Whereas Miles and Pendleton regard the standard set by the disguised ruler as the norm, and the Duke's shortcomings as exceptional, the similarities between the Duke and his predecessors in Elizabethan history plays prove that Shakespeare's Duke actually represents the traditional standard, and his contemporaries a conscious improvement on a traditionally negative stock character. The negative traits traditionally associated with Shakespeare's Duke are not entirely Shakespeare's own invention, and what Barton defines as a 'serious, somewhat incendiary, examination into the nature of kingship' in *Henry V* was well under way before Shakespeare wrote *Measure for Measure*. If it is true that *Measure for Measure* voices James' political ideas, a parallel investigation of the "disguised ruler plays" shows how Shakespeare's tribute to the new king was far from encomiastic.

2.2. *The Climax of the Convention under James (1604-1605)*

In most of the disguised ruler plays written around 1604-1605 the disguiser overlooks politically, socially and morally inferior characters: in *The Malcontent*,[20] Malevole vexes corrupt courtiers and censures their vices; in *The Phoenix*,[21] the Prince

[19]Tennenhouse, p. 142.
[20]J.Marston, *The Malcontent*, ed. by G.K.Hunter (London: Methuen, 1975).
[21]T.Middleton, *The Phoenix*, ed. by J.B.Brooks (New York and London: Garland, 1980).

punishes corrupt lawyers, exposes a plot against his father and defends threatened female virtue. In *Measure for Measure*, authority, for the first time, overlooks itself. The Duke, unlike any of his contemporaries, finds corruption not only in the underworld or at court, but rooted at the very heart of authority. As previously mentioned, Shakespeare revised the motif of the appointment of the substitute, and, as a result, the supreme authority and the substitute appear as one and the same person. The abridgement of the distance between the ruler and his substitute, between the observer and the observed, inevitably affects their status. Tennenhouse has effectively described the strategic function of distance in the disguised ruler plays:

> [l]ike God, the disguised figure can gaze on the state from a position outside the social matrix. By placing these people on the margin, the playwrights suggest the analogy between God's perspective and that of the ruler. In this fashion they can imply a metaphysical basis to the monarch's power while demonstrating he can only perform his task within human limits.[22]

By collapsing the distance between the observer and the observed, Shakespeare is therefore questioning the ruler's privileged position as an absolute, i.e. autonomous and detached, agent of reform. Shakespeare's Duke is intricately bound to his *alter ego* Angelo, and directly responsible for the misdemeanour of his subjects.

Another important element of discontinuity between *Measure for Measure* and the disguised ruler plays is the quality of the disguise. Because disguise is 'traditionally a diabolical technique,' Miles observes, '[t]he dramatist who puts a [good] character into disguise must be careful that his hero will not seem to be acting ignobly.'[23] Shakespeare's contemporaries proved extremely careful in removing the negative traits commonly associated with disguise on the Elizabethan stage. In *The Malcontent*, Malevole does not adopt disguise voluntarily. He is a deposed duke and lives at court at his own peril. His disguise as a court jester is not a caprice, or a 'romantic gesture', but

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[22]Tennenhouse, p. 144.
[23]Miles, p. 131, p. 144.

a necessary expedient. Besides, Malevole's acrimony excites admiration and respect in the other characters. Pietro the usurper, for example, values his company, because, he says, 'he gives good intelligence to my spirit, makes me understand those weaknesses which others' flattery palliates.' (*The Malcontent,* 1.2.28-30) Malevole is an 'honest villain' (1.3.90) because his disguise 'doth yet afford [him] that/ Which kings do seldom hear or great men use -/ Free speech.' (1.3.161-3) The audience are similarly led to admire Malevole's blunt honesty and to align uncompromisingly with him, and, as a result, the deviousness associated with the act of disguising goes unnoticed.

The stronger tones of frustration and revenge in *The Malcontent* are replaced by lighter social satire in *The Fawn,*[24] where the audience can share the disguiser's vantage point from which the courtiers are spied upon and their vices ridiculed. Hercules' role as a disguised observer is beautifully described at 2.1.549-53:

> Herc. I am left
> As on a rock, from whence I may discern
> The giddy sea of humor flow beneath,
> Upon whose back the vainer bubbles float
> And forthwith break.

The audience can laugh more light-heartedly with Hercules, because, unlike Malevole, he deliberately imitates the courtiers to mock their faults. As Gerald Smith has observed, '[Hercules] enjoys playing his part: no longer is he Hercules, the upright duke, making his way by strength, honesty and fair dealing; he is Faunus, the slippery sycophant, who climbs by lying, flattery and fraud'.[25] The advantage of having a double for the Duke is that the ruler and the disguiser never really merge into a single character. Hercules' two identities are and remain separate throughout the play; Hercules disappears behind Faunus and is therefore at one remove from the transgression and deceit associated with disguise.

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[24]J.Marston, *The Fawn*, ed. by G.A.Smith (London: Arnold, 1965).
[25]Smith, p. xiv.

The Prince's disguise in *The Phoenix* is more similar to the Duke's in *Measure for Measure*. The audience laugh at, and not with, the disguiser, when the Prince is outwitted by the Innkeeper and abused by the Jeweller's Wife. The Prince's ingenuity is however counterbalanced by the noble nature of his quest: he turns into a 'private gentleman' (*The Phoenix*, 1.1.62) and into a 'farmer's son' (2.2.215) in order to unmask conspiracy. When Phoenix asks Fidelio, his servant, to 'become ... that invisible rope-maker, the scrivener' (2.1.1-2), Fidelio also provides a viable explanation to justify his decision to put on a disguise:

> rather than the poor lady my mother should fall upon the common side of rumor to beggar her name, I would not only undergo all habits, offices, disguis'd professions, though e'en opposite to the temper my blood holds, but, in the stainless quarrel of her reputation, alter my shape forever.
>
> (*The Phoenix*, 2.1.7-11)

In *Measure for Measure*, the Duke's choice of disguise is particularly unfortunate, because of its catholic affiliation and its numerous unflattering precedents on the Elizabethan stage. As Miles noted, friars had disappeared in England with the Reformation, but a lasting literary tradition developed thereafter. After the Reformation, the figure of the friar never came to be associated with 'power, mystery or divinity' again. 'With this background', Miles concludes, 'it is inconceivable that a disguised friar would have been received as God in 1604.'[26] The play itself provides some evidence to disprove the hypothesis advanced by Chambers and his followers that the Duke's disguise was meant to encourage an assimilation of the Duke with Providence. Angelo's lines - 'I should be guiltier than my guiltiness/ To think I can be undiscernible,/ When I perceive your grace, like power divine,/ Hath looked upon my passes.' (*Measure*, 5.1.368-71) - are merely suggestive of a well known psychological mechanism, whereby guilt, once denounced and made public, turns into shame, i.e. a sudden realisation of being *watched* and *judged*. Although it is quite natural that

[26]Miles, p. 172.

'precise' Angelo should associate this sudden realisation of being watched with the unseen power of God, there is no reason why the audience should do the same. Unlike Angelo, the audience have been watchers; they have been watching the Duke scheming and struggling throughout the play. Besides, other characters disagree with Angelo and think that the Duke was wrong in choosing Angelo as a substitute (cf. Isab. 'O, how much is the good Duke deceived in Angelo!' *Measure*, 3.1.194-5) and that he is to be blamed for leaving (cf. Lucio: 'It was a mad fantastical trick of him to steal from the state, and usurp the beggary he was never born to.' *Measure*, 3.1.356-7). Far from a perfect vantage point from which the ruler can, unseen, examine his subjects and strike unexpectedly, disguise is now regarded as a 'mad fantastical trick', an expedient to which the Duke resorts when he realises that there is no other "orthodox" way of restoring order in Vienna. Rather than a sign of divine, unlimited power, disguise in *Measure for Measure* becomes an acknowledgement of weakness and ineptitude.

The character of the disguiser and the quality of his disguise are radically revised and cleansed in the "disguised ruler plays", whereas they remain ambiguous and problematical in *Measure for Measure*. The ideological distance between Shakespeare and his contemporaries is substantial even with regard to the function of disguising.

Although the disguiser is generally a social reformer, Malevole in *The Malcontent* is also a typically Elizabethan revenger. Andrugio's distressed appeal in *Antonio's Revenge*,

> Fly deare Antonio:
> Once more assume disguise, and *dog the Court*
> *In fained habit*, till Piero's blood
> May even ore-flowe the brimme of full revenge.[27]
> (ll. 1309-12; added emphasis)

provides a brief sketch of Malevole's character. There is, however, a crucial difference between *The Malcontent* and revenge tragedy: whereas the revenger resorts to personal

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[27]J.Marston, *Antonio and Mellida and Antonio's Revenge* (1602), Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1921), ll. 1309-12.

justice and breaks the law, Malevole *is* the legitimate ruler and his "revenge" is a lawful act of justice.

In *The Fawn*, disguise leads to carnivalesque misrule:

> Herc. Once more, fare you well.
> And now, thou ceremonious sovereignty,
> Ye proud, severer, stateful complements,
> The secret arts of rule, I put you off;
> Nor ever shall those *manacles of form*
> Once more lock up the *appetite of blood.*
> (1.1.35-40)

Gibbons suggests a similar motivation in Shakespeare's Duke: 'the Duke is impatient to divest himself of his robes and insignia' and eager to be 'releas[ed] from the constrictions of being head of state.'[28] In *The Fawn*, however, misrule and transgression are contained because they are seen as a necessary step towards the achievement of a superior order:

> Another's court shall show me where and how
> Vice may be cur'd; for now beside myself,
> Possess'd with almost *frenzy*, from strong *fervor*
> I know I shall produce *things near divine.*
> Without immoderate heat, no virtues shine
> For I speak strong, though strange: the dews that steep
> Our souls in deepest thoughts, are *fury* and *sleep.*
> (2.1.565-71)

The Phoenix is again more similar to *Measure for Measure* than any of the other disguised ruler plays: in both plays the disguiser puts on a disguise in order to enforce the law against corruption and abuse, and ensure a fair administration of justice. But whereas the young prince sets off to learn where his intervention is most needed, the old Duke in *Measure for Measure* leaves because, despite knowing perfectly well what he should do, he deliberately avoids responsibility. Another important difference is that

[28]Gibbons, p. 42-3.

although the prince realises that the law has been abused in Ferrara, responsibility lies not on his old father or himself but on corrupt lawyers, who, like Tangle, hide behind the pretentious technicalities of the legal jargon to elude rather than to enforce the law:

> Tan.: the cause being found, you'll have a judgement; *nunc pro tunc*, you'll get a *venire faciam* to warn your jury, a *decem tales* to fill up the number, and a *capias utlagatum* for your execution.
> (*Phoenix*, 1.4.96-9)

The divine origin and infallibility of the law is never questioned here. The law, in the prince's words, is 'glorious and divine; ... the very masterpiece of heaven.' (4.1.193-4) The integrity of the law is unaffected by its abuses: 'Yet why so rashly, for one villain's fault,/ Do I arraign whole man? Admired Law,/ Thy upper parts must need be sacred, pure,/ And uncorruptible' (1.4.200-3). These certainties indirectly justify the disguiser's motives in *The Phoenix*.

The Duke's function in *Measure for Measure* is more complex and his endeavours bound to disappoint because he is faced by different and more serious obstacles. The first two obstacles analysed below have already emerged from an investigation of Shakespeare's rewriting of the motif of the "corrupt magistrate" in the direct sources, i.e. a new, fundamentally sceptical conception of the law and the problematic distinction between personal and social concerns, between a private and a public persona. Two other problems also become noticeable when the Duke is set against his contemporary models in the "disguised ruler plays", i.e. the delegation of power and the control exercised by the "public eye" over authority.

Prince Phoenix's view of the law is shared by the other disguised rulers, who, like him, believe that true authority can still discriminate between virtue and vice and bestow rewards or impose censure accordingly. The same ideal of retributive justice appears in James's political writings: in *Basilikon Doron*, James suggests to Prince Henry that 'the *measure* of [his] love to every one, be according to the *measure* of his

virtue'.[29] (added emphasis) *Measure for Measure* undoubtedly rejects this testamentarian ideal of justice recalled by its title, but the widely accepted argument that the alternative proposed by *Measure for Measure* is a more humane balance between the application of the law and merciful forgiveness fails to identify the play's peculiar perspective on this issue. Both the language and the arguments employed by Shakespeare in *Measure for Measure* were widely used by contemporary political and religious pamphleteers. William Perkins, for example, in his *The Whole Treatise of the Cases of Conscience*, argues that mercy is not only desirable but indispensable, given the obvious faults and weakness of human nature. Although men 'do things in a right manner,' Perkins explains, they 'fail in the *measure* thereof', because they

> cannot attain the *measure* of love, which law requireth ... so as if God should enter into *judgement*, deale with them in the *rigour* of his justice, and examine them *by the strict rule of the Law*, he might justly condemne them, even for their best actions.[30] (added emphasis)

What is at stake in *Measure for Measure* is not the intrinsic "goodness" of justice or mercy, but their practical application in a fallen world where 'there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so'. When, at 2.4, Isabella and Angelo argue over a clearly different perception of mercy, it is easy to agree with Isabella that Angelo's proposal is blackmail rather than merciful forgiveness. But when Angelo questions Isabella's conception of mercy - 'Might there not be charity in sin/ To save this brother's life?' (*Measure*, 2.4.63-4) -, and she decides that 'More than our brother is our chastity' (*Measure*, 2.4.186), it becomes more difficult to take sides. After nearly four centuries, critics are still debating over the legitimacy of Isabella's choice. It is therefore hardly surprising that Shakespeare's Duke should find himself at a loss in a world where the ideal principles promoted by his contemporaries no longer apply.

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[29] *The Political Works of James I (1616)*, ed. by C.H. McIlwain (New York: Russell & Russell, 1965), p. 52.

[30] W.Perkins, *The Whole Treatise of the Cases of Conscience, Distinguished intoThree Bookes* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilm International, STC 19669), p. 24.

The Duke, like the contemporary disguised rulers, is both a social and a spiritual reformer: in the first half of the play, he is busy lecturing Claudio and Juliet on the weakness of the flesh; in the second half, he cautions Angelo and Isabella against the perversion of the mind. Spiritual reform in *Measure for Measure* is however perceived not so much as a perfectly legitimate, if marginal, function of the political reformer, as in the disguised ruler plays, but as an unwarranted intrusion. A major obstacle faced by the Duke is that peculiar conception of the Self which emerged from Shakespeare's revision of the pleading scenes. This new conception of the Self is best described as a complex sign, where the physical is inseparable from the spiritual.

This view of the subject was in open opposition with the traditional Christian binary conception of the body and the soul, which was still quite popular around the time when *Measure for Measure* was written. In the anonymous *Two Guides to a Good Life* (1604), for example, the soul is regarded as 'celestial': the 'soule', the author explains, 'is in the body ...; the soule is infused by God, [and] in that respect it is clean & without spot ... for the bodie infectes not the soule, but the soule the body, whose instrument it is.'[31] The body here is merely the recipient of the soul. The different view offered by Isabella in *Measure for Measure* was however beginning to be contemplated as a viable alternative. In *The Whole Treatise*, also published in 1604, William Perkins starts from the same assumption that 'the parts of the body are used as it were the hands and instruments of the soul,' but he reaches the radically different conclusion that 'all this comes by reason of the *union* of the bodie with the soule, whereby they make *one person.*' (added emphasis) Perkins regards the soul and the body as complementary parts of a unified being. He therefore believes that 'when the bodie is troubled, the soule is also troubled,' and that the worst crimes are 'sinnes of uncleanness', in that 'there is none that fitteth so nigh or leaveth a blot so deeply imprinted in [the soul].'[32] Stemming from the same conception of the self is Perkins' distinction between those crimes which are committed without the direct involvement of the body, 'bodies being the instrument

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[31] *Two Guides to a Good Life: The Genealogy of Vertue and the Nathomy of Sinne* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilm International, STC 12466), p. C1r.
[32] Perkins, pp. 189-90.

of the sinne, but not the thing abused', and those committed against 'mans owne bodie': the latter are obviously worse in that the 'thing which (the sinner) abuseth [is] his own selfe'. Through fornication, for example, '[the sinner] doth not only hinder, but loose the right power, and propertie of his bodie, in that it makes it the *member* of the *harlot.*'[33] According to this new concept of the Self, the soul is no longer transcendental but *inscribed* onto the body.

Implied in the idea that identity is affected by changes in the body is the related concept of identity as "artefact", as a "sign", where, what 20th century linguists refer to as the "signified", or what Perkins would call "the soul", is reshaped and fashioned through the manipulation of the "signifier", i.e. "the body". Recent studies have identified the rising of this idea of a fashion-able Self with the beginning of Modernity.[34] If the concept of identity as "artefact" empowers and frees the subject from conventional models, it also exposes the subject to the risk of abusive manipulation by some external agents other than the subject itself. Sexuality, that crucial aspect of human experience through which the individual and society negotiate their respective control over the body, provides a good vantage point from which to evaluate the nature and effects of the disguised rulers' intervention as "spiritual" reformer.

In *The Fawn*, Hercules' main achievement is the spiritual regeneration of his son Tiberius, who, at the beginning of the play, suffers from a deep disaffection for life, and married life in particular. In *The Fleire*, the homonymous deposed ruler prevents his daughters from turning to prostitution. In both plays prostitution and melancholy are not so much "spiritual blotches" as political impediments to the transmission of power from the older to the younger generation. The disguiser's intervention can therefore be interpreted as part of a social reform, which reconciles the individual to society without clashing with individual desire. In *Measure for Measure*, the necessity of controlling

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[33]Perkins, p. 31.

[34]See, for example, S.Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980) and C.Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985).

sexuality is also at the top of the Duke's agenda, but his intervention proves more problematical.

Although both female and male sexuality is "deviant" in the play, the Duke's attention is catalysed by the female body, because, unlike the male body, it is subject to change. Pregnancy, for example, threatens social order, unless sanctioned by such rituals as marriage, or, in Shakespeare's England, public trials followed by seclusion, or the "marking" of the woman's appearance, by means of special items of clothing or the peculiar dye of her gown. Pregnancy turns the female body into a particularly ambiguous sign, which is open to different interpretations. The metaphors Lucio uses to describe Juliet's condition to Isabella suggest increase and natural growth:

> Your brother and his lover have embraced.
> As those that feed grow full, as blossoming time
> That from the seedness the bare fallow brings
> To teeming foison, even so her plenteous womb
> Expresseth his full tilth and husbandry.
> (*Measure*, 1.4.40-44)

Angelo's order to 'dispose' of Juliet 'to some fittest place' (2.2.16-7) instead suggests that uneasiness with which pregnancy is often viewed by Shakespeare's contemporaries. In John Cooke's *Epigrames Served Out in 52. Severall Dishes*, pregnancy is jokingly described as a 'deformity':

> Lais all of deformity is compact,
> Splay-footed, beetle-brow'd, crook't-backe,
> I ask't her how it came she answers all,
> When she was yong by an unhappy fall:
> But Lais, Lais, you might avoyded well
> The fall you had which made your belly swell.[35]

[35]John Cooke, *Epigrames Served out in 52. Severall Dishes*, (1604) (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilm International, STC 5672), sig. C1r.

In his 1603, *A True and Admirable Historie of a Mayden of Confolens,* Francois Citois provides a pseudo-scientific explanation for the incredible case of a woman, who, despite retaining her feminine appearance, had lost the capacity to procreate, 'all the muscles, intestines, bowels & other parts of the belly being withdrawne and annihilated by want of food'.[36] Like Cooke's epigram, this amazing story expresses uneasiness with those natural processes which cause change in the female body.

Whereas the Duke's upbraiding of Juliet reflects a common concern with unregulated female sexuality, a few critics have wondered why the Duke should humiliate Mariana publicly in Act 5. Christy Desmet is one of them:

> Mariana is paraded about as a sexual monster outside the matrix of normal social roles ... Although the Duke's testing of Isabella has been rationalised ..., the ritualistic "arraignment" of Mariana - who has been perfectly chaste, silent and obedient - remains an unexplained gesture.[37]

By defining Mariana's arraignment as 'ritualistic' Desmet actually provides a possible explanation to account for the Duke's handling of Mariana's case. As Foucault explains in his *The History of Sexuality*, authority often enforces conformity not so much through repression, as through a 'proliferation of discourses, carefully tailored to the requirements of power.' Instead of silencing diversity, authority elicits 'confessions' in order to reintegrate subversive discourse within the 'establishment of ... legitimate knowledge.' The Duke's 'ritualistic' arraignment of Mariana can be explained in terms of Foucault's definition of 'surveillance',

> not [as] a movement bent on punishing rude sex back into some obscure and inaccessible region, but on the contrary, [as] a process that spreads it over the surface of things and bodies, arouses it, draws it out and bids it speak, implants it in reality and enjoins it to tell the truth.[38]

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[36](Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilm International, STC 5326), sig. D2r.
[37]C.Desmet, '"Neither maid, widow, nor wife": Rhetoric of the Women Controversy in *Measure for Measure* and *The Duchess of Malfi*', in *Another Country: Feminist Perspective on Renaissance Drama*, ed. by D.Kehler and S.Baker (Metuchen, N.J. and London: Methuen, 1991), p. 77.
[38]M.Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (London: Allen Lane, Penguin, 1979), p. 75.

Mariana, Isabella and Juliet are *confessed* by the Duke, and their sexuality controlled and relocated within society (Mariana is removed from the moated grange, Isabella from the convent and Juliet from prison). By the end of the play, the three main female characters are made to wear 'the destined livery'. The Duke's intervention releases Juliet from prison and provides Mariana with a husband she had lost. His attempt to "relocate" Isabella, however, is met by an uncomfortable silence, the symptom of a conflict between the fashioning powers of the reformer and the subject's desire to retain control over the fashioning of his/her own identity, which never manifests itself in the other disguised ruler plays.

As mentioned above, Shakespeare's Duke faces two other closely interrelated problems in *Measure for Measure*, which are either absent or not perceived as proper obstacles in the disguised ruler plays, namely, the delegation of power and the effects of the public gaze upon the figure of authority.

Although delegating power in Vienna is an exceptional measure, delegating power in James' England was a practical necessity. By highlighting the Duke's difficulties in carrying out his task as a reformer, both personally and through his substitute, Shakespeare was voicing a delicate political issue. James had reinforced the theory according to which the king is invested with divine, undivided power. The Scottish king was however the head of a large body politic and delegation of power could not be prevented. In *Basilikon Doron* the king had complained that 'wee have alreadie moe good Lawes then are well execute.'[39] As soon as he became King James I, he issued a proclamation to urge his officers and justices of the peace to apply and execute the law. In *A Proclamation for the Execution of the Statute against Rogues, Vagabonds, Idle and Dissolute Persons*, James launches a distressed appeal to the nation, because he feels that,

> [through] the remisseness, negligence, and connivencie of some justices of the Peace, and other Officers in divres parts of the Realme, [crimes]

[39]*The Political Works*, p. 19.

> have swarmed and abounded every where more frequently then in times past, which will grow to the great and imminent danger of the whole realme, if by the goodnesse of God Almighty, and the due and timely execution of the said law, the same be not prevented.[40]

James must have sensed the contradiction between his theory of state and ruling a country through 'Justices of Peace', 'Majors', 'Bayliffes, 'Hedboroughs, 'Constables', let alone an unruly Parliament and the whole army of bureaucrats, who ran the delicate machine of a centralised state. In his speech for the opening of the first Parliament on 19 March 1603, he cunningly addressed judges and magistrates as 'mine Eyes and Eares.'[41] By considering his delegates as his own *eyes* and *ears*, James was trying to suggest a figurative re-assimilation of judges and magistrates into the one and undivided body of the monarch. James must have realised that by allowing his delegates to become his ears and eyes, to become 'at full the king himself', he would lose control over his own image. Like the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, the king must have wondered 'what figure of us' his delegates would bear. If in the Elizabethan history plays previously examined the gazer's eye could spy upon his subjects *unseen*, the gazer in *Measure for Measure* is now also gazed upon.

The problem of the effect of the community's gaze upon the figure of authority was strongly felt by James. In the first book of *Basilikon Doron*, James reminds Henry that the king should be a heavenly model for his subjects to gaze upon and imitate: the 'kings' persons [are] as bright *lamps* of godliness and virtue', so that they 'may, [by] *going in and out* before their people, give *light* to their steps.'[42] Later on James exhorts Prince Henry to 'let [his] owne life be a law-booke and a mirrour to [his people]; that therein they may read the practice of their own lawes, and therein they may see, by [his] image, what life they should lead.'[43] Shakespeare echoes almost literally the first passage when he has the Duke explain to Angelo the higher merits of active virtue over

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[40] *King James I: Proclamations* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilm International, STC 8333).
[41] *A Speach, as it was Delivred in the Upper House of the Parliament ... on Monday the XIX day of March 1603*, in *Political Works*, p. 277.
[42] *Political Works*, p. 12.
[43] *Political Works*, p. 30.

contemplation: 'Heaven doth with us as we with torches do, / Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues/ Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike/ As if we had them not.' (*Measure*, 1.1.33-6) But Shakespeare also voices the king's realisation of the drawbacks of having one's own body turned into a model of perfection and exposed to the public gaze:

> for Kings being publike persons, by reason of their office and authority, are as it were set (as it was said of old) upon a publike stage, in the sight of all the people; where all the beholders eyes are attentively bent to looke and pry in the least circumstance of their secretest drifts: Which should make Kings the more careful not to harbour the secretest thought in their minde, but such as in their owne time they shall not be ashamed openly to avouch.[44]

Shakespeare dramatised this concern through the character of the Duke. In *Measure for Measure*, disguise is adopted by the ruler not only to spy upon his people, but also to subtract himself from the common gaze. *Measure for Measure* shows how the disguiser's gaze is reciprocated by the community and how the shaping power of the ruler's eye is counterbalanced by the unsettling effects of uncensored slander. Slander in *Measure for Measure* represents a serious threat, because authority is exposed to the public eye and therefore laid open to the risk of *misrepresentation*. None of the contemporary disguised rulers is so visibly upset by slander as Vincentio. Hercules in *The Fawn* in fact gains some useful insight from the gentle form of slander to which he is exposed:

> I never knew till now how old I was.
> By Him by Whom we are, I think a prince
> Whose tender sufferance never felt a gust
> Of bolder breathings, but still liv'd gently fann'd
> With the soft gales of his own flatterers' lips,
> Shall never know his own complexion.
> Dear sleep and lust, I thank you. But for you,
> Mortal till now, I scarse had known myself.

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[44] *Political Works*, p. 5.

(*The Fawn*, 1.2.305-12)

Vincentio, on the other hand, is angered to distraction by Lucio's slander, as if his person could be misinterpreted by 'false eyes' and rewritten by 'false reports':

> Duke O place and greatness, millions of false eyes
> Are stuck upon thee; volumes of report
> Run with their false and most contrarious quests
> Upon thy doings; thousand escapes of wit
> Make thee the father of their idle dream,
> And rack thee in their fancies.
> (*Measure*, 4.1.58-63)

Millions of false eyes 'rack', that is pervert, falsify and misrepresent authority. The gazer's gaze, although here the gazer is the community and not the ruler, has a similar power to shape and unshape the object of its gaze.

Measure for Measure voices James' ideas more clearly than any other of the disguised ruler plays written around 1604-1605, but what Shakespeare seems to have been particularly alert to is the anxiety and half-voiced concerns buried between the lines of James' robust and direct statements. Both *Measure for Measure* and the contemporary disguised ruler plays engage the political debate started by James through the publication of his political writings. But whereas the disguised ruler plays are ultimately encomiastic, and reflect the enthusiasm and sense of relief with which the advent of the new monarch was saluted by the whole nation, *Measure for Measure* is radically dialogic and unsettling. Although Shakespeare did not remain indifferent to the sweeping popularity of the convention of the ruler in disguise, he did not use the convention to celebrate the confidence and optimism inspired by the new monarch. Shakespeare's contribution to the proliferation of rulers in disguise on the Jacobean stage around 1604-1605 is still informed by the sceptical view of authority offered by Elizabethan history plays, and anticipates the tones of the radical debate on the nature of

kingship which was resumed as soon as the enthusiasm excited by the accession of the new king started to wane.

2.3 *The Decline of the Convention: Formalism and Parody in Jacobean Court Masques and City Comedies.*

The disguised ruler plays represent an important transitional phase between Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. With the exception of *Measure for Measure*, they transformed the unsympathetic stock character of the disguised ruler of the earlier history plays into a by and large successful and effective reformer. Their short-lived success was determined by a combination of factors: their topical allusiveness to James' political ideas, widely debated mainly around the time of James' accession to the throne of England, but also, and more importantly, their characterisation of the disguised ruler, an eclectic combination of traditionally negative traits and newly acquired positive qualities. No matter how hard Shakespeare's contemporaries tried to improve on the traditional model, disguise was still used as a stratagem to re-establish a contact between the ruler and his subjects, which had been lost or impaired in the first place.

As anticipated above, the character of the disguised ruler did not disappear altogether, but developed into two hardly recognisable variants, the royal masquer of the Jacobean court masque, and the dumb justice of the peace or the jealous husband in Jacobean city comedies.[45] By regarding these two characters as somehow related to Shakespeare's Duke in *Measure for Measure*, I am not trying to demonstrate the obvious, namely that *Measure for Measure* is not a city comedy, let alone a Jacobean

[45]The royal masquer in 1613 *All is True* bears a distinctive resemblance to the king of Navarre and his three attendants in *Love's Labour's Lost*, who, disguised as Russians, attempt to win the favours of the Princess of France and the three ladies in her train. The use of the royal disguiser in *All is True*, where the characters 'are stars indeed -/ ... And sometimes falling ones.' (4.1.55-6), represents an intermediary stage between the realism of the earlier history plays, like *Edward IV*, and the romantic idealisation of contemporary Jacobean masques.

court masque; what I intend to show is that, although *Measure for Measure* has been regarded as 'royal entertainment',[46] or as a straightforward homage to the king on a par with court masques, the use *Measure for Measure* makes of the convention of the disguised ruler is in fact unreconcilable with the very nature and purpose of a court masque. If one wishes to trace a development of the character of the disguised ruler after Shakespeare, city comedies provide far more enlightening similarities.

Reality, as it is portrayed in the masques, reflects the idealised world of the court. The masque is an autocratic fantasy through which the monarch and his court preserve and cherish political and aesthetic ideals. As late as 1611, the political theories which James had exposed in his earlier political works were still faithfully reproduced and immortalised in the magnificent productions of court masques. In the following passage from Jonson's *Oberon, The Fairy Prince* (1611),[47] the king is portrayed as divine and infallible:

> He is the matter of virtue, and plac'd high.
> His meditations, to his height, are even,
> And all their issue is akin to heaven.
> He is a god, o'er kings; yet stoops he then
> Nearest to a man when he doth govern men,
> To teach them by the sweetness of his sway,
> And not by force.
> (*Oberon*, ll. 271-77)

The absence of a realistic picture of society in the masque prevents the disguised monarch from performing his traditional role as a social reformer, actively engaged with the education of his subjects and the administration of justice. The disguiser in court masques represents authority itself, completely abstracted from the historical context of its time.

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[46]J.W.Bennett, '*Measure for Measure' as Royal Entertainment* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1966), *passim*.

[47]B.Jonson, *Oberon, The Fairy Prince*, ed. by R.Hosley, in *A Book of Masques in Honour of Allardyce Nicoll*, ed. by T.J.B.Spencer and S.Wells (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1967).

This process of progressively increasing abstraction from reality affected the quality of the disguise: if Middleton, Marston and Sharpham had paid special attention to removing the negative connotation that disguise had inherited from Elizabethan history plays, the dramatists hired to write court masques went to an even greater length in order to create a character that could please and flatter James. Disguise lost its realistic character: the disguise of the friar, the servingman, the courtier and the farmer's son in the disguised ruler plays were intentionally humble in that they were meant to help the ruler bridge the gap between himself and the lower classes. In court masques, the masquer's disguises were instead inspired by mythological figures, in that, with its purely visionary and legendary character, disguise was now supposed to stress, rather than bridge, the gap between the king (and his court) and the rest of society, and to transfigure the monarch's humanity rather than hide his semi-divine nature.

The disguiser was no longer a social reformer, but an ideal 'made apprehensible,'[48] a glittering and sumptuous model of kingship. As Samuel Daniel explains in his *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*,[49] the magnificent ideals promoted in the masque were meant to 'portend the true desire/ Of those who wish them waking, real things.' (ll. 234-5) The masque reproduced and kept alive ideals which had no counterpart in James' troubled reign, but it encouraged its audience to believe that the gap between the real and the ideal could be bridged. Daniel's Sybilla, for example, towards the end of *The Vision*, invites her audience to hope,

> That these fair blessings which we now erect
> *In figures* left us here, *in substance* may
> Be those great props of glory and respect.
> (*The Vision*, ll. 375-7)

In Thomas Campion's *The Lord's Masque* (1613),[50] especially written to celebrate the marriage between James's daughter, Lady Elizabeth, and the Count

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[48]S.Orgel, *The Illusion of Power* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), p. 56.
[49]S.Daniel, *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*, ed. by J.Rees, in *A Book of Masques*.
[50]T.Campion, *The Lord's Masque*, ed. by I.A.Shapiro, in *A Book of Masques*.

Palatine, the embodiment of the ideal into the real is dramatised in the episode of the miraculous metamorphosis of eight celestial beings, eight newly transformed stars, into eight lusty knights:

> View these heav'n-born stars,
> Who by my stealth are become sublunars.
> ...
> Then shall their forms to human figures turn,
> And these bright fires within their bosoms burn.
> (*The Lord's Masque*, ll. 138-42)

The eight knights are then joined in marriage with eight statues, symbol of static, divine perfection, which Prometheus turns into 'women fit for love'. (*The Lord's Masque*, l. 254) Campion's masque shows the courtiers and the king how their ideals can 'become sublunar', how they can be absorbed and reintegrated within their own world. As Orgel explains,

> the climactic moment of the masque was nearly always the same: the fiction opened outward to include the whole court, as masquers descended from pageant cars or stage and took partners from the audience.[51]

Disguise is no longer used as a device to enable the ruler to leave the court and restore a link with his subjects; disguise in the court masque becomes part of a larger fictional frame, within which reality is not explored, let alone reformed, but simplified and abstracted until it becomes compatible with the ideal.

A quick glance at the royal masquer undermines Bennett's definition of *Measure for Measure* as royal entertainment, and supports Cox's opposite view, according to which,

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[51]Orgel, p. 39.

> if the Duke is at a human distance from the image of his divine prototype in medieval drama, he is at an equal and greater distance from the masque's representation of ideal Jacobean monarchy.[52]

While the king was entertained at court and flattered by idealised images of kingship, the London audience in the public theatres were becoming more and more familiar with a dramatically and ideologically alternative rendition of the stock character of the ruler in disguise. Three memorable examples can be found in Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* (1614),[53] Thomas Dekker and John Webster's *Westward Ho* (1605) and Dekker's *Honest Whore II* (1608).[54]

The figure of the disguiser in Jacobean city comedies is no longer the highest authority in the play: the disguiser is a low rank character, often ridiculed for his human and intellectual limitations. In *Bartholomew Fair* the disguiser is still a figure of authority, but he is only a justice of the peace; in *Westward Ho* and *Honest Whore II* the disguiser is no longer a public figure, but he still enjoys some authority for being the head of the family in a patriarchal society.

If the disguiser is no longer at the top of the hierarchy, he however shares some important features with his predecessors in the disguised ruler plays, and, most of all, with Shakespeare's Duke. As in the earlier disguised ruler plays, disguise retains a realistic character, but it loses its positive connotation. The only exception is *Honest Whore II*, where Orlando puts on a 'poore blue coat' (4.2.2) to help his daughter defend her honesty. In *Westward Ho*, however, Justiniano, who first disguises himself as a 'wryting Mecanicall Pedant' (2.1.21) and later on as his wife (4.2.52) is ridiculed for putting himself into such a degrading position:

> Luce: ... what a filthy Knave was that betraied them.
> Birdlime: One that put me into pittifull feare, ...
> lurking like a sheep-biter,

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[52]J.D.Cox, 'The Medieval Background of *Measure for Measure*', in *Modern Philology*, 81 (1983), p. 12.
[53]All quotations are followed by line-reference to B.Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, ed by E.M.Waith (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1963).
[54]All quotation from *Westward Ho* and *Honest Whore II* are followed by line-reference to *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, ed. by F.Bowers, 4 vols (Cambridge, Cambridge University PRess, 1955), II.

(*Westward Ho*, 4.1.230-3)

As Justiniano himself acknowledges, jealousy makes a man an 'idle coxcombe'. Similarly Overdo in *Bartholomew Fair*, who disguises himself as mad Arthur of Bradley, is described as a 'certain middling thing between a fool and a madman' (2.2.137-8). The derogatory remarks about the disguiser and his enterprise recall Lucio's slander in *Measure for Measure* and the moral condemnation of disguise in Elizabethan history plays.

The disguiser in city comedies, like his predecessors, puts on a disguise to see through deception and restore order, but unlike the disguised rulers, and somewhat like the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, the disguisers Orlando, Justiniano and Overdo only learn about their own mistakes. Orlando and Justiniano, for example, realise that their suspicions about the virtue of their wives and daughters were groundless, whereas Overdo finds out that the young man he has tried to protect, Edgworth, is in fact a cutpurse. Shakespeare's Duke, unlike the other disguised rulers, anticipates his comic successors and their misconceptions by entrusting Angelo (why not wise Escalus?) with his power while away from Vienna. If the Duke genuinely thought that Angelo, better than Escalus, could restore order in Vienna, he is clearly proved wrong.

The traditional function of disguise as a vantage point from which the ruler can see past hypocrisy and flattery is evoked in these comedies, but only to become the object of sharp satire. In *Bartholomew Fair* Overdo echoes his predecessors' preoccupation with the drawbacks of being a public figure:

> For alas, as we are *public persons*, what do we know? Nay, what can we know? We hear with other men's *ears*; we see with other men's *eyes*. A foolish constable or a sleepy watchman is all our information; he slanders a gentleman by the virtue of his place, as he calls it, and we, by the vice of ours, must believe him. ... This we are subject to, that live in *high place*; all our *intelligence* is idle, and most of our intelligencers knaves; and, by your leave, ourselves thought little better, if not arrant fools, for believing 'em.
>
> (*Bartholomew Fair*, 2.1.25-35; added emphasis)

This traditional function of disguise becomes parodic in Justice Overdo's mouth, because he does not fit the role of the social reformer at all. Jonson is certainly at his best when he describes Overdo's dejection after he realises that putting on a disguise has complicated the course of justice, rather than making it smoother:

> To see what bad events may peep out o'the tail of good purposes! The care I had of that civil young man I took fancy to this morning ... drew me to that exhortation, which drew the company, indeed, which drew the cutpurse; which drew the money; which drew my brother Cokes his loss; which drew on Wasp's anger; which drew on my beating: a pretty gradation!
>
> (*Bartholomew Fair*, 3.3.12-8)

Although Overdo's blunders find no precedents in the disguised ruler plays, they magnify the awkwardness and limitations associated with Shakespeare's Duke in *Measure for Measure*.

The unmasking of the disguiser in city comedies also presents distinct similarities with *Measure for Measure*: as in the disguised ruler plays, the unmasking takes place within a ritualistic ceremony (a masque with dancers and music in *The Malcontent*; a 'most new and special shape of delight' in *The Fawn* (4.1.236), during which the 'general council of love summon'd in the name of Don Cupid' (4.1.238-9) condemns those who have either hindered or underestimated its power; an exorcism in *The Phoenix*), but the ceremony is reduced to a 'comicall business' in *The Honest Whore*, and a puppet show in *Bartholomew Fair*. Ceremony is turned into parody and fails to convey that sense of providential inevitability typical of the comic resolution in the disguised ruler plays by Middleton, Marston and Sharpham. In *Bartholomew Fair*, although Overdo promises to 'break out in rain and hail, lighting and thunder, upon the head of enormity' (5.2.5-6), in the style of his predecessors, the unmasking turns out to be just the 'dish' Overdo has got in store for his friends 'for fruit' (3.3.18-9). Revelation has no longer the implied connotation of Last Judgement Day, but is simply the last "course" of a light-hearted comedy. Lucio's insubordination and his frequent interruption of the trials in Act 5 have a similar comic effect:

Lucio That's I, an't like your grace.
...
Duke You were not bid to speak.
Lucio No, my good lord,
Nor wished to hold my peace.
...
Duke Why, you are nothing then: neither maid, widow, nor wife?
Lucio My lord, she may be a punk, for many of them are neither maid, widow, nor wife.
Duke Silence that fellow.
...
Mar. I have known my husband, yet my husband
Knows not that ever he knew me.
Lucio He was drunk then, my lord, it can be no better.
Duke For the benefit of silence, would thou wert so too.
...
Duke (to Angelo) Know you this woman?
Lucio Carnally, she says.
Duke Sirrah, no more!

(*Measure*, 5.1.75-215)

Comedy and cheap jokes, as in later Jacobean comedies, reduce the impact of the Duke's ceremony. Partly because of Lucio's misrule, the Duke's unmasking in *Measure for Measure* loses its ceremonial value and supernatural undertones, and inevitably becomes anticlimactic and bitterly disappointing.

After reconstructing the main stages in the evolution of the convention of the disguised ruler on the Elizabethan and the Jacobean stage, we can safely conclude that the use of the convention in *Measure for Measure* is not "encomiastic", as in the contemporary group of the disguised ruler plays, but radical and unsettling, in keeping with its traditional function in Elizabethan history plays and Jacobean city comedies. Although *Measure for Measure* is contemporary to *The Phoenix* and *The Malcontent*, and although it employs similar conventions, it voices concerns which first emerged on the Elizabethan stage and that were subsequently silenced, if only for a little while, in the disguised ruler plays. *Measure for Measure*, in other words, represents the last

example of a realistic and critical investigation of the nature of kingship, traditionally associated with the stock character of the ruler in disguise, after which the convention degenerated into abstract flattery in Jacobean court masques and a comic jest in city comedies.

PART III

'Rex Quondam Rexque Futurus'

The Cult of the Christian Ruler

The "bed trick" is the second main plot component that Shakespeare added to the original story contained in the direct sources of *Measure for Measure*, and, undoubtedly, the most misunderstood element in the play. Most critical evaluations of the bed trick are aimed at assessing its moral implications. Paradoxically enough, the moral issues upon which most critics of *Measure for Measure* disagree, such as the legitimacy of the Duke's plan or Isabella's enthusiastic approval, are unlikely to have bothered or interested the original audience.

The bed trick has famous precedents, which, while likely to be recalled by a Jacobean audience, have by now ceased to affect our response to this episode. The non-Italian antecedents of the bed-trick identified by Peggy Simonds, namely the Old Testament (*Genesis* xxxviii), Plautus' *Amphitruo* and Malory's *La Morte d'Arthur*,[1] have all got a strong magic element in common. In all these texts the bed trick is performed through magic or supernatural powers: Merlin in Malory transforms Uther so that chaste Igraine mistakes him for her husband; Judah, as the Geneva Bible reports, sleeps with his daughter-in-law, Tamar, because his senses have been 'wonderfully blinded' (she is disguised as a prostitute and God himself has intervened to change her voice).

The bed trick in *Measure for Measure* was likely to be related to at least the Biblical and the Arthurian analogues by the vast majority of a Jacobean audience, where the motif of the substitute bed-mate has a magic rather than a moral connotation. One might however object that Shakespeare's use of the bed trick in *All's Well That Ends Well* provides a closer and more relevant parallel to the same motif in *Measure for Measure*, than the above-mentioned precedents. Although many believe that *All's Well That Ends Well* was written before *Measure for Measure*, the chronological order in which these two plays were written is still a matter of dispute.[2] Besides, the context and purpose of the bed trick in *All's Well That Ends Well* and in *Measure for Measure* are significantly different.

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[1]P.M.Simonds, 'Overlooked Sources of the Bed Trick', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 34 (1983), p. 433.
[2]For more details, see *A Textual Companion*, p.127, and W.Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well*, ed. by S. Snyder (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 24.

Helena's strength and vitality and the strongly romantic connotation of the episode in *All's Well* are directly derived from the play's main Italian source, the ninth story of the third day of Boccaccio's *Decameron.* The bed trick in *Measure for Measure*, although still functional to the reconciliation of an unwilling husband-to-be to his betrothed, is no longer arranged by a woman but by a Christian ruler, and is therefore more likely to have been inspired by the example of the figures of authority in the sources identified by Peggy Simonds, than by the Italian precedents of *All's Well.*

The association of the Duke with a supernatural agent would not be evoked by the episode of the bed trick alone. A contemporary audience would expect the Christian ruler of tragicomedy to have extraordinary skills. This convention was not only a popular theatrical device, but the reflection of one of the Tudors' most successful political accomplishments, the establishment of the cult of the Christian monarch. Magic had been a crucial component of Elizabeth's cult. Her grandfather Henry VII had first encouraged iconographers and historians to portray the Tudor dynasty as the direct descendants of the mythological king Arthur. The corpus of Merlin's prophecies had been carefully scrutinised in order to find enough evidence to support Elizabeth's identification with Arthur's successor, under whom England would enjoy a new Golden Age of peace and prosperity. Hence the recurrent association of Elizabeth and her court with the Arthurian world of fairies and natural magic. The unprecedented occurrence of a female, unmarried monarch also encouraged the association between the Queen and the Virgin Mary. Although Elizabeth ruled a Protestant country, she managed to exploit the powerful imagery of the Virgin Queen and to replace the catholic icon with her own. Magical and supernatural qualities proved essential to legitimise her position at the head of the nation.

Like the former Queen, James did not object to the use of magical, mythological and celestial identifications to reinforce his claim to the throne. Fresh evidence was conveniently found to welcome the new monarch as the new Arthur, the "once and future king". James, who called himself King of Britain in order to stress his contribution to the prospected reunification of England and Scotland, seemed to fulfil Merlin's prophecy according to which 'the island [under the new Arthur] would be called by the name of

Brutus.'[3] In John Harrington's *Tract on the Succession of the Crown*, James is again identified with the new Arthur because Merlin had predicted that only a monarch crowned in his infancy could accomplish the reunification of Britain.[4] In Jonson's masque *Prince Henry's Barriers*, the Lady of the Lake rejoices over the fact that 'a monarch equal good and great,/ Wise, temperate, just and stout, claims Arthur's seat', and that with James's accession 'the times are now devolv'd/ That Merlin's mystic prophecies are absolved.'[5] James' decision to create a personal army of a thousand knights also reflects his efforts to imitate the legendary king and sustain the association.

Magic was still a very important component of the cult of the Christian ruler, although James had mixed feelings about it. When he came to power in 1603, James had long renounced his former interest in magic as an embarrassing foible. 'The age of miracles', he said, 'was over.'[6] James was the first English monarch to express an open unwillingness to perpetuate the ritual of touching for the king's evil. While still in Scotland, between 1590 and 1597, he had himself ferociously prosecuted those who claimed or were thought to possess healing powers. At the same time, James must have realised that the ritual was an essential part of the cult of previous monarchs. The famous episode of Edward the Confessor in *Macbeth* testifies the importance of this practice for the rightful monarch. Keith Thomas, in his book *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, confirms its central role in the establishment of the cult of the monarch: 'the ability to cure the Evil ... became a touch-stone for any claimant to the English throne, on the assumption that only the legitimate king could heal the scrofulous.' 'Elizabeth's healings,' for example, Thomas continues, 'were cited as proof that the Papal Bull of Excommunication had failed to take effect.'[7] A proclamation issued on 24 March 1616, announcing that those who were seeking the comfort of the king's touch would be denied

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[3]R.F.Brinkley, *Arthurian Legend in the Seventeenth Century* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1932), p. 7.
[4]Brinkley, p. 5.
[5]B.Jonson, *The Speeches at Prince Henry's Barriers*, in *Masques and Entertainments by Ben Jonson*, ed. by H.Morley (London: Routledge, 1890), p. 130.
[6]Quoted in D.H.Wilson, *King James VI and I* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1956), p. 309.
[7]K.Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), p. 195.

access to his majesty 'betweene the feasts of Easter and Michaelmas,'[8] proves that the practice, if unwillingly performed by the king, was still in use at the time.

James' mixed feelings about magical practices reflect a more general change in the conception of magic. 'If the distinction between magic and religion had been blurred by the medieval church', Thomas reminds us, 'it was strongly reasserted by the propagandists of the Protestant Reformation.'[9] Reformers condemned miracles and exorcisms, an important component of pre-Reformation Christianity, as fraudulent Popish superstition. The proscription of this form of authorised magic represented an enormous loss for Christian monarchs, who had always quite liberally resorted to it, in the specific forms of the coronation rituals, of the touching for the King's Evil and the Blessing of Cramp-rings on Good-Friday, to prove the divine, supernatural origin of their power. Magic, half-heartedly retained by James as an essential component of his cult, was therefore becoming more and more difficult to use without raising suspicions of Catholic nostalgia.

A close analysis of the motif of the bed trick and other related elements of the plot of *Measure for Measure* shows how deeply the shift in the understanding of magic brought about by the reformers' teachings, and the consequent revision of the cult of the monarch that occurred under James, affected the characterisation of Shakespeare's Duke. The distinct lack of extraordinary powers in the Duke highlights a peculiar shortcoming in his character, which, if no longer immediately evident to 20th century audiences and critics alike, must have struck a Jacobean audience as a radical departure from the traditional model of the Christian ruler. Shakespeare consciously evoked the magical tradition associated with the Renaissance cult of the monarch in relation to the character of the Duke, but only in order to reconsider it critically at the light of the cultural changes ushered in by the Reformation.

The Duke uses what he himself defines as an 'ancient skill' (*Measure*, 4.2.155) to perform a series of tricks: the bed trick, the gallows trick, whereby the Duke substitutes Claudio's head with Ragozine's, and the resurrection trick in Act 5. The last two have

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[8] *A Proclamation Concerning the King's Evil* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilm International, STC 8538).
[9] Thomas, p. 51.

rarely been granted any attention but they have as strong a magical background as the bed trick. In folklore, hanging had strong sacrificial and ritualistic connotations. Leach reports that 'the clothes of the person hanged, the gallows, the rope, nail and all the paraphernalia used were thought to have magic power.'[10] The ritualistic significance of hanging has survived to the present day: Madame Sosostris' alarm at not finding the hangman in her pack of tarot-cards in Eliot's *The Waste Land* reflects a timeless, innermost fear that death might not lead to natural regeneration. The ruler's unmasking had also a supernatural connotation in contemporary drama. When the ruler removes his disguise, he stages, as Robert Watson puts it, 'his own miraculous return, fulfilling [a] fantasy familiar from Elizabethan drama: namely, the return of a father from death.'[11] In *Measure for Measure*, the motif of resurrection is reinforced by a second unmasking, when Claudio, whose death had been publicly announced the night before, is suddenly revealed to the on-stage audience. The Duke's disguise also associates him with magic. Although the friar in *Measure for Measure* does not use herbs and magic potions, like his predecessor in *Romeo and Juliet*, he does use his position as a vantage point from which to oversee the ongoing events and overcome an otherwise insurmountable crisis.

The Duke's tricks, however, fail to live up to the standards set by his antecedents. In the non-Italian sources, the bed trick is justified by the necessity of generating a great saviour-hero, respectively Hercules, seen by Renaissance mythographers as the predecessor of Christ, King David and King Arthur.[12] In *Measure for Measure* the Duke does not arrange the bed trick to secure the advent of a new ruler; the themes of succession and regeneration are in fact altogether absent from the play. Angelo's experience in the darkness and silence of his garden does not even lead to the personal regeneration the lovers experience in the wood outside Athens in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Angelo's garden is not a green space, where the suspension of social conventions allows the

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[10]M.Leach, *Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1949).

[11]R.N.Watson, 'False Immortality in *Measure for Measure*: Comic Means, Tragic Ends', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 41 (1990), p. 419.

[12]Simonds, p. 433-4.

wanderers to reinvent, readjust and domesticate their passions. From Isabella's description,

> He hath a garden circummured with brick,
> Whose western side is with a vineyard backed,
> And to that vineyard is a planched gate
> That makes his opening with this bigger key;
> This other doth command a little door,
> Which from the vineyard to the garden leads.
> (*Measure*, 4.1.26-31)

we get the impression that, by gaining access to the garden through several locked doors and gates, we are in fact moving deeper and deeper into the most private recesses of Angelo's disturbed fantasies. For Angelo, as Janet Adelman has noticed, 'the imagined act of spoiling a virgin [remains] the only source of sexual desire.'[13]

The gallows trick proves equally unsatisfactory: even if nobody gets killed it is hard to regard Bernardine's unfitness to live or die as a desirable outcome. Death can be more profitable to the economy of a comic ending than survival, if death is ritualised and turned into the regenerative process of a sacrifice. In Cinthio's *Hecatommithi*, the sight of her brother's severed head triggers off Epitia's constructive reaction: her pleading for justice with the supreme ruler leads to a compensation for her wrongs and a reinforcement of our faith in the institutions. In *Measure for Measure* hanging is avoided twice. Claudio's life is spared but the ritualistic significance of hanging is lost. Ragozine, the very symbol of the corruption and malfunctioning of justice in Vienna, dies unregenerated in prison. His head, severed from a corpse, triggers off not a higher form of justice, as in Cinthio, but more subterfuge. If, on the one hand, the Duke's meddling with the hanging rescues Claudio, on the other, it deprives the Viennese society of yet another chance of regeneration.

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[13]J.Adelman, 'Bed Tricks: On Marriage as the End of Comedy in *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*', in *Shakespeare's Personality*, ed. by N.N.Holland, S.Homan and B.J.Paris (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1989), p. 152.

The disappointing character of the resurrection trick in the last scene can be measured in relation to its contemporary models in the disguised ruler plays, where a sense of providential necessity accompanies the ruler's unmasking and the re-establishment of order. In *The Malcontent* Malevole's success is described as a 'whirl of fate [that] comes tumbling on.' (5.5.89-90) In *The Phoenix*, the old duke is delighted to admire 'heaven's wisdom' in his son's actions. (5.1.78) The deposed duke in *The Fleire*[14] claims that since he was appointed by 'heavens pleasure' (5.1.172), the 'all-directing power yeeld good aspect,/ And to [his] purpose give a blessed ende.' (5.1.42-3) This sense of providential determinism is reinforced through magic. In *The Phoenix* the prince's staging of the trial, modelled on Last Judgement Day, is followed by a gruesome experiment of exorcism. Quieto, the wise man of the law, slices the corrupt lawyer's veins and pours a 'balsam of a temperate brain' into his blood, a 'filthy steam of trouble, spite, and doubt.' (5.1.308, 316) In *The Fawn*, Hercules invokes the 'better stars of knowledge' and 'pale-cheek'd muses' to lavish their best influences on him and his mission, so that he can be confirmed in his belief that 'Works of strong birth end better than commence' (4.1.665-71).

The astonishment and the sense of wonder that pervades the on-stage audience in the disguised ruler plays is matched by a complete lack of response in the case of Claudio's unmasking and by Lucio's sarcasm when he unmasks the Duke. Lucio's cynicism is the strongest energy at large in the play that eventually undercuts the Duke's "illusionist" power. The Duke's cunning manoeuvring, which Angelo identifies with Providence divine, is in Lucio's eyes mere trickery: 'It was a mad fantastical trick of him to steal from the state, and usurp the beggary he was never born to.' (*Measure*, 3.1.356-7) As previously mentioned, Lucio is the Duke's most dangerous opponent. The fact that everybody is eventually forgiven except for Lucio betrays the Duke's anxious impotence against his slandering tongue. Lucio spoils the Duke's arrangements for the judgement scene: the Duke chooses a suggestive setting, the Gates of Vienna, which might remind the audience of the Gates of Heaven, and carefully prepares the script for Isabella, Mariana

[14]E.Sharpham, *The Fleire*, ed. by H.Nibbe (Louvain: A.Uystpruyst, 1912).

and Friar Peter. All the other characters 'speak', in Lucio's own words, 'according to the trick' (*Measure*, 5.1.507), but Lucio's unruliness, his bawdy remarks, his interference with the trial spoil the Duke's little performance and break the spell the Duke is trying to cast upon his audience.

Like *Measure for Measure*, *The Phoenix* also ends with a judgement scene. In *The Phoenix*, however, the perfect timing of the unmasking suggests a well-planned *coup-de-theatre*. In *Measure for Measure*, the lack of an uninterrupted progression between Isabella and Mariana's allegations against Angelo and the Duke's unmasking suggests that the Duke's control of the events is not as absolute as the Prince's in *the Phoenix*. As a consequence, 'the theatre of God's judgement', as Robert Watson observes, 'begins to look like an ordinary stage fiction.'[15] The Duke's magic is not strong enough to turn his personal view of justice into a collectively shared ideal.

As Louise Schleiner effectively puts it, 'the Duke wins, but on points - there is no knockout, and the losers will doubtless soon challenge again.'[16] The solution offered by the Duke at the end of *Measure for Measure* does not suggest the same sense of regained stability and harmony achieved through exorcism and magic at the end of *The Phoenix*. 'The dances of marriage at the end of the play', Watson remarks, 'are, measure for measure, also a dance of death.'[17] In *Measure for Measure*, as opposed to *The Phoenix* or *The Malcontent*, which draw on similar conventions, the Duke is a providential figure, but not Providence itself. 'The Duke's office,' as Jocelyn Powell acutely observes, 'is "like" that of divine power; but [the Duke] is not divine, he is a man, and under judgement as all men are.'[18]

The Duke's magic in *Measure for Measure* fails to impress. Though his lack of stature and supernatural powers goes unnoticed today, it must have struck a contemporary audience as a radical departure from the traditional characterisation of the Christian ruler and from the standards set by the cult of James. An analysis of the origin and

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[15]Watson, p. 423.
[16]Schleiner, p. 233.
[17]Watson, p. 416.
[18]J.Powell, 'Theatrical *Trompe l'Oeil* in *Measure for Measure*', in *Shakespearian Comedy: Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, 14*, ed. by M.Bradbury and D.Palmer (London: Arnold, 1972), p. 181.

contemporary significance of the motif of the bed trick and other related motifs in *Measure for Measure* highlights an increasing difficulty to reconcile qualities derived from the magic tradition of the cult of the Christian ruler with a realistic representation of authority. If the Reformation had ushered in a new concept of individual responsibility and a new idea of the Self as a private moral space outside the jurisdiction of temporal authority, which, as Shakespeare's revision of the motifs of the "corrupt magistrate" and the "disguised ruler" has revealed, started to undercut the personal authority of the absolute ruler, the Reformation also deprived the Christian ruler of the legitimising imagery of the cult and its magical associations. Although after the Reformation the king was invested with both temporal and spiritual authority, his figure underwent a progressive secularisation. Although James tried to maintain the cult of the monarch alive, by reinforcing the theory of the Divine Right of Kings, he failed to revive Elizabeth's dazzling mystique of monarchy, and came to be seen as a less dignified, thoroughly earthly, ruler of a more secular and more Protestant England. By means of a thorough revision of the three main plot-components in *Measure for Measure*, Shakespeare presented his audience with a ruler, who, unlike his contemporary counterparts, is fallible and misled, limited and manipulative, intrusive and presumptuous, and, unlike his forefathers in Simmonds' precedents, is surprisingly awkward and impotent.

PART IV

Revision as Negotiation:

'Measure for Measure' Made Fit

> Heav'n is all mercy, who that death ordains.
> And that which Heav'n thinks best is surely so:
> But bare and naked, shame to undergo,
> 'Tis somewhat more than death!
> Expos'd to lawless eyes I dare not be,
> My modesty is sacred, Heav'n, to thee.
> Let not my body be the Tyran's spoil;
> Nor hands nor eyes thy purity defile.
> (*Tyrannick Love*, 5.1.301-8)

St.Catherine's rejection of Maximin's "indecent proposal" in Dryden's *Tyrannick Love* (1670)[1] represents the closest parallel to Isabella's intransigent modesty offered by Restoration Drama. St.Catherine, like Isabella, disdainfully refuses the Emperor's proposal: 'Though hers to save I my own would give,/ Yet by my sin, my mother shall not live.' (*Tyrannick Love*, 5.1.282-3) St.Catherine's resemblance to Isabella is striking, but her character is exceptional. Modesty in Restoration drama becomes the domain of comedy and is soon abandoned in favour of the pleasures, financial and sexual, of an honourable marriage.

If Isabella's character has little following in post-revolutionary drama, the character of the corrupt magistrate survives, but in the much altered form of an extremely popular Restoration comedy stereotype, the reformable rake, who takes advantage of his public position and authority to seduce defenceless young maids. The convention of the disguised ruler, on the other hand, disappears altogether. William Davenant and Charles Gildon's adaptations of *Measure for Measure*, *The Law Against*

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[1] J.Dryden, *Tyrannick Love* (London: Herringman, 1686), STC D2396.

Lovers (1662)[2] and *Beauty Best Advocate* (1700)[3] provide the only relevant counterparts to Shakespeare's Duke Vincentio.[4]

After investigating the "effects" of Shakespeare's rewriting of the three main plot-components in *Measure for Measure*, studying the development of the same plot-components in the work of two adapters will help us realise how dramatically *Measure for Measure* had to be altered in order to conform to yet another "re-vision" of its original story. *Measure for Measure*'s peculiar dramatic perspective on characters and events, identified by means of a thorough comparison with its sources in Part I and II, will now be confirmed by a contrastive analysis with its later adaptations.

4.1 *Translating History into Myth: 'The King's Blessed "Retirement"'*

William Davenant brightened up the original of *Measure for Measure* by removing the Vienna underworld and by adding the main characters and the courtly setting of another Shakespearean comedy. Benedick and Beatrice, the "gay couple" from *Much Ado About Nothing*, become respectively Angelo's valiant brother and his ward, and take part in the main action by trying to rescue Claudio and Juliet from the long arm of the law. The disguiser is also altered to fit in the new sophisticated world of the court, enlivened by witty banters and musical entertainments.

The first noticeable difference in Davenant's characterisation of the Duke is a detailed account of the reasons behind the Duke's decision to leave the court. Unlike Shakespeare's Duke, his Restoration counterpart is not forced to leave because unable to enforce the law himself. The Duke, like many of his predecessors, leaves the court

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[2]W.Davenant, *The Law Against Lovers* (London: Cornmarket Press, 1970).
[3]C.Gildon, *Measure for Measure: Or, Beauty Best Advocate* (London: Cornmarket Press, 1969).
[4]The only noticeable exception is the Duke of Milan in Davenant's *Love and Honour*. Like Vincentio, the Duke of Milan restores justice and seals a double marriage. His character is however very marginal: he makes his first appearance at the very end of Act 5, and the *dénouement* he orchestrates is awkward and hardly relevant to the main plot.

because, as he explains, he wants to travel 'in fit disguise', and 'compare the Customs, prudent Laws,/ And managements of sovereign States with ours' (*Law Against Lovers*, p. 273). Although, like Middleton's Prince in *The Phoenix*, the Duke's real intention is not so much to look into foreign models as into his own state, there is no urgency in his decision to leave. The Duke leaves the court not because of the gravity of the situation in Turin, but because of the fortunate conjuncture of Benedick's victory over the Duke's adversaries. Now that Turin is no longer under the threat of a foreign invasion, the Duke can afford to go travelling. Davenant also hints at the Duke's old age:

> Here, take our Commission -
> In which we have enabled you with all
> The sev'ral strengths and organs of my Pow'r:
> Your youth may bear that weight,
> Which tires my Age.
> (*Love against Lovers*, p. 273)

The introduction of this new motif suggests that the Duke, aware of his old age, might have planned to test his potential successor Angelo. The testing of the substitute is a recurrent motif in the direct sources of *Measure for Measure*, which contributes, among other things, to justify the supreme authority's decision to delegate his power. Davenant's efforts to find as many plausible reasons as possible to account for the Duke's decision to leave the court show how unconvincing he must have found his original model.

One might object that if Davenant had intended to remove the original motif of the Duke's ineptitude, he would have omitted 1.3, where Shakespeare's Duke admits to his responsibility for the moral degeneration of Vienna. Minor but telling changes contribute, however, to alter the original significance of this scene. Although, for example, Davenant's Duke, like Shakespeare's, confesses that he has 'suffer'd [strict Statutes, and chastising Laws] Nineteen years to sleep', so that 'decrees, dead to infliction, to/ Themselves are dead' (*Law against Lovers*, p. 279), his unwillingness to enforce the law has not had the same devastating consequences as in *Measure for*

Measure. The Vienna underworld of bawds and prostitutes, of moral and physical decay, has been replaced by the sophisticated court of Turin, a world of civilised customs and honest entertainments, a world of music, dances, merry jests and witty repartees. Whereas the Duke's failure to intervene has dire effects on the population of Shakespeare's Vienna, in *The Law against Lovers*, the Duke's father-like leniency generates only loquacious and impertinent courtiers. Another interesting change in this scene is represented by the Duke's new, qualifying statement, 'I have on Angelo impos'd/ Th' unpleasant *pow'r of punishing*' (p. 279; added emphasis). The Duke's unwillingness to punish is not as negatively connotated here as it was in *Measure for Measure*. Later on in the play, when the Provost calls for the hangman's 'Block and Ax' (*Law Against Lovers*, p. 311), the Duke, probably voicing Davenant's own uncomfortable memories of the royal execution in 1649, laments the necessity of resorting to violence to maintain order: 'What horrid Instruments are us'd by pow'r.'(*Law Against Lovers*, p. 311). Friar Thomas' extra line, 'I'm convinced' (*Law against Lovers*, p. 279), whereby the representative of a religious order endorses the Duke's opinion that a too strict enforcement of the law would impair his reputation as a merciful ruler, is the third and last significant alteration Davenant introduced in this scene. Shakespeare's Friar never blessed the Duke's plan.

All the other alterations in the Duke's character are in keeping with Davenant's by now evident attempt to improve on his original model. Slander, for example, is either redirected or toned down in *The Law Against Lovers*: Davenant's characters censure the Duke not for his supposedly reprehensible *habits*, as Lucio does in *Measure for Measure*, but for the *habit* he has chosen as a disguise. Benedick and Beatrice's attack against the 'fiddling friar' is not directed to the Duke, but to the whole religious category:

Bea. Are we circumvented by a Fryer?
Rather than not vex that Fryer, I'll invent
A new Sect, and preach in a Hat and Feather.
Ben. 'Tis strange that men of their discretion,
Should come abroad in old fashion Gowns,

And drest with abominable negligence.
Bea. Bus'ness make them great slovens, and they love to be busie.
Ben. And never observe
The right seasons when they are necessary.
For though we are content with their company
When we are old and dying; yet (methinks)
They should not trouble us with their good counsel,
When we are young, and in good health.
Bal. Alas poor Book-men! they want breeding.
(*Law against Lovers*, p. 303)

Lucio's slandering remarks, on the other hand, are reduced in length and softened in tone. The famous exchange between the Duke and Lucio at 3.1.350, starting with 'What news, friar, of the Duke?', which stretches over nearly one hundred lines in the original and contains outrageous allegations about the Duke's sexual conduct is compressed into a brief exchange of about twenty lines towards the beginning of Act 4. Lucio's insinuation - 'He had some feeling of the sport; he knew the service, and that instructed him to mercy.' (*Measure*, 3.1.381-2) - is flattened into the milder, 'Th' absent Duke was a true friend to Lovers' (*Law against Lovers*, p. 305). The anecdote of the 'beggar of fifty' is retained, but it only provokes the Duke's amused hilarity. Whereas in *Measure for Measure* Vincentio feels threatened by Lucio's slander, 'No might nor greatness in mortality/ Can censure scape; black-wounding calumny/ The whitest virtue strikes.' (*Measure*, 3.1.442-4), in *The Law against Lovers*, the Duke simply and light-heartedly dismisses Lucio as a 'merry, and malicious Tongue' (p. 306). Even more important is the fact that Davenant's Duke extends his forgiveness to Lucio as well as to Angelo in the final scene, because, as he himself explains, 'Your slanders, Lucio, cannot do me harm' (p. 328). Lucio is, as a whole, a less threatening or disturbing character than in *Measure for Measure*. When he discloses the reasons for Claudio's arrest to Isabella, for example, he sounds exceptionally prudish and affected: 'He has,/ *I hope unwillingly*, got his friend with Child.' (*Law against Lovers*, p.280, added emphasis). Slander itself, as a consequence, becomes harmless.

Another interesting alteration affects the Duke's unmasking in Act 5. Like the supreme authority in the sources, Davenant's Duke does not need to resort to tricks and stratagems to bring about the happy ending, and, most importantly, unlike his predecessor in *Measure for Measure*, he does not need to *stage* his home-coming to take his subjects by surprise and make them more acquiescent and co-operative. The Duke of Savoy discloses his identity off-stage, and, as we learn from Balthasar's report, the Duke's unmasking on its own guarantees the re-establishment of order:

> Balt. ... th' assault was scarse begun,
> When suddenly our Sou'raign Duke *breaks forth*,
> *From the dark Cloud of that disguise*, in which,
> It seems, he hath remain'd conceal'd in Turin.
> Bea. The Duke in Town?
> Balt. Most visibly in person, and in pow'r.
> For by his high command victorious Benedick,
> Is now with conquer'd Angelo, and both
> Are Pris'ners to the Provost.
> Bea. *Sudden* and *strange*.
> (*Law against Lovers*, p. 322; added emphasis)

By resorting to the traditional imagery of the sun and the clouds, which suggests the 'sudden' and 'strange' manner in which the absolute ruler reveals itself to his awe-struck subjects, Davenant grants his Duke those supernatural qualities Shakespeare's Vincentio had lost.

The semi-divine nature of Davenant's Duke is further stressed upon through the other characters' reactions to his merciful forgiveness in Act 5. Angelo's death wish is replaced by unremitting gratefulness:

> Your Highness makes
> An hourly conquest of our hearts, and we
> Most humbly bow in thankfulness for your
> Continual clemency.
> (*Law against Lovers*, p. 327)

Even Bernardine welcomes the Duke's generous mercy: 'I am your Highness Debtor for this life,/ And for th' occasion of that happiness,/ Which may succeed it after death.' (*Law Against Lovers*, p. 237) The Duke succeeds in accomplishing the task he had set for himself at the beginning of the play, i.e. administering justice without having to resort to punishment. The power of the Restoration Duke is all-conquering and the happy ending, brought about solely by his intervention, is as flawless and completely satisfactory as, in the Duke's own words, 'A moral drawn from a poetick Dream' (*Law Against Lovers*, p. 329).

Also functional to the happy ending is the battle in Act 5, most probably a dramatic re-enactment, on a smaller scale, of the Civil War. The Duke's initial announcement of his decision to "go travelling" must have reminded the audience of King Charles I, who had used the same expression as a euphemism to talk about his exile. Charles I was beheaded in 1649, but his son Charles II returned in 1660 and his succession guaranteed a brief period of order and stability. Davenant, who seems to be celebrating the restoration of the Stuarts through his heavy adaptation of Act 5 in *Measure for Measure*, spared his audience the trauma of remembering the violence and the blood, especially the royal blood, shed during the revolution. In *The Law against Lovers*, the battle in Act 5 is bloodless and the Duke rejoices at the thought that 'the last encounter has/ Not lost me any of my Subjects lives' (*Law Against Lovers*, p. 327) The convention of the disguised ruler, which in early Elizabethan history plays, in *Measure for Measure* and in Jacobean city comedies had served to carry out a critical investigation of absolute monarchical power, becomes now just another opportunity for a Cavalier playwright like Davenant to celebrate the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy after the Interregnum.

On the title-page of *Measure for Measure: or, Beauty Best Advocate* Charles Gildon explains that the play 'written *originally* by Mr.Shakespear' has now been 'very much Alter'd; With Additions of several Entertainments of Musick'. '*The Loves of Dido and Aeneas*, a Mask, in Four Musical Entertainments', Gildon's own adaptation of 1689

Purcell's tragic opera *Dido and Aeneas*, is the most noticeable alteration in his reworking of *Measure for Measure*, but, by no means, the most significant. Gildon, like Davenant, concentrated much of his attention upon revising the character of the disguiser.

As in the direct sources of *Measure for Measure*, the question of the appointment of a substitute is mentioned by Lucio in passing in the opening scene in a neutral, perfunctory manner: the 'Duke is gon, Incognito, to Travel' (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 1). Furthermore, as in *The Law against Lovers*, the Duke is not forced to leave because unable to stop the thriving business of prostitution in Turin. In *Beauty Best Advocate*, the Duke decides to leave and put on a disguise in order to 'visit Prince and People: And hear how both approve this means I've taken' (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 17). Gildon's Duke, like Davenant's, has perfectly justifiable reasons for leaving Turin, and is guilty of a lesser crime than his predecessors: if Davenant's Duke admits to have given the people 'scope' (*Law against Lovers*, p. 279), Gildon's Duke is merely guilty of giving the people 'Hope' (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 17). The only misjudgement he is accountable for is, as Friar Thomas reminds him, the appointment of Angelo as his substitute: 'You find already how you've been mistaken/ In Angelo, you so long thought a Saint.' (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 17)

Davenant had omitted the bed trick along with the Mariana sub-plot, to make his characterisation of Angelo as Isabella's secret lover more credible. Gildon reintroduced both, but in a much altered form. Gildon's Duke, for example, seems less concerned with the *staging* of his unmasking in Act 5 than with avenging Mariana. After realising that Angelo is adamant in his hypocritical denial of Mariana, the Duke does not keep pretending to believe in Angelo's innocence to come back as the Friar and astound his subjects with his little *coup-de-théâtre*. In Gildon, the Duke informs Angelo that he has known the truth all along: 'Base Angelo, I know thee guilty;/ I was my self contriver of this Scene,/ As I had been to do Mariana justice.' (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 42) Although the bed trick finds its way back into Gildon's adaptation, the Duke is cleared of any responsibility in instigating what Gildon must have come to regard as unlawful

pre-nuptial intercourse. Whereas in *Measure for Measure* Mariana was merely 'affianced to her oath, and the nuptial appointed' with the shipwreck occurring between the 'contract and limit of the solemnity' (*Measure*, 3.1.215-7), in *Beauty Best Advocate*, Angelo, 'fearing Frederick's [her brother's] Aversion to the Match/ ... Marry'd her in private' (p. 25). Isabella is also made to sound more cautious. She asks Friar Thomas for confirmation that the plan is lawful, 'But is she marry'd?', and the latter supports the Duke: 'We both assure you that: you sure may trust us.' (*Beauty Best Advocate*. p. 25) The Duke's intentions are therefore honourable, and his procedures perfectly lawful.

As in Davenant, the Duke is no longer vulnerable to slander: the original passage 'O place and Greatness!' is retained in its original form and length, but is contrasted with Friar Thomas' opposed view according to which,

> Men bark at Grandeur, but 'tis at a distance,
> As Dogs do at the Moon - she hears it not;
> Goes on her Round and peaceful Race of Glory
> Untouch'd by all their little Malice.
> (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 32)

The ruler is again elevated to the detached perfection of an ideal, which does no longer belong to the sublunar world of his subjects. If, in *The Law Against Lovers*, the underworld had been erased, the civil turmoil had kept the issue of government and the public world of politics in sight throughout the play. In *Beauty Best Advocate*, the idyll of the opera obliterates not only the underworld of bawds and prostitution but also the larger political implications of the Duke's decisions, such as the appointment of an iniquitous substitute. The figure of authority in this latest version of *Measure for Measure* is a moral, rather than a political, leader, and is considerably detached from matters of immediately practical concern.

The role of the Duke as a whole is however considerably reduced. The Duke gains in credibility and moral rectitude but loses in dramatic stature. As mentioned above, the Duke's appointment of his substitute takes place off-stage, and the Duke makes his first appearance only in the second half of Act 2. When on stage, the Duke is

often a silent listener, as a consequence of the substantial expansion of other roles, like Claudio and Juliet's, which, considerably more marginal in the original, are here expanded and used as the main source of pathos.

It seems therefore legitimate to conclude that the Duke, although elevated to the dignity and venerability of his predecessors in the sources used by Shakespeare for *Measure for Measure*, is also more marginal. Davenant and Gildon took great care in removing all the ambiguous traits from their original model, but as a result, they replaced a secular leader with two abstract paragons of virtue and justice. Marginalisation was the price monarchy had to pay to be re-established in 1660. Cromwell first severed authority from the body of the king, and then the Parliament stipulated the terms of Charles II's restoration to the throne of England in the Declaration of Breda, which altered the strategy of the transmission of royal power from purely hereditary to contractual. If Charles II was indeed the legitimate heir to the throne of England, he became king only at the conditions agreed upon in Breda. After 1660 the king became a symbol of restored order and social harmony, but he was less and less involved in the actual administration of the country. Nancy Maguire's analysis of the peculiar view of monarchical authority offered by post-revolutionary tragi-comedy supports this reading of Davenant and Gildon's revision of the stock character of the ruler in disguise:

> In contrast to earlier tragi-comedy, Carolean tragi-comedy reflects an ideology in which divine-right kingship is a remote ideal and not a widespread assumption. ... For both psychological and political reasons, an ideal monarchical order continued to be celebrated, but that culture recognises the order as mythic, and hence the myth no longer operates as a motivating force.[5]

It is therefore hardly surprising that, though the convention of the disguised ruler survived as a detached idealised figure in Davenant and Gildon's adaptations of

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[5]N.K.Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration: English Tragicomedy, 1660-71* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 162.

Measure for Measure, it should gradually disappear altogether from the Restoration stage.

4.2 *The Rake's Progress*

Although Davenant claimed to be, both literally and artistically speaking, the most direct "descendant" of Shakespeare,[6] and Gildon is remembered almost exclusively as a 'critically prominent apologist of Shakespeare'[7], who argued for moderate conservatism while Shakespeare's works were being 'polished into native classics',[8] both of them did not hesitate to stray from the original and reinvent the character of Angelo even more freely and radically than they had done with the Duke.

Angelo's successors are barely recognisable. Davenant's Angelo is a "Machiavel in love", or a 'coward and a sneak', as Williams puts it. Whereas in *Measure for Measure* Angelo 'had really had lascivious designs on Isabella', in *The Law against Lovers*, Williams specifies, he is merely playing a 'reprehensible trick to test Isabella's virtue'[9]. Angelo is now only incidentally a magistrate; primarily, he is a curiously jealous young lover. This change in the character of Angelo affects the reception of the play as a whole: whereas originally an exploration of the paradoxical nature of human justice, *Measure for Measure* becomes with Davenant a light-hearted study of the hardship of wooing and marriage.

In keeping with Davenant's revision of Angelo is his addition of the "gay couple" from *Much Ado*. This new emphasis on the romantic potential of comedy is not a sign of degeneration towards triviality and inconsequence, but rather symptomatic of a

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[6]M.Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant: Poet Laureate, Playwright, Civil War General, Restoration Theatre Manager* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), *passim*.
[7]H.Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved: The Restoration Versions in Quarto and on the Stage* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927), p. 329.
[8]Dobson, p. 13.
[9]J.D.E.Williams, *Sir William Davenant's Relation to Shakespeare* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1905), p. 27.

radical rethinking of gender roles. John Harrington Smith grants that 'the secret of the excellence of the sex-antagonism in Restoration comedies [is that] the sexes are virtually on a par [and] love can be played as a game.' Smith however minimises the significance of this stage convention because, as he continues, 'the basic premise of this love-game comedy is that, since society and the conventions are stronger than the individual, this revolt of his can be productive only of comic effect.'[10] Singh also views the gay couple as a harmless comic device: 'Restoration comic playwrights at times create the illusion of equality between men and women largely for artistic purposes. In a comedy where repartee between lovers plays such an important role', Singh explains, 'it was natural that the playwrights should create women characters who possess not only an agile mind but also an exceptional mastery of the current fashionable idiom.'[11]

Seeing the gay couple as a comic device is, however, reductive. Crucial historic events had changed the way in which authority was conceived, and, consequently, the way in which the subject, and especially the female subject, viewed itself. Cromwell's administration inflicted a strong blow on patriarchy. On 24 August 1653 the Barebones Parliament passed a new Marriage Act, whereby it was established that marriages were now to be performed by a justice of the peace and no longer by a religious authority. After severing the body of the king from the institution of monarchy, Cromwell's Parliament severed marriage from its former sacredness and turned it into a civil institution. As Lawrence Stone observes, 'once the divine sanction for the social hierarchy was undermined, ... the way was open first for a contract theory of the state, and then, by logical analogy, for a contract theory of the family.'[12] In *Uncertain Unions: Marriage in England, 1660-1753*, Stone however reports that 'the legislation ... was generally unpopular, since it was characterised by a strong anti-clericalism which was

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[10]J.H.Smith, *The Gay Couple in Restoration Comedy* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 41.

[11]S.Singh, *Family Relationships in Shakespeare and the Restoration Comedy of Manners* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 160.

[12]L.Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), p. 340.

not shared by the bulk of the population.'[13] Mainly for this reason another act was passed in 1657 which established that any form of marriage, civil or religious, was at that point recognised as valid. Stone reflects on the legal confusion that ensued from the Parliament's contradictory legislation, but fails to appreciate the consequences of the first act, which, at least for four years, had secularised marriage. Susan Staves, in her *Players' Sceptres: Fictions of Authority in the Restoration*, more realistically believes that the experience of the civil marriage could not possibly have been forgotten because it had 'unsettled the assumptions about the sacramental character of marriage' and, from a strictly legal point of view, it had created a precedent: 'since many justices served both before and after 1660, remembered cases as precedents. Jurisdiction once acquired is usually not easily relinquished.'[14]

The experience of the civil marriage and its unsettling consequences in the redefinition of family relationships could not be simply swept under the carpet. The repartee between the witty couple seems to me not so much a comic interlude before marriage, as an opportunity for the couple to settle the terms of their marriage contract. For the first time in romantic comedies the focus is not on external obstacles that procrastinate marriage as on the stipulation of the marriage contract itself. In one of the earliest "gay couple" plays, James Howard's *All Mistaken: or the Mad Couple* (acted in 1667), Philador and Mirida, who have both fooled former lovers, decide to get married, but only after going over each term of their marriage contract together:

Phil.: Well, let us remember our conditions.
Imprimis, I will love you.
Mir.: Item, so will I you.
Phil.: I won't say how long.
Mir.: Item, nor I neither.
Phil.: Item, It may be I can love you but a week.
Mir.: Item, I don't care if it be a day.
Phil.: Item, I'll never be tied to anything.

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[13]L.Stone, *Uncertain Unions: Marriage in England, 1660-1753* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 20.
[14]S.Staves, *Players' Sceptres: Fictions of Authority in the Restoration* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), p. 115.

Mir.: Item, thou shall be tied to what thou wilt, but me.
Phil.: Item, I'll come when I please.

.....

To conclude, we will be both as mad
As we please.
Mir.: Agreed and the devil take the tamest.
Phil.: A blest bargain.

(*All Mistaken*, D3r)

Restoration lovers are not 'romantics cursed with an inconveniently powerful strain of rationalism',[15] as Anne Barton propounds. On the contrary, Restoration lovers fight to bargain for the best deal in the redefinition of their roles.

Beatrice and Benedick's attempts to outdo each other in trying to rescue Claudio and Juliet are similarly indicative of the strong antagonism between the sexes, which is also central in Davenant's *Love and Honour*.[16] Evandra rejects the association of female virtue with passivity and forbearance:

Why should these mighty spirits [men] lay so vast
An obligation on our sex, and leave
Eternall blushes on our souls, 'cause we
In acts of kinder pitty and remorse
(The vertues sure, wherein we most excell)
Durst not adventure like to them?

(*Love and Honour*, 3.4.189-94)

Leonell's praise of Evandra's fortitude hardly conceals his bitter resentment and wounded pride:

This sure is such
A great example of a female fortitude
As must undo all men, and blushing make
Us steale from our unjust advancement ore
The world; teare off our sawcy beards before
The scatt'ring winds that give us the preheminence

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[15]Quoted in Singh, p. 175.
[16]W.Davenant, *Love and Honour and The Siege of Rhodes*, ed. by J.W.Tupper (Boston and London: D.C.Heath, 1909).

> Of sexe; when this is known, let women sway
> Counsels and war, whilst feeble men obey.
> (*Love and Honour*, 3.4.252-9)

The heroine challenges male authority and demands a redefinition of conventional gender roles, and the formulation of new viable models.

Davenant's decision to conflate *Measure for Measure* with *Much Ado about Nothing* and add the motif of the "gay couple" to the original play was therefore not accidental. This motif had a large following: Beatrice and Benedick's skirmishes in *The Law against Lovers* ushered in a whole generation of warring lovers who rethought and renegotiated the terms of interpersonal relationships.

The influence of the Puritan revolution on the private sphere of family and interpersonal relationships did not prove as durable as on the public sphere. Gildon's Angelo is no longer a jealous lover; his worst trait is now avarice. The first horn of Angelo's dilemma between the sudden discovery of the urgency of physical desire and the necessity of enforcing the law is replaced in Gildon by the prospect of material gain. Angelo is an accomplice of Juliet's mean uncle Pedro, a recurrent character in Early Augustan comedy. Angelo enforces the strict statute not because he believes in the goodness and infallibility of the law, but because he has planned to share Juliet's dowry with his *privado* Pedro, after Claudio has been sentenced to death and Juliet locked away in a monastery for the rest of her life. Angelo in *Beauty Best Advocate* is no longer an obdurate reformer of vice, who falls himself and turns into a tyrant, but an avaricious fortune-hunter, who 'has made his false severity/ Bawd to his Fame, and Broaker to his Vice/ of Avarice' (p. 17).

Isabella's "virtue" is also a direct result of her financial situation. Gildon's Isabella has decided to enter the nunnery because, as Angelo informs the audience before their first encounter, she has been 'left without a Fortune' (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 4). Along with her vocation, Isabella has lost her obsessive preoccupation with the preservation of the integrity and purity of her body. The word 'body' is replaced by the more neutral 'Self' - 'Give up your Self to the same Blemish' (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p.

10) - and overtly sexual allusions are removed by means of painstaking revision: 'And *strip* myself to death as to a bed' in the original (*Measure for Measure*, 2.4.102) becomes 'And *ship* my self to Death, as to a Bed' in Gildon (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 11). Isabella's chastity reveals no deep-rooted vocation, nor any anxiety about the preservation of her autonomy as a virgin. For Gildon's Isabella the nunnery is simply a shelter for an orphan without a dowry. Angelo, on the other hand, as the subtitle suggests, is merely infatuated with Isabella's beauty, and not tempted by the strength and assertiveness of her virtue. In *Measure for Measure* Angelo sees Isabella primarily as a maid, whose virginity, like an empty, unstable sign, must be invaded, conquered and fixed by his *sense*, the sense of the male ruler who appropriates and marks the unknown, empty space of female autonomy. In *Beauty Best Advocate*, Angelo sees Isabella as a young attractive woman, who does not challenge his authority with her autonomy but simply excites his *senses*. When Angelo laments his fall, he blames Isabella's inner qualities, but most of all her outer appearance:

> This Musick is no Cure for my Distemper;
> For, every Note, to my Enchanted Ears,
> Seem'd to Sing only Isabella's Beauty,
> Her youth, her Beauty, and her Tender Pity
> Combine to ruin me ... !
> Strange Witchery of Love.
> We are uneasie with its raging Fire;
> Yet seek the Object to Increase Desire,
> Whose Fury else, wou'd, of it self, Expire.
> (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 9)

What torments Angelo is not a moral dilemma but the pangs of his unrequited love. It is noticeable that the first original meeting with Isabella at 2.1, where the issues of justice and mercy are explored, is abridged, whereas the second meeting at 2.4, where Angelo discloses his feelings and his intentions, is instead significantly expanded.

If Isabella's "virtue" originates from her shaky financial circumstances, Claudio's crime also boils down to greed, rather than passion. After the Duke has revealed that Angelo left his wife to become 'Broaker to his Vice of Avarice' (*Beauty*

Best Advocate, p. 17), Claudio confesses that his avarice is also the cause of Juliet's misfortunes: 'You then have heard too of a Lady's Suff'rings,/ Which I thro' Avarice, alas, have caus'd.' (p. 18) Angelo similarly tempts Gildon's more earthly Isabella by offering her a casket of jewels: even if Isabella has already agreed to follow the Friar's advice and pretend to comply with Angelo's request, she resists him until she is offered the jewels. Her delighted surprise at the sight of the jewels sounds genuine - 'They are indeed most rich and most surprizing' (p. 29) - and she listens patiently to Angelo's solicitation:

> Be in the World like other People, Wise,
> And take this Treasure as your Beauty's due.
> Wealth draws a Curtain o're the face of shame,
> Restores lost Beauty, and recovers Fame.
> (*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 29)

Isabella, however, unlike Angelo and Claudio, does not give in to temptation. She is instead the channel through which the jewels are reallocated to the legitimate owner. In the last scene the casket reappears and is used to identify the true wife. True virtue is not only rewarded, but also signified, by the jewels: the casket becomes the objective correlative of Mariana's "jewel", her faithfulness and married chastity. In an increasingly mercantile economy, virtue is rewarded by returning stolen properties to their legitimate owners. Wealth and property are the external manifestations of triumphant virtue. Crime, on the other hand, is not seen as a moral plague, but as misappropriation of property. The comic ending in the "new comedy" of Etherege, Wycherley, Shadwell and Congreve is achieved through the heroine's reformation of the rake, usually a rich owner or heir, so that virtue and patrimony are happily reunited.

The rake's reformation is both financial and sexual. The reunion of virtue and patrimony leads to the stabilisation of conventionally bourgeois ideals, such as parsimony and restraint. As Wilson puts it,

> the tide of reaction against wit and eroticism had begun to flow. 'Respectable' people were going to see plays; clergymen were

> inveighing against the licence of the stage; ... Sentimentalism, for the average man the normal escape from crude reality, was coming in like a fog with tide and with it came pudicity.[17]

Sentimentalism put an end to the process of redefinition of sex roles that had characterised Restoration comedy, and confined women to the role of reformers. What Gildon wrote, in the guise of Urania, in one of his epistolaries, is sadly illuminating:

> Learning teaches wisdom, which can never render us so opposite to the establish'd Oeconomy of the World, as to make us once think so wildy, as to attempt the inverting of so prevalent, and inveterate a custom as the Sovereignty of Men.[18]

With the rise of sentimentalism, comedies started extolling those virtues that make marriage a stable and strong union, whilst tragedies started condemning sexual transgression as the most injurious of crimes. In Ravenscroft's *The Italian Husband*,[19] the Duke kills his adulterous wife and her lover, despite their genuine contrition, and is not only allowed to walk out of the stage unpunished but he also invites all the betrayed husbands in the audience to imitate his example:

> Let not our Womens Tyring-Rooms be haunted
> Boast not favours which they never granted.
> Tick not with Orange Wench; nor side-box misses,
> (Alas they live by love, and feed on kisses)
> Grant this, and if they make not just requitals,
> You've our Consent Gratis, to stop their vitals.
> (*The Italian Husband*, p. 45)

Angelo, the corrupt magistrate of *Measure for Measure*, becomes a jealous and most peculiar "Romeo" in *The Law against Lovers*, and a reformable rake in *Beauty Best*

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[17]J.H.Wilson, *The Court Wits of the Restoration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), p. 170.
[18]C.Gildon, *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays*, ed. by A.Freeman (New York and London: Garland, 1973), p. 58.
[19]E.Ravenscroft, *The Italian Husband: A Tragedy Acted at the Theatre at Lincolns-Inn-Fields* (London: Isaac Cleve, 1698).

Advocate. If still in a position of power, their abuses no longer have serious political consequences. Public concerns are superseded by the urgency of a spiritual, fundamentally private and personal, reformation. By the end of both plays, the audience is left in no doubt that Isabella will be a good wife and that Angelo, cured of his jealousy in *The Law against Lovers*, and of his avarice in *Beauty Best Advocate*, will turn into a good husband. The happy ending is fully satisfactory, but in order to achieve it, Davenant and Gildon could afford to leave very little of the original unaltered.

4.3 *Restoration as Counter-Revolution.*

The terms "restoration" and "counter-revolution" can be used interchangeably, although the former implies an acritical recovery and reinstatement of the past, and the latter, an active reaction and tension towards the future. The character of the revision undergone by *Measure for Measure* shows how appropriate the term "counter-revolution" would be to describe the political, social and cultural advancement which characterises the "Restoration". Recent studies share a conservative or decadent view of the period. Gary Taylor, for example, sees the Restoration as an 'act of collective, willed oblivion',[20] and the repertory put together by Killigrew and Davenant at the Theatre Royal and at the Duke's around 1660-70 as an attempt to 'restore both the political and theatrical tradition of the 1630s'.[21] Arthur Gerwitz's *Restoration Adaptations of Early Seventeenth Century Comedies*, on the other hand, is impaired by an unresolved contradiction. First Gerwitz admits that 'Restoration comedy is combative, because the desires of the individual are more forcefully dramatised than those of society, though the

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[20]G.Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London: Vintage, 1991), p. 10.
[21]*Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 13.

necessities of society are understood to be no less important'.[22] Later on, however, a stereotypical, dismissive attitude towards Restoration drama takes over and Gerwitz concludes that 'the theatre was no longer a forum for ideas',[23] and that 'Restoration comedies, following Davenant, ... lose their "cosmic implications", not to introduce a view of social fragmentation with its own serious implications, but to become frivolous rather than comic'.[24] Michael Dobson has similarly interpreted Restoration drama and its most peculiar fondness for tragicomedy as a politically conservative effort to counteract the shock of the Revolution:

> Evoking tragic responses from improbable situations, only to dispel them by the provision of still less probable happy endings, the Fletcherian tragicomedy was perfectly fitted to the royalist view of the Interregnum and equally dependent on an unusually willing suspension of disbelief. ... The Restoration was itself, from a royalist perspective, a thoroughly Fletcherian event, a half-providential, half-arbitrary awakening from the tragedy of the Interregnum into the implausible poetic justice of the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion.[25]

Nancy Maguire, starting from the assumption that 'genre draws on history', agrees with Dobson that the function of Restoration masques was primarily conservative and reactionary:

> In contrast to the Caroline masquers, the Carolean impersonators know that their roles are make-believe. In the court masque, the monarch watches himself; he is both actor and spectator. Charles I watched himself as he thought he was, and he had considerable certitude; Charles II and his society watched what they knew was an outgrown fantasy.[26]

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[22]A.Gerwitz, *Restoration Adaptations of Early Seventeenth Century Comedies* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1982), p. xvi.
[23]Gerwitz, pp. 73-4.
[24]Gerwitz, p. 142.
[25]Dobson, pp. 21-2.
[26]Maguire, p. 162.

'Willed oblivion' and 'outgrown fantasy' imply that creativity and political commitment in the London theatres after their reopening in 1660 were sacrificed to a complete, if conscious and sceptical, submission to an outdated ideal.

A similar bias affects our appreciation of the dramatic achievements of Restoration adapters. If it is undeniable that Davenant and Gildon's adaptations present several parallels with the direct sources of *Measure for Measure*, it would however be misleading to argue that these two samples of Restoration and early Augustan drama are a servile "homage" to the romantic tradition from which Shakespeare derived his sources. Although both are distinctively romantic, the direct sources and the adaptations of *Measure for Measure* represent two radically different stages in the evolution of the main motifs and conventions they share.

As in most direct sources, Davenant and Gildon's adaptations end with three successful marriages. The three marriages announced at the end of *The Law against Lovers* are the result of a genuine reformation. Isabella willingly accepts reformed Angelo as a husband, confident that 'Much happiness will still attend/ Th'obedience which does yield/ To [the Duke's] command' (p. 328). Claudio endures his misfortunes patiently and welcomes the prospect of marriage: 'They feel not joy who have not sorrow felt./ We through afflictions make our way to Heaven.' (p. 328) Benedick's misogyny is cured and he responds to Beatrice's provocation, 'Take Heed! Our quarrel will begin again', by summoning images of a fruitful union: 'I'll venture. 'Tis but providing good store of cradles for Barricadoes to line my chamber.' (p. 326) Although Gildon omitted the romantic sub-plot Davenant had borrowed from *Much Ado About Nothing*, he introduced a few changes which turn Act 5 into a properly "romantic" happy ending. Lucio's lines are entirely removed from the last scene, Angelo is thoroughly reformed and the Duke's final speech is followed by the longest entertainment in the play, a celebration of the marriage between fecundating Sun and fertile Spring, and the abundant "harvest" their union produces:

> She gives our Flocks their feeding,
> He makes them fit for breeding,

She decks the Plain
He fills the Grain,
And makes it worth the weeding.
(*Beauty Best Advocate*, p. 46)

The final entertainment helps the audience overlook the inconsistencies which *Beauty Best Advocate*, more than *The Law against Lovers*, had inherited from the last scene in the original.

In these two adaptations of *Measure for Measure*, marriage is respectively the crowning of an exciting negotiation between the lovers to redefine gender and social roles within the couple, and the outcome of a long and painful, but fully successful, process of personal reformation. In the direct sources of *Measure for Measure*, social concerns had a priority over the rights of individual characters, and no psychologically credible development could account for the heroine's sudden change from grieving sister to loving wife. After 1660, public concerns became secondary to the redefinition of the Self in Davenant, and to private concerns, such as ownership and family patrimony, in Gildon. The masque of *Dido and Aeneas* in *Beauty Best Advocate*, altough dramatically irrelevant to the main course of the action, is however significant in that the arguments supporting the horns of the original dilemma - personal fulfilment and love vs honour and the priority of the cause of the Empire - are no longer balanced, as in Virgil, but clearly in favour of the private cause. After the Revolution, power started to be conceived as distributed "horizontally" among the members of society represented by the Parliament. The supreme ruler was consequently no longer threatening nor looked up to, but simple "iconography"; the "management" of the country was now in the hands of public officers, like Gildon's Angelo and Escalus, the predecessors of Walpole's legion of bureaucrats.

The treatment of authority is another "romantic" element the direct sources and adaptations of *Measure for Measure* have in common. The term "romantic" however designates two radically different conceptions of kingship. In the direct sources of *Measure for Measure*, the supreme authority had never resorted to disguise to re-establish a link with his subjects because the hierarchy was stable and unquestioned.

The law represented the direct manifestation of the king's divine will and, if properly applied, it flowed like nurturing lymph from the head of the state, or the belly, as Menenius's parable in *Coriolanus* alternatively propounds, to the lesser members of the body politic.

As a consequence of the Reformation, the king became not only temporally but also spiritually, the highest authority in the country. Hierarchy, which had provided a link between the king and his subjects, was undermined by a strong polarisation between the centralized and inaccessible bureaucratic system, upon which the absolute monarch started to rely, and the rest of the country, aristocracy included. The need to recover a metaphorical link, a connection between the ruler and his subjects, which had been lost somewhere along the line of the Tudor dynasty, led to the rise of the convention of the disguised ruler. By the time Shakespeare wrote *Measure for Measure* disguise had already come to be seen as both a means for the ruler to re-establish a link with his subjects and as a potential threat: the imagery of disguise made the necessity of guaranteeing order and stability seem unnatural and manipulative.

Henry VIII started the process of secularisation of power, by absorbing the role of head of the Church of England upon himself, and Cromwell brought it to its natural conclusion. Under the Puritan government of the Interregnum, spiritual authority came to be identified with the individual's conscience. Only after crowning conscience as the highest spiritual authority could Cromwell and the Puritans behead Charles I. The execution of an anointed king severed the mythical union of the king's two bodies once and for all. The image of the severed head of the king strongly suggests that the king had been definitively detached from the body of the nation, which was henceforth to be ruled by an increasingly powerful Parliament. Hence the superfluity of the convention of disguise, which had previously guaranteed the ruler a link with his subjects. The ruler no longer belongs to the temporal domain of the city and no longer partakes in its government. The ritual of the royal execution - Charles I's progress through White Hall, the physical and metaphorical heart of monarchical power, with its rich engraved ceilings celebrating the glories of the Stuart dynasty, to the scaffold - strongly suggests

the king's role as a royal martyr. Unlike Robespierre, Cromwell did not kill the English monarchy: the execution sanctioned the king's exclusion from the realm of history and celebrated the monarchy's rebirth into a myth, a symbolic operation without which the English monarchy would not have possibly survived the political changes that have shaken Western Europe since then.

If Dobson can rightly interpret the proliferation of Shakespearean adaptations during the Restoration as an attempt to reconcile Shakespeare with the 'particular romantic fictions that were among the premises of Charles II's court',[27] a closer investigation of this shift towards romance shows how such a movement was not so much a regression to the past as a progression towards the articulation of new generic forms and new political ideals. By highlighting the peculiar character of post-revolutionary romance, it is possible to see how the reworking of *Measure for Measure* represents not so much the obsequious homage of a decaying theatre to a glorious past as an articulate and original rethinking of the issues first engaged by Shakespeare while elaborating his sources.

Studying the work of a Restoration adapter provides fresh evidence to identify the principles, conventions and concerns central to the drama of the period, but it also provides useful insights into the way in which the original was read by dramatists who were much closer to Shakespeare than we are. If both Davenant and Gildon had to change *Measure for Measure* so dramatically in order to turn the Duke into a divine ruler, Angelo into a perverse lover or a mean fortune-hunter, and Isabella into a reformer, we can safely assume that this is not how they read Shakespeare's characters. An assessment of what the adapters *did not* find in *Measure for Measure*, and what they had to add to change the original, confirms the conclusions reached after a close investigation of Shakespeare's revision of the three main motifs in *Measure for Measure:* Shakespeare's Duke is a human and meddling ruler, Angelo a self-deceived man 'dressed in brief authority', and Isabella a strong individual struggling for the

[27]Dobson, p. 21.

preservation of her identity against the intrusive manipulation of the two authority figures in the play.

If, along with Schanzer, we should keep wondering whether Isabella's conception of identity can be regarded as a stronger moral imperative than charity and selfless sacrifice, we should stop applying Schanzer's definition of "problem play" to *Measure for Measure*, because the play *does* offer his audience a definitive and identifiable perspective on the main issues it explores. This perspective, more easily detected when *Measure for Measure* is contrasted with its precedents and its successors, does not provide ready-made answers for the audience. Rather, this perspective, as amply demonstrated above, is a radical statement, which invited Jacobean audiences, and still invites us today, to look beyond what is social, conventional and established, into what can only be personal, unresolved, paradoxical and painfully human.

CHAPTER TWO

'King Lear' in Perspective:

Absolute Tragedy and Jacobean Absolutism

Hamlet appealed to the Romantic imagination as much as *King Lear* appeals to ours.[1] Common to the most disparate readings offered by critics and directors this century is the tendency to regard Lear as 'our contemporary'. According to Anderson, the reception of *Lear* swings constantly between two 'interpretative extremes', determined by the 'established but controversial alignment of [the play] with Beckett's absurdist dramas or ... with Dante's *Purgatorio*'.[2] Reading *King Lear* as a Christian tragedy reduces Lear's experience of the Fall and the play itself to the first act of an implied "divine comedy"; reading Lear as a blank stare into the abyss of nothingness and endless inversions, on the other hand, turns the play into a grim *fin-de-siècle* "end game". Both approaches, however, hinge on a contemporary preoccupation with the idea of the End, explored in *King Lear* more distinctively than in any other Shakespearean tragedy, and use the play to substantiate two opposed, but complementary attitudes towards it, one optimistic and redemptive, the other pessimistic and cynical.

Even recent attempts to read Shakespeare historically reproduce this dichotomy. Lisa Jardine, for example, investigates the dramatic function of Erasmian "familial letters" in *King Lear*, and argues that because the evil characters in the play use the medium of "familial letters" not to 'convey passionate feeling, to create bonds of friendship, and to make the absent loved one vividly present', as Erasmus had theorised, but to manipulate and mislead the other characters, a Jacobean audience would view Lear's world as corrupt beyond repair. According to Jardine, Shakespeare's radical

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[1]For a full investigation of this shift in the perception and appropriation of Shakespearean tragedy, see, for example, R.A.Foakes, *Hamlet vs Lear: Cultural Politics and Shakespeare's Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[2]J.H.Anderson, 'The Conspiracy of Realism: Impasse and Vision in *King Lear*', in *Studies in Philology*, 84 (1987), p. 1.

inversion of his model determines the 'dark, nihilistic character of the ending'.[3] Richard Dutton, on the other hand, detects a parallel treatment of their common sources in Anthony Munday's Lord Mayor's show *The Triumphs of Reunited Britannia*, written in 1605, and *King Lear*, whose Quarto version was written only a year later. He therefore concludes that '[t]he imaginative use of history ... in both Munday and Shakespeare seems entirely loyal to the new king and dynasty [and to] the providential view of the matter of Britain.'[4] Consequently, he dismisses pessimistic readings of the play as the result of a distortion of the playwright's original intentions:

> The modern appropriation of the play is often linked with an impulse to emphasise the play's pessimistic, even nihilistic implications. .. The allusions I have been tracing to the myths and history of Britain are ... arguments against modern sentimental pessimism.[5]

If, according to Jardine, the comparison between *Lear* and a contemporary literary model largely employed by Shakespeare in the play proves that a pessimistic reading is encouraged by the play, Dutton's contrastive analysis of *Lear* with a contemporary dramatic text reaches exactly the opposite conclusion.

'Reading Shakespeare historically' can help us re-establish some distance between our conception of the End at the turn of the second millennium and the fall of Lear, a character conceived at the beginning of the 17th century, only a few years after the accession of a new dynasty to the throne of England. 'Reading Shakespeare historically', however, cannot be simply reduced to an investigation of one structural element in the play or one contemporary dramatic text, which shows some resemblance to *Lear* in its treatment of its chronicle sources. Only a systematic investigation of the play's main sources (Part I) and its Restoration adaptation, Nahum Tate's *The History of King Lear* (Part III), can provide us with an overall view of the development of the Lear story throughout the 16th and 17th century, against which the peculiar character and historical significance of Shakespeare's own revision stands out more clearly. Once the nature of Shakespeare's revision of his sources is established, it will also be possible to

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[3]L.Jardine, *Reading Shakespeare Historically* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 96.
[4]R.Dutton, '*King Lear, The Triumphs of Reunited Britannia*, and "The Matter of Britain"', in *Literature and History*, 12 (1986), p. 145.
[5]Dutton, p. 149.

demonstrate that *King Lear*'s 'irreducible ambivalence'[6] is only supported by a conflated version of the 1608 Quarto *The Historie of King Lear* and the 1623 Folio *The Tragedie of King Lear*. When the Folio is analysed separately in relation to Shakespeare's revision of his sources in the Quarto, it clearly appears as a further stage of Shakespeare's rewriting of the original story (Part II).

[6]Anderson, p. 23.

PART I

Kingship in the Dock:

The Trials in 'King Lear'

Shakespeare revised the Leir story both thematically and generically. After appearing on the pages of English Chronicles and on the contemporary stage of romantic-pastoral tragicomedy, the original story was for the first time recast into a tragic mould. Thematically speaking, the most noticeable changes introduced by Shakespeare into the original plot are aimed at extending the trial motif from the first scene, or from the opening stages of the story, to the rest of the play. When read against its main sources, one cannot help wondering why there should be so many trials in *King Lear*:[1] the love-test in 1.1; Edgar's trial *in absentia* in 1.2 and 2.1; Kent's trial in 2.2; Goneril and Regan's trial, again *in absentia*, on the night of the storm; Gloucester's trial in his own castle at the end of act 3; Goneril's arraignment of his wife in 4.2; Lear's fantastic re-enactment of his old role as supreme judge in 4.6; the trial by combat and Edmund and Goneril's final trial in act 5.

The generic and the thematic are clearly interrelated aspects of Shakespeare's revision of his sources. As opposed to comedy, where the *denouement* shows how society naturally accommodates human needs, or, conversely, how the individual can be reconciled to the values and customs of the community, tragedy records the divorce between the Self and the Other, the latter appearing alternatively in the shape of an insentient divinity, adverse fortune or an open conflict within the human *consortium*. The most visible and most immediate consequence of a breach in the harmonious relationship between the Self and the Other is a collapse of the normal proceedings, rituals and general functioning of human justice, which ideally should preside over and regulate the terms of that relationship.

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[1]Quotations from *King Lear* in Part I are followed by line reference to W.Shakespeare *King Lear*, ed. by K.Muir (London: Methuen, 1952, rev. 1972), a standard conflated edition of the 1608 Quarto and the 1623 Folio, because Part I explores the character of Shakespeare's rewriting of his sources, independently of the individual differences between the earlier and the later versions of the play.

In *Lear*, the gods turn a blind eye to human suffering, fortune plays bad tricks on Edgar and Cordelia's army, and society proves tragically inadequate to guarantee the preservation of its members and their values. Since Tudor and Jacobean absolutist theories had reinforced the belief in a divine origin of monarchical power and in a correspondence between natural and social order, the insentient gods and the raging elements in *King Lear* can be interpreted as symptoms of a failure on the part of the supreme judge, his majesty the king, to guarantee a fair administration of justice. It is Lear's initial misjudgement in the first trial and his abuse of his power as supreme judge that, to borrow King Pontus's own words in Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, makes Lear's England a 'fit place inough to make the stage of any Tragedie'.[2]

1.1 The King's Trial: the Love Test.

Much has been said about the first scene in *King Lear*. After the typically Shakespearean conversational opening exchange between Gloucester and Kent, the action moves into the very centre of the court, the language soars to formulaic mannerism and real-life coordinates fail to guide us through the fast proceedings of the love test. The resigning king is still in power, and, from the height of his position, he rewards two of his daughters for their most articulate profession of filial love and affection by leaving them half of his kingdom each, and punishes his third daughter and his most loyal councillor Kent for their presumption by disowning them. Only future events will prove Lear wrong.

Some critics are puzzled and deeply embarrassed by the enigmatic character of this scene and prefer to regard it as either a prologue or a narrative premise to the main action. The proliferation of trials in *Lear* confutes this theory: if Shakespeare expanded the trial motif from the first scene to the rest of the play, he must have regarded it not merely as a pre-text but as an integral part of the story. When, on the other hand, critics

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[2]Bullough, VII, p. 406.

have looked beyond the unaccountable fairy-tale-like character of the first trial, they have concentrated exclusively on Lear's role as supreme judge. William Downes, for example, by means of a complex linguistic analysis, demonstrates what the dramatic context makes clear anyway, namely that Lear's question is not so much a question, as a 'command to provide evidence of love.'[3] Apart from stating the obvious, Downes speculates on the worn-out argument of Lear's confusion between love and obedience. What Downes seems to ignore is the crucial fact that it is Lear, rather than his daughters, who is being tried in front of both the on-stage and the real audience.

Some of the sources stress this point quite clearly. Geoffrey of Monmouth, after reporting Leir's intention of '[making] tryal who was the worthiest of the best part of his kingdom',[4] accounts for Cordelia's defiance as follows:

> But Cordeilla the youngest, understanding how easily he was satisfied with the flattering Expressions of her Sisters, was *desirous to make Tryal of his Affection* after a different Manner.[5] (added emphasis)

Cordeilla tries to break the spell cast upon her father by her sisters' flattery by disclosing the economic basis of filial love: 'Look how much you have, so much is your value, and so much I love you.'[6] If not so explicitly, Leir's position as judged rather than judge is emphasised in Holinshed by means of the riddling character of Cordeilla's answer:

> Knowing the great love and fatherlie zeale that you have alwaies borne towards me (for the which I maie not answere you otherwise than I thinke and as my conscience leadeth me) I protest unto you, that I have loved you ever, and will continuallie (while I live) love you as my naturall father. And if you would more understand of the love that I beare you, assertaine your selfe, that so much as you have, so much you are woorth, and so much I love you, and no more.[7]

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[3]W.Downes, 'Discourse and Drama: King Lear's "Question" to His Daughters', in *The Taming of the Text: Explorations in Language, Literature and Culture*, ed. by W. van Peer (London: Routledge, 1982), p. 246.
[4]Bullough, p. 311.
[5]Bullough, p. 312.
[6]Bullough, p. 312.
[7]Bullough, p. 317.

Cordeilla puts her father's understanding to the test, but he fails to solve the riddle and ends up choosing the wrong heirs for his kingdom. Similarly, Higgins' Cordila, by using the pronoun 'we' and punning on the double meaning of the word 'goodes', insinuates that her sisters' love is moved only by the prospect of inheriting a larger share of the kingdom: 'We love you chiefly for the goodes you have.'[8]

In *Leir*,[9] the love test takes on a slightly different meaning. There Leir arranges the trial to 'beguyle' his youngest daughter into marrying a suitor of his choice. The trial is not set up to test his three daughters, but to blackmail Cordella into an arranged marriage. Leir's mistake stems not so much from a misjudgement of his three daughters' motives, as from a misjudgement of priorities: Leir is perfectly aware of the conflict of interest between his 'childrens love', and his 'care of Common weale' (*Leir*, l. 203), but he places the public cause before his youngest daughter's private happiness. Despite Perillus' advice - 'Yet to become so provident a Prince,/ Lose not the title of a loving father: Do not force love,' (*Leir*, ll. 73-5) - Leir fails to heed the reasons of the heart, a fatal mistake in the world of romance. In the trial scene, Leir is more disappointed than outraged. Leir's much delayed 'Peace, bastard Impe, no issue of King Leir' (*Leir*, l. 312), comes only after Gonorill and Ragan have repeatedly fomented their father's rage. Their first attempt - 'Gon. Here is an answere answerlesse indeed:/ Were you my daughter, I should scarcely brooke it.', and 'Reg. Dost thou not blush, proud Peacock as thou art,/ To make our father such a slight reply?' (*Leir*, 281-5) - only provokes Leir's disbelief: 'But, didst thou know, proud gyrle,/ What care I had to foster thee to this,/ Ah, then thou wouldst say as thy sisters do.' (*Leir*, ll. 296-8). Only their insistent provocation- 'Gon. I love my father better then thou canst', and 'Reg. I say, thou dost not wish my fathers good.' (*Leir*, ll. 305, 310) - finally triggers off a Lear-like outburst. Last, but not least, the love test is not Leir's own idea, but that of Skalliger, the evil counterpart of good councillor Perillus, who suggests that Leir should 'make them [his daughters] eche a Joynter more or lesse,/ As is their worth, to them that love professe.' (*Leir*, ll. 37-8). In the romantic setting of *The True Chronicle Historie*, Leir fails mainly as a father, and only secondarily, as a ruler.

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[8]Bullough, p. 184.

[9]All quotations from *Leir* are followed by line-reference to *The History of King Leir* (1605) The Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1907).

Shakespeare's Cordelia provides the most shocking answer of all: to Lear's question 'what can you say to draw/ A third more opulent than your sisters?', Cordelia can only reply 'Nothing, my lord.' (*Lear*, 1.1.84-6). After the exquisite performance of her two sisters, the trial comes to an abrupt halt. Bullough rightly observes that '[b]y omitting the preparatory matter of the old play, Shakespeare makes her bold understatement a hammer-blow to the audience as well as to Lear himself'.[10] Bullough describes the effect of Cordelia's answer in strictly theatrical/linguistic terms: its length and register violate the norm set by her two sisters' answers, and the pause following Cordelia's reply is also made the more eloquent by way of contrast. But the word 'nothing' recurs frequently enough in *Lear* to justify speculation on its significance.

Alessandro Serpieri interpreted Cordelia's answer as an attack against the system of medieval hierarchy which Lear assumedly stands for. '[T]he only way of staying within the system of medieval hierarchy is by means of comparison. Cordelia infringes the rule by refusing to be compared to her sisters.'[11] 'The rejection of comparison', Serpieri continues, 'implies the rejection of a whole system of signs. It involves a leap into nothingness, a loss of identity'.[12] This theory is fascinating but historically defective: unlike her predecessors, Cordelia no longer stands for a 'medieval system of allegiance', as Serpieri claims, according to which she is expected to love her father 'no more no less' than her filial bond requires. Neither does she attack medieval hierarchy. By the time *King Lear* was written and performed medieval hierarchy and the system of allegiance on which it was based had already been replaced by absolutism, a derivative, but profoundly different form of government which destroyed the concept of allegiance/bond altogether (the denomination "absolute", i.e. ab-solutus, bond-less, suggests that the monarch was unchecked by any conscience/will other than his own). After crossing the absolute ruler's will, she eventually provides the very answer Lear was expecting from her in the first place: 'Why have my sisters husbands, if they say/ They love you all? ... Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,/ To love my father all.' (*Lear*, 1.1.98-103) Cordelia's answer is the only possible one which can outbid her

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[10]Bullough, p. 287.
[11]A.Serpieri, 'The Breakdown of Medieval Hierarchy in *King Lear*', in *Shakespearean Tragedy*, ed. by J.Drakakis (London and New York: Longman, 1922), p. 87.
[12]Serpieri, p. 92.

sisters' and gain her a 'third more opulent'. But the delay with which she answers puts Lear on the spot. Cordelia beats Lear at his own game: by refusing to comply and subverting the trial, Cordelia challenges Lear's authority and unmasks his 'darker purpose(s)'. Cordelia tries Lear and finds him guilty of abusing his power both as an absolute ruler and a father, in demanding that his youngest daughter should become a substitute mother and wife. To Lear's eyes, Cordelia's crime is pride, paradoxically the same crime Lear imputes his two elder daughters with later on. By refusing to obey, Cordelia, well before her sisters, shows Lear the limits of his assumedly absolute power.

The nature of Cordelia's crime (and the root of Lear's rage) is further qualified by Kent's attempt to check the old king's folly. After Lear has condemned Cordelia's 'plainness' - 'Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.' (*Lear*, 1.1.128) -, Kent himself insists on being plain with the king: '[B]e Kent unmannerly,/ When Lear is mad.' (*Lear* , 1.1.144-5) Kent's intervention does not abate Lear's rage, but, quite predictably, enrages him even more. Kent points out the limits of the king's judgement, and Lear, the absolute ruler, cannot but reprimand his councillor's audacity: 'thou hast sought ... with strain'd pride/ To come betwixt our *sentence* and our *power*,/ Which nor our *nature* nor our *place* can bear.' (*Lear*, 1.1.167-70; added emphasis)

A comparison with the sources leads us to question the roles traditionally attached to the king and his daughters as judge and defendants of this first trial. Shakespeare's revision of the first trial makes it difficult to decide who is being tried. If Lear's mistake consists in separating the form and function of kingship from his own *persona* and in taking flattery for solid evidence, Cordelia and Kent are there to remind him of his own folly well before Goneril and Regan point it out at the end of 1.1 - 'With what poor *judgement* hath he now cast her off appears too grossly' - and in 1.4, where they eventually dare confront their father openly:

> Reg. O, Sir! you are old;
> ... you should be rul'd and led
> By some *discretion* that *discerns* your state
> Better than you yourself.
> (*Lear*, 2.4.143-7)

It is his dutiful daughter and loyal servant, and not his ungrateful daughters, who first make Lear mad. As Bradley observed, 'what is true of Kent and the Fool (who, like Kent, hastens on the quarrel with Goneril) is, in its measure, true of [Cordelia].'[13] Although comparing Cordelia to Iago probably means stretching the argument a bit too far, Robert Martz is certainly right in stressing the fact that both characters refuse to reveal their motivations:

> Whatever Iago's and Cordelia's apparent differences, they are both the resistant object of state knowledge and state power. And the utter subversion of Lear's authority begins in part from Cordelia's silence. She refuses to be an object of either knowledge or power for Lear.[14]

1.2 Gloucester's Trial: the (Un)natural Villain

Gloucester's trial *in absentia* at 1.2 and 2.1 introduces the sub-plot which Shakespeare borrowed from Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*. In the source, the old king's misjudgement is the inevitable result of his bastard son's exceptional knavery, and of his 'poysonous hypocrisie, desperate fraude, smoothe malice, hidden ambition, and smiling envie.'[15] The clear-cut distinction between good and evil exempts the old king from any real responsibility. Shakespeare's long build-up towards Edgar's banishment, on the other hand, is clearly there to *try* Gloucester's judgement. As with the first trial, it is the father, rather than the child, who is tried and fails. Gloucester's mis-interpretation of the evidence provided by Edmund leads him to choose the wrong heir. Like Lear's, Gloucester's trial reveals a crisis of judgement. Whereas Lear's trial shows how the

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[13]Bradley, p. 322.
[14]R.Martz, '"Speaking What We Feel": Torture and Political Authority in *King Lear*', in *Exemplaria: A Journal of Theory in Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 6 (1994), p. 225.
[15]Bullough, p. 404.

king's judgement is swayed by flattery, Gloucester's trial shows how his 'wisdom of Nature' (*Lear*, 1.2.101) is also inadequate and fallible.

Gloucester's belief that disorder in nature is responsible for disorder in society - 'These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us' (*Lear*, 1.2.100-1) - is imported directly from Sidney, where Plexirtus' evil disposition is accounted for as the result of both nature and craft - 'For certainely so had nature *formed* him, and the exercise of craft *conformed* him to all turnings of sleights.'[16] As A.D.Weiner observes 'Plexirtus is evil by nature and despite the other characters' goodwill towards him he will continue unrepentant.'[17] In Sidney, good and evil are super-human, i.e. "natural", forces, which shape human nature from the outside. A providential pattern in Sidney reduces evil to a trial for the good characters, and its temporary sway over human affairs to a pre-text for the final re-establishment of a benevolent order. Nature comprises good and evil, but evil is perfunctory to the ultimate success of the good-natured.

Gloucester's 'natural wisdom' leads him to subscribe to this optimistic and providential view of nature, and to believe his "natural" son's hypocritical profession of love. The irony of Gloucester's blindness stems from the double sense of the word "natural", both as "illegitimate" and "good-natured", which, in Gloucester's logic, is counterpoised by the betrayal of his "legitimate", but "unnatural", son Edgar.

Although he elects Nature as his Goddess (*Lear*, 1.2.1.), Edmund is not a "natural" villain. He himself denies nature the power of shaping human character:

> This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune, often the surfeits of our own behaviour, we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, the stars; as if we were villains on necessity, fools by heavenly compulsion .. An admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star!
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> (*Lear*, 1.2.115-25)

Edmund knows that Edgar's good nature makes him as vulnerable as 'the catastrophe of the old comedy' (*Lear*, 1.2.131-2), and that his father's 'foolish honesty', i.e. his belief

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[16]Bullough, p. 407.

[17]A.D.Weiner, 'Sidney/Spenser/Shakespeare: Influence/ Intertextuality/ Intention', in *Influence and Intertextuality*, p. 254.

in a natural world shaped by Providential laws, only makes 'his practices ride easy' (*Lear*, 1.2.178-9).

The Nature invoked by Edmund is, as Bradbrook appropriately observes, 'the world of phenomena and human reason'. '[Edmund's] only reason', Bradbrook continues, 'is the pursuit of happiness; and as the only values are measurable ones, happiness consists in material success.'[18] Nature to Edmund is nothing more than a drive to prevail and reshape society according to his own values. And Edmund's values are not simply "natural" instincts, but the anti-values of the outsider. Edmund's plan is to 'top the legitimate', and not to reform society according to a more "natural", i.e. fairer, set of values. Edmund does not advocate the cause of natural rights, opposed to but at the same time reconcilable with Gloucester's own perception of nature. Edmund, as Dollimore remarks, is the product of the same society he purposes to destroy:

> although he falls prey to, he does not introduce his society to its obsession with power, prosperity and inheritance; [this obsession] is already the material and ideological basis of his society.[19]

An essentialist belief in a providentially ordained Nature is therefore dismissed in *King Lear* as a deceptive illusion. Gloucester's conception of nature obfuscates his judgement. Like Lear, he rewards and punishes his children according to what he regards as "natural" values of loyalty and gratitude, and, paradoxically, like Lear, he is mistaken and behaves like a tyrannical, "unnatural" father.

1.3 Kent's Trial: the Privilege of Anger.

Kent's return from exile in disguise reinforces the impression that there is no "natural" world, where positive values can survive unaltered by the collapse of the

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[18]M.C.Bradbrook, *Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), p. 168.
[19]J.Dollimore, '*King Lear* and Essentialist Humanism', in *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 202.

court. Kent's initial resolution to leave Lear's court - 'Fare thee well, King; sith thus thou wilt appear,/ Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.' (*Lear*, 1.1.179-80) - is soon abandoned. Banishment does not open up unforeseen opportunities of regeneration. If in *As You Like It* the audience follow the true Duke on his exile into the forest, and witness how exile can be turned into a chance for renewal and rebirth, *King Lear*, as Scragg points out, 'remains within the society created by the central figure, focusing upon the nature of the environment produced by its actions'.[20] Neither does banishment usher in romance, as in *King Leir*, where the audience is given to follow Cordella outside the court, and witness her fortunate meeting with the Gallian king. Banishment in *Lear* is tantamount to death. Kent comes back only after he has found himself another identity. Kent the courtier, the loyal councillor, is dead, as the disappointing recognition scene at 5.3, where Lear fails to realise that Kent and Caius are the same person, clearly points out.

Lear accepts Kent-as-Caius' services probably because the latter, among his many talents, claims to 'fear judgement' (*Lear*, 1.4.16) and because he also says he can spot that quality in Lear's countenance that he 'would fain call master', that is authority. (*Lear*, 1.4.28). This nostalgic renewal of allegiance between the master and his servant is doomed to fail. Kent's acknowledgement of Lear's royalty proves a futile, if noble, gesture. The fool's sarcastic comments on Kent's loyalty will prove prophetic: 'if thou follow him thou must needs wear my coxcomb.' (*Lear*, 1.4.101-2). Kent's rigid code of conduct will lead him straight to the stocks and will accelerate rather than slow down or prevent the king's mental decay. Kent's trial proves how Kent's loyalty is not merely vain but also dangerous.

When Kent is provoked by Oswald's cowardice, his anger degenerates into paroxysm. Even if the audience might initially sympathise with Kent, it soon becomes clear that his anger will only secure him a night in the stocks. Kent's anger and his outrageous threats - 'Thou whoreson zed! thou unnecessary letter! My Lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar, and daub the wall of a jakes with him.' (*Lear*, 2.2.61-4) - must sound utterly unjustified to his bewildered on-stage audience. Cornwall repeatedly asks Kent what occasioned his displeasure: 'What's the

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[20]Scragg, p. 142.

matter here?' (*Lear*, 2.2.45); 'What is your difference? speak' (*Lear*, 2.2.49); 'how grew your quarrel?' (*Lear*, 2.2.58); 'Why art thou angry?' (*Lear*, 2.2.68); and 'What is his fault?' (*Lear*, 2.2.86). Kent fails to reply to the first three questions. When he answers the fourth question, he is deliberately vague: 'Corn. Why art thou angry? Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,/ Who wears no honesty.' (*Lear*, 2.2.69-70) Kent's answer to Cornwall's last question is openly provocative: 'Corn. What is his fault? Kent. His countenance likes me not.' (*Lear*, 2.2.87) Cornwall starts wondering if Kent is mad. It is ironic that Kent, who invokes Nature's revenge on such a rascal as Oswald and calls him Vanity's 'puppet' (*Lear*, 2.2.34), 'wagtail' (*Lear*, 2.2.64), 'rat' (*Lear*, 2.2.71), 'dog' (*Lear*, 2.2.77), and 'Goose' (*Lear*, 2.2.80), should in fact strike his judges as being himself "unnatural" and "beastly". Although Kent, being one of Lear's retinue, was not likely to get a fair trial, he can only blame himself, his anger and his raving frenzy, for impairing the formal proceedings of his own trial in the first place.

Kent justifies his behaviour, as Kenneth Graham reminds us, by making a conscious reference to the ethico-philosophical tradition of the '*saeva indignatio*' or '*ira per zelum*':[21] 'anger', Kent claims, 'hath a privilege' (*Lear*, 2.2.67). Only when Cornwall orders to fetch forth the stocks Kent seems to regain control. His plea, however - 'Sir, I am too old to learn' (*Lear*, 2.2.124) - comes too late. It is significant that Gloucester, despite his vain attempts to pacify Cornwall, finds Kent's behaviour reprehensible: 'His fault is much, ...' (*Lear*, 2.2.137). Kent himself later on acknowledges his share of responsibility in compromising his own trial: 'Having more man than wit about me, drew.' (*Lear*, 2.4.41) Kent's presumption, justified or more excusable in 1.1, cannot be as easily excused in 2.2.

Kent's trial shows the audience how old values, like feudal allegiance, are relative and cannot survive the collapse of the system from which they originally derived. If the supreme judge can no longer administer justice, Kent can no longer fulfil his traditional function as mirror, guide and counsellor, like Perillus in *Leir*, or his countless predecessors in middle English secular 'counselling literature'.[22] Although Kent certainly 'give[s] the fable a glow of humanity which would otherwise be

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[21]K.J.E.Graham, '"Without the Form of Justice": Plainness and the Performance of Love in *King Lear*', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 42 (1991), p. 441.

[22]G.Barnes, *Counsel and Strategy in Middle English Romance* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1993), *passim*.

wanting', as Sidney Lee argues,[23] his anger represents another instance of blatant misjudgement. He is tried and, like the other "good" characters, traditionally regarded as the undeserving victims of hypocrisy and flattery, he fails. If the king cannot guarantee the survival of state values in the public sphere, the individual necessarily fails in the matter of private and moral conduct. 'So out went the candle', as the Fool's adage goes, 'And we were left darkling' (*Lear*, 1.4.226).

1.4 The Staging of Justice in Act 3: the Mock Trial and Gloucester's Blinding

Act 3 is coated in darkness. Characters stumble across the stage because all lights, most prominently Gloucester's eyes, have been put out. The catastrophe triggered off by the two fathers' misjudgement of their children is exemplified in Act 3 in all its horror.

The image of this horror is a wholly Shakespearean invention. In some of the main sources, though the king realises how wrong he was in disowning his youngest daughter, he does not regard his fall as a direct consequence of his initial misjudgement. In Geoffrey of Monmouth, the king admits that Cordelia was right:

> How true was thy Answer, Cordeilla, when I asked thee concerning thy Love to me, *As much as you have, so much is your Value, and so much I love you*? While I had any Thing to give they valued me, being Friends not to me, but to my Gifts.[24]

However, the realisation of the economic basis of the feudal values of loyalty and allegiance does not outrage Leir and does not come as a shock to the system. Leir only mildly blames himself, because bad luck, he believes, is solely responsible for his fall:

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[23]S.Lee, *The Chronicle History of King Leir: The Original of Shakespeare's King Lear* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1909), p. 32.
[24]Bullough, p. 314.

'O irreversible Decrees of the Fates ... O Rage of Fortune! Shall I ever again see the Day, when I may be able to reward those according to their Deserts?'[25]

In Holinshed, the king is even more blasé about his responsibilities. 'Necessitie', and not remorse, persuades him to sail to Gallia 'to seeke some comfort of his yongest daughter Cordeilla'.[26] Although the king, according to Higgins' Cordeilla, is to blame for his misjudgement - 'Then he to late his rigour did repente'[27] - he never loses his right to be eventually reinstated. For the first time in the anonymous *Leir*, the king's misjudgement is sensed as problematical, but its implications are carefully buried under the glittering coat of romance. Leir is sorry and disappointed, but not outraged: instead of inveighing against his daughters, he remains the 'myrrour of mild patience' (*Leir*, l. 755). The king regards his fall as deserved punishment for his initial folly - 'This punishment my heavy sinnes deserve,/ And more then this ten thousand thousand times:' (*Leir*, ll. 856-7), but his responsibility is toned down. The dramatist's insistence on the scheming nature of the two sisters and Skalliger, the evil counsellor, makes Leir appear more as the victim of a conspiracy, than the direct cause of his misfortunes:

> Gon. Well, after him Ile send such thunderclaps
> Of slaunder, scandall, and invented tales,
> That all the blame shall be remov'd from me,
> And unperceiv'd rebound upon himselfe.
> (*Leir*, ll. 983-6)

Cordella absolves her father and blames her sisters: 'Oh sisters! you are much to blame in this,/ It was not he, but you that did me wrong.' (*Leir*, ll. 1088-9) Leir himself, after acknowledging his share of responsibility, momentarily casts off his *habitus* of passive forbearance and assures the villain hired by Ragan to kill him that his initial misjudgement of Cordella's motives is the only big mistake he has ever made: 'For her except, whom I confesse I wrongd,/ Through doting frenzy, and o're-ielous love./ There lives not any under heavens bright eye,/ That can convict me of impiety.' (*Leir*, ll. 1598-1601) Leir's initial misjudgement is clearly a most unfortunate and isolated episode. The values associated with true kingship are also never questioned: Perillus, like France

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[25]Bullough, p. 314.
[26]Bullough, p. 318.
[27]Bullough, p. 328.

in *King Lear*, draws a distinction between false loyalty excited by interest and true loyalty stemming from disinterested love (cf. *Leir*, ll. 1770-90), and Ragan and Gonoril's behaviour is condemned as "unnatural". In *Leir*, nature is still on the king's side and, despite his *faux pas*, his "natural" superiority and right to rule is eventually re-established. It is also significant that Cordella first reconstitutes a symbolic court in the forest: an extended metaphor of vesting and divesting illustrates the process whereby Cordella first rejects the hypocrisy of her father's court - 'These costly robes ill fitting my estate,/ I will exchange for other meaner habit.' (*Leir*, ll. 614-5) - and then reinvests herself of true "natural" authority:

> Ile hold thy Palmers' staffe within my hand,
> And thinke it is the Scepter of a Queene.
> Sometime ile set thy Bonnet on my head,
> And thinke I weare a rich imperiall Crowne.
> (*Leir*, ll. 698-701)

Since the pilgrim she is pledging love and obedience to is the Gallian King in disguise, Cordella's dream soon proves more than a pastoral fantasy.

In *Lear* the green world of romance has been replaced by a bleak barren space, shaken, like a hell on earth, by the upheaval of the elements and the torments of its inhabitants. Act 3 marks not so much Lear's full realisation of his mistake as the beginning of his descent into the abyss of suffering created by his actions: before Lear is given to fully understand the nature of his mistake, he must *feel* its consequences.

Lear's arraignment of the elements in the storm shows as yet no 'reason in madness'. Lear challenges the wind to blow and cataracts to spout, he upbraids the elements for conspiring with his daughters, and calls them 'servile ministers' (*Lear*, 3.2.21). His suffering is still self-centred and blinding. Although he can take pity on Poor Tom, he attributes his misfortunes to his 'unkind daughters'. But Edgar has no daughters. Edgar was in fact wronged by a father, who, like Lear, was and still is tragically deceived.

The mock trial in Act 3 offers Lear the first glimpse of that truth he cannot bring himself to face. Lear's decision to 'arraign' his daughters 'straight' (*Lear*, 3.6.20) recreates the atmosphere of the court-room so often encountered in this play. Edgar is

appointed 'learned justicer', the fool 'yoke-fellow of equity' and Kent as one of the 'commission' (*Lear*, 3.6.21-38). Lear's determination to resume his former role of supreme judge and to 'deal justly' (*Lear*, 3.6.40), undermined by the setting and by the components of his jury, a fool, a beggar and a servant, has often been interpreted as just another instance of the impossibility of 'securing justice in such an unjust and unequal society'.[28] My impression is that a trial *is* actually taking place, and that it comes to an end not when the fool points out that Lear is trying a joint-stool, but when the king orders to anatomise Regan in order to find the final cause of her evil character, and 'see what breeds about her heart' (*Lear*, 3.6.74-5). Lear wonders, 'Is there any cause in nature that make these hard hearts?' (*Lear*, 3.6.75-6) As Renaissance scientists realised in their anatomical theatres, there is nothing in the human body that can explain, justify or account for such a thing as "natural" evil. Lear suspends the trial when he begins to see that it was not nature but himself who created the opportunity for his daughters to show him their ingratitude. This time, Lear is tried and he does not fail, but cannot bear to stare the truth straight in the eyes.[29]

The second trial in Act 3 is significant, not because of its outcome - the audience have by now enough evidence to decide for themselves who the betrayed and the traitors are - but because of the very necessity for Cornwall to set up a trial to take his revenge on Gloucester:

> Though well we may not pass upon his life
> Without the *form* of justice, yet our *power*
> Shall do a court'sy to our *wrath*, which men
> May *blame* but not *control*.
> (*Lear*, 3.7.24-7; added emphasis)

Cornwall has already been informed by Edmund of Gloucester's "betrayal". The trial does not therefore serve its orthodox function of apprehending the truth through an impartial scrutiny of the evidence available. The letter Gloucester received, presumably from Cordelia, for example, never appears on stage. Gloucester is doomed well before the trial commences. Yet the trial must take place. Cornwall needs the 'form' of justice

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[28]M.Heinemann, '"Demystifying the Mystery of State": *King Lear* and the World Upside Down', in *Shakespeare Survey*, 44 (1992), p. 79.

[29]The implications of the Folio's omission of the mock trial will be fully discussed in Part II.

to give his tyranny an appearance of legitimacy. After Lear's abdication has irremediably separated form from substance, justice is turned into a mere simulacrum, an empty shell, through which private interests can be conveniently smuggled into the system as lawful, just and legitimate. The audience is here made to realise that justice does not pre-exist power as a fixed, unchangeable, ideal paragon, but that it can be appropriated and warped to serve selfish purposes. Once again the fool's wisdom sums up the significance of this badly managed staging of justice: 'Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipp'd out when the Lady's Brach may stand by th'fire and stink.' (*Lear*, 1.4.117-9) Lear, still blind in Act 3, will come back in Act 4, wearing a coronet of wild flowers, the very image of Nature's fool, aged, tired and delirious, under the burden of a newly acquired, very similar sort of wisdom.

1.5 The Last Trials: the Turn of the Screw.

The structure of *King Lear* and the complexity of its plot have often been the cause of embarrassment among Shakespearean scholars. Bradley's famous remarks on the dramatic quality of *King Lear* are a typical example: '*King Lear* seems to me Shakespeare's greatest achievement, but it seems to me not his best play. ... The stage is the test of strictly dramatic quality, and *King Lear* is too huge for the stage.'[30] The structural weakness of *King Lear* has also affected our reading of the tragic hero:

> *King Lear* is certainly not without its scenes of tension, [but] no grandly comprehensive structural device of a kind ... ensure[s] tension until the end of the play. ... Once Lear has divided his kingdom and banished Cordelia and Kent, he becomes very largely a passive figure. ... [Since] there is ... no alternative hero, ... what keeps the action moving is some force other than the will of a single strong personage.[31]

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[30]Bradley, p. 244, 248.

[31]E.Jones, *Scenic Form in Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 154.

It is interesting to notice that such a question has never arisen with regard to *Leir*. The plot in *Leir* is relatively simpler - 'no underplot, no storm, no fool, no madness and no deaths' - as Muir effectively summarises.[32] Muir however overlooks another important difference: *Leir* has the perfectly balanced double structure of tragi-comedy. Nature intervenes to stop the messenger from killing Leir at l. 1634; Leir's warning, 'Sweare not by hell; for that stands gaping wide,/ To swallow thee, and if thou do this deed.' (Leir, ll. 1632-3), is followed by 'Thunder and lightning.' (*Leir*, l. 1634). From this point onwards romance takes over - the king and Perillus travel to Gallia by sea, the Gallian king and Cordelia meet them in disguise, their reunion is celebrated with a ritual banquet, which, like 'blessed manna', revives the old king. The initial misjudgement is amended by Cordelia, who by forgiving her father and intervening to restore him re-establishes the 'course of nature's powers' (*Leir*, l. 1264), i.e. patriarchal lineage.

King Lear, however, is not a tragi-comedy. According to Lucas' definition of tragedy, *Lear* falls into the category of 'tragedy of error'.[33] The tragedy is triggered off by Lear's misjudgement (*hamartia*), which is followed by a classical case of *peripeteia*, i.e. the effects of the hero's actions do not correspond to his intentions, and culminates with the tragic hero's *anagnorisis*, or realisation of his mistake. Whenever critics identify the storm as the moment of Lear's full realisation, they fail to account for the second part of the play. Moulton, for example, identified three main plots which presumably converge towards their resolution in the 'centrepiece' of the storm in Act 3. The tragedy is figuratively represented as an arch, its highest point being in the middle. Moulton's analysis of the play is significantly restricted to the first three acts. His only attempt to venture into the no-man-land of Act 4 betrays his disorientation: '[a]fter the centrepiece Lear disappears for a time, and when we next see him, his agitation has declined into something more pathetic.'[34]

If unacceptable, Moulton's dismissiveness is interesting because it reflects a common tendency to regard pathos as the main structural element which welds together

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[32]K.Muir, *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays* (London: Methuen, 1977), p. 201.
[33]F.L.Lucas, *Tragedy in Relation to Aristotle's Poetics* (London: the Hogarth Press, 1953), p. 101-2.
[34]R.G.Moulton, *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), p. 215.

the first and the second half of the play.[35] A systematic comparison with its main sources shows how the trial motif is in fact a crucial structural element in the play, and how Lear's progress towards the tragic ending in Act 5 does not touch its highest point in Act 3, only to degrade into the milder, stretched out and pathetic rambling of Act 4 and 5, but unfolds, inexorably, along a straight line, at the end of which, and only at the end of which, Lear will dare to look down into the abyss and reach the lowest/highest point of his tragic experience.

The trials in the first half of the play show the consequences of Lear and Gloucester's misjudgement. Chaos ensues when the absolute ruler and the head of the family lose their ability to judge. The tragedy is however incomplete, because there is still hope that though a failure of judgement undermines Lear's society, its values are strong enough to hold it together. The audience's expectations of a comic reversal are allowed to reach their highest point in Act 4. Gloucester and Lear, the father and the king, fully realise the extent of their mistakes. Paradoxically, Gloucester's blindness and Lear's madness allow them to see more clearly: Gloucester can see how the world goes 'feelingly'; Lear, though still deceived about Edmund's motives - 'Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard son/ Was kinder to his father than my daughters.' (*Lear*, 4.6.114-5) - realises that his power, assumedly absolute and "natural", is, in fact, an artificial construction, a lie his daughters' flattery led him to mistake for reality:

> When the rain came to wet me once and the wind to make me chatter,
> when the thunder would not peace at my bidding, there I found 'em,
> there I smelt 'em out.
>
> (*Lear*, 4.6.100-3)

If lack of understanding triggered off the tragedy, hindsight, we are led to hope, will help contain its effects. The trials in the second half of the play are meant to refute this logic. The values embodied by the "good" characters are tried again, and again they fail. The last trials are the most painful to forbear, in that they show the absence of absolute values; if the values of loyalty, selflessness and honour embodied by Kent, Cordelia and

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[35]See, for example, D.S.Kastan, *Shakespeare and the Shapes of Time* (London: Macmillan, 1982), p. 121; T.McAlindon, 'Tragedy, *King Lear* and the Politics of the Heart', in *Shakespeare Survey*, 44 (1992), pp. 85-90.

Edgar are undoubtedly positive and admirable in themselves, they are proved utterly ineffective when unsupported by the political structure, rules and customs within which they were observed and shared by the community.

Albany, submissive and unable to confront Goneril in the first part of the play, takes it upon himself to arraign and judge her in 4.2.[36] Albany's scorn, 'O Goneril!/ You are not worth the dust which the rude wind/ Blows in your face' (*Lear*, 4.2.29-31), is however met by Goneril's prophetic lines, 'Milk-liver'd man! ... Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning/ Thine honour from thy suffering.' (*Lear*, 4.2.50-3)

A common mistake is to regard the defeat of Cordelia's army as the main anti-climax in the second part of the play. Although the English army prevails, Albany, informed by Edgar of Edmund's betrayal, soon takes over the lead and power is secured into the hands of Lear's party. This long-awaited restoration of legitimate power leads to the very last tragic twist in *Lear*, the last trial and ultimate failure of the "good" characters. It is after Albany, Edgar and Kent have securely recovered their power that Cordelia is killed and Lear consequently dies. Even if Cordelia's death is the direct consequence of Edmund's plotting, the timing of the events in 5.3. shows how the "good" characters' indulgence in the pathetic recollection of their miseries keeps their mind from the main object of their endeavour, the safety of the king himself. Albany's sudden realisation, 'O, great thing of us forgotten', once again comes too late, and Lear's heart-rending 'O you are men of stones' condemns the vanity of their attempts and the inefficacy of empathy.

Albany, Goneril's stern judge of 4.2., is proved guilty of lacking a 'discerning eye'. Edgar's revenge on his brother in the trial by combat in Act 5, on the other hand, similarly reveals his limits. As Gillian Kendall points out, the trial by combat represents a plain anachronism at this stage in the play. 'In the trial by combat we witness precisely what the rest of the play negates: a vision of deep order, a working out of natural, and, of course, poetic justice.'[37] Edgar and Albany still believe that the outcome of the trial reflects a 'judgement of the heavens' (*Lear*, 5.3.230), and that the gods are not only

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[36]The variants between this scene in the Quarto and in the Folio will be dealt with extensively in Part II.
[37]G.Kendall, 'Ritual and Identity: the Edgar-Edmund Combat in *King Lear*', in *True Rites and Maimed Rites: Ritual and Anti-Ritual in Shakespeare and His Age*, ed. by L.Woodbridge and E.Berry (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), p. 241.

sentient but 'just' (*Lear*, 5.3.169). 'The ensuing events', Kendall continues, 'will reveal the inadequacy of the entire trial by combat. ... The completion of this morality play acted out by Edgar and Edmund is "but a trifle."'[38] Edgar revels in his role of condemning censor in the trial by combat:

> thou art a traitor,
> False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father,
> Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince,
> And, from th'extremest upward of thy head
> To the descent and dust below thy foot,
> A most toad-spotted traitor.
> (*Lear*, 5.3.132-7)

He is however soon made to realise that he was being tried and that he is now severely condemned for his presumption: 'A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!/ I might have sav'd her; now she's gone for ever!' (*Lear*, 5.3.268-9) Edgar's final proposition - 'The weight of this sad time we must obey;/ Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.' (*Lear*, 5.3.322-3) - inevitably sounds void and futile, because both Edgar and Albany have already been given a chance to prove that empathy is practically effective, but they have failed.

This double twist in Lear's tragedy also affects the tragic hero's apprehension of the truth. In the sources, the moment when the truth dawns on the mistaken king is marginal and unproblematic. The king in Geoffrey of Monmouth is said to have been unjustly deprived of his 'Kingdom' and his 'Regal Authority', which he 'had hitherto exercised with great Power and Glory'.[39] In neither of the chronicle sources does Lear abdicate and, interestingly enough, in both versions his sons-in-law, and not his daughters, depose him. The king's mistake does not affect the system, nor does it question the legitimacy of his power. Spenser's king is the first to abdicate to 'ease' himself of the crown. Here, however, a simple 'abatement' in the older sisters' kindness to their father, rather than open insurrection, prompts Cordelia to intervene. Leir's tragedy in Spenser is predominantly private. In *Leir*, prophetic dreams, premonitions and, eventually, the reinstatement of the king to his former position of supreme

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[38]Kendall, p. 250.
[39]Bullough, p. 313.

authority reveal a natural/providential necessity behind the events. The shift from history to romance, however, betrays an increasing uneasiness with regards to the Leir story. If in the chronicles, history was a strong enough confirmation of the king's natural right to reign, the anonymous playwright must have sensed that the historically recorded victory of Cordella's army and her father's reinstatement might simply have been a most fortunate coincidence and that the king's initial mistakes had seriously problematical implications which required a romantic, other-worldly resolution in order to be silenced. The abrupt ending, after the long romantic digressions that slow down the pace considerably towards the end of *Leir*, suggests that there are unresolved problems which not even romance could completely efface. Why, for example, does the newly reinstated Leir go off to France? Who is left to rule his kingdom? What happens to Cordella's sisters? Do their husbands at any point realise that they have taken part in an unjust war?

Lear, in an extremely realistic, anti-romantic and clear-sighted way explores the very questions *Leir* had only partially managed to avoid. Lear is the first king to catch a glimpse of the abyss. And his audience with him. After Act 3, where insight is still defective, Act 4 shows the audience a new Lear, fully aware of the artificiality of his power - 'they told me I was every thing; 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof.' (*Lear*, 4.6.104-5) - and of the artificiality of the values upon which his power and his society rested. Chastity, for example, is now to Lear's eyes mere opportunistic pretence:

> - Behold yond simp'ring dame,
> Whose face between her forks presages snow;
> ...
> The fitchew nor the soiled horse goes to't
> With a more riotous appetite.
> (*Lear*, 4.6.117-22)

Lear can now perceive the arbitrary character of all those practices, justice in the first place, which, while formerly thought to rest on unshakeable principles of divine right and natural order, are now seen for what they really are, a screen for personal interests and material gain: 'The usurer hangs the cozener' (*Lear*, 4.6.161) The mock-trials set up by Lear's crazed imagination in 4.6 - 'What was thy cause?/ Adultery?/ Thou shalt

not die: die for adultery! No: ... Let copulation thrive; ...' (*Lear*, 4.6.109-14); 'Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!/ Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;/ Thou hotly lusts to use her in that kind/ For which thou whipp'st her,' (*Lear*, 4.6.158-61); 'None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able 'em:/ Take that of me, my friend, who have the power/ To seal th'accuser's lips.' (*Lear*, 4.6.166-8) - show the audience how Lear's initial misjudgement is not an isolated episode or merely the result of Lear's own blindness, but the direct consequence of the collapse of those principles and set of beliefs upon which monarchical absolutism rests.

Lear's realisation does not lead straight to his death nor, as a reading of the play as a "tragedy of the heart" might suggest, to an attempt on the part of the king to reform his state according to the knowledge and values he has acquired through suffering. Lear's suffering produces no constructive solution, and when he is finally reunited to Cordelia he does not want to be reinstated. When Cordelia reassures him that he is still in *his* own kingdom, Lear resentfully beseeches her not to 'mock' him (*Lear*, 4.7.59). Before Cordelia and Lear are taken away to prison, she asks to see her sisters, assumedly to scold or plead. Lear silences her: 'No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison.' (*Lear*, 5.3.8) The king does not want justice, the king wants to 'pray' and 'sing like birds in a cage' with Cordelia; he wants to 'tell tales' and laugh at 'gilded butterflies'. Lear wishes to be in the more comfortable position of 'spectator', rather than 'actor' or 'agent':

> [We'll] ... hear poor rogues
> Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,
> Who loses who wins; who's in, who's out;
> And take upon's the mystery of things,
> As if we were Gods' spies:
> (*Lear*, 5.3.13-7)

In *Othello* or *Hamlet*, the tragic hero's self-dramatisation in the final act empowers theatre itself. Though either the hero or his world, or both, are tragically flawed, a pattern can still be imposed upon their experience. If chaos takes over the hero's life and his world, order survives in the imagination. Tragedy, in other words, is still a mirror in which the audience can watch and learn from the hero's mistakes. At the end of *Lear* the

play can offer his audience no similar instance of self-dramatisation. Lear tries to step out of his own tragedy and look at his life as a spectacle. Lear tries to be his audience, he tries to be us. If he cannot judge from within his society, maybe he can judge it from the outside. Life however catches up with him. The pain of Cordelia's death bridges the fictive distance Lear has tried to put between himself and his life, between himself and his tragic experience. The fictive frame theatre imposes on life is not strong enough to contain the 'image' of the end, the glimpse Lear catches of the void, of the absence of a fixed meaning, of the abyss underlying human experience.

Through a development of the trial motif, Shakespeare reshaped the Leir story into a tragedy, which, while showing the collapse of the principles and ideas supporting monarchical absolutism, is also absolute tragedy, because it shows how, not only principles and ideas, but also values and emotions, are not "natural", but constructed fictions, which fall headlong into the abyss along with Lear. After Lear's death, any attempt to constrain reality within meaningful patterns is vain.

PART II

The Appeal:

Shakespeare's (Re)vision of the Trial Motif

The main Quarto and Folio variants in *King Lear* suggest that the trial motif and royal misjudgement, the most visible elements added by Shakespeare to his sources, were still a central concern for the reviser of the Quarto. Most of the main Folio variants introduced in the first half of the play are directly related to the motif of the king's trial. The introduction of these variants affects not only the characterisation of the king but also the course of the action and the audience's response to both.

Thomas Clayton, in his '"Is this the promis'd end?": Revision in the Role of the King',[1] restricted his analysis to the variants occurring within Lear's own lines, and consequently assessed the quality of the revision of the king separately from the larger context of the overall strategy of revision in the Folio. His conclusions are therefore affected by Bradley's tenet according to which character is destiny. The present analysis relies on the different premise that a character cannot be examined in isolation from its dramatic context. As Liebler explains in her *Festive Tragedy*, the tragic flaw, traditionally considered as the source and pre-text of tragedy,

> is not a matter of morality, of flawed character, stupidity, naiveté, or any of the usual inculpations to which tragic heroes have been subjected by a long march of critics. Nor is it essentially a matter of local politics. ... *Hamartia* is not a flaw, is specifically an act of misrecognition. .. a deed, an action. ... *Hamartia* is misrecognition not only by the protagonist, which could still be interpretable as a 'flaw' or an 'error', but also by the community.[2]

The traditional distinction between man and nature, between what lies within man's power to change and what is given, is similarly the result of an essentialist world view.

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[1]T.Clayton, '"Is this the promis'd end?": Revision in the Role of the King', in *The Division*, pp. 121-41.
[2]N.C.Liebler, *Festive Tragedy: The Ritual Foundations of Genre* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 42-4.

Symptomatic of this approach is Frye's attempt at defining the fundamental components of Elizabethan tragedy as a binary opposition of two absolute principles:

> The organizing conceptions of Elizabethan tragedy are the order of nature and the wheel of fortune. ... The order of nature provides the *data* of the human situation, the conditions man accepts by getting born. The wheel of fortune supplies the *facta*, what he contributes by his own energy and will.[3]

As highlighted by Shakespeare's revision of the Gloucester sub-plot, Nature in Shakespearean tragedy is not remote and unchangeable. Nature is rather what is considered as "natural" by the community. The tragic *agon* therefore describes not so much the hero's solipsistic attempt to come to terms with destiny, as the hero's negotiations with the community over shared values and ideas. Hence the emblematic character of the tragic hero: as Liebler reminds us, 'the institution of monarchy, not the monarch, is the real subject of tragedies of state'.[4] The present analysis will therefore include those Folio variants which, if not directly related to the character of the king, are relevant to the overall revision of the motif of royal misjudgement.

The Folio variants at 1.1 combine to make the king look older, weaker and consequently unable to rule his kingdom. In the Folio, the king's 'darker purpose' coincides with his decision to abdicate not only 'all cares and business' of state (Q 40; F 44), as in the Quarto, but also the 'Rule, and Interest of Territory' (F 54-5).[5] In the Folio the king's decision is fully justified by the fact that he can no longer sustain the burden of power. The king is dying: ''tis our fast intent,/ To shake all Cares and Businesse *from our Age/ Conferring* them on yonger *strengths, while we/ Unburthen'd crawle toward death.*' (F 43-6; Folio variants in italics). Experience and wisdom uncoupled from *strength* are not enough to ensure the common weal of the nation. The king's weakness makes abdication an unavoidable necessity. His gesture is however selfless and generous: the following Folio lines alert the audience to Lear's role as a sacrificial victim: 'We have this houre a constant will to publish/ Our daughters severall Dowers, that future strife/ May be prevented now.' (F 48-50)

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[3]N.Frye, *Fools of Time: Studies in Shakespearean Tragedy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), pp. 12-3.

[4]Liebler, p. 13.

[5]All quotations from the Quarto and Folio *King Lear* are followed by line-reference to W. Shakespeare, *The Parallel King Lear: 1608 - 1623*, ed. by M.Warren (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1989).

If Lear is weaker in the Folio, the other "good" characters are stronger. Cordelia's first shattering 'Nothing' is followed by Lear's astonished, 'Nothing?' (F 93-4). Lear in the Folio is taken aback and visibly hurt by Cordelia's reply. Folio Lear takes longer to recover from the shock and gather the energy for his arraignment of ungrateful Cordelia. The latter, on her part, is deprived of the crucial line 'To love my father all' (Q 93), which, in the Quarto, helps the audience remember that, if openly defiant of Lear's authority, she is still his loving daughter. Similarly, Kent laments the loss of his 'Freedome' in the Folio (F 195), and no longer the end of a 'Friendship', as he does in the Quarto (Q 174). He also urges the king to revoke his 'guift' (F 178) and not his 'doome' (Q158). Jackson has rightly emphasised the different function of these variants: 'the Folio's 'revoke thy gift' evidently refers to Lear's bestowal of the kingdom upon Goneril and Regan and their husbands, whereas the Quarto's 'revoke thy doom' ... presumably refers to Lear's judgement on Cordelia'.[6] In the Folio, Kent is more concerned with the political viability of Lear's decision than with the consequences of his misunderstanding of Cordelia's motives. The weak king is unsurprisingly outraged by the behavior of those he thought were going to support his plan, so outraged that "Alb. and Cor."[7] must intervene to restrain (support?) him: 'Alb. Cor.: Deare Sir forbeare.' (F 175) Steven Urkowitz has interpreted this line as an ominous premonition of what Lear's misjudgement will trigger off later on in the play: Albany and Cornwall, who have just learnt about the succession, do not hesitate to exercise their newly acquired power against the very source from which they have derived it.[8] Apart from imposing a meaning on this line that the audience can fully understand only *a posteriori*, when the theatrical significance of this gesture has probably already faded from their memory, Urkowitz's reading overlooks the immediate effect of having two characters approaching and maybe touching the king. The king is either too old to stand, or too bewildered to forbear the outrage of his councellor and his daughter's disobedience. In either case the king is weak and overwhelmed, but most of all, within reach of his subjects. The aura of the anointed and the mystical distance between the

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[6]MacD.P.Jackson, 'Fluctuating Variation: Author, Annotator, or Actor?', in *The Division*, p. 338.

[7]Beth Goldring's hypothesis according to which 'Cor.' might stand for Cordelia, as opposed to Cornwall, as it is generally assumed, makes this extra line even more intriguing. If Goldring is right in her assumption, this line provides further evidence to regard Cordelia as a much stronger character in the Folio. See, B.Goldring, 'Cor.'s Rescue of Kent', in *The Division*.

[8]S.Urkowitz, *Shakespeare's Revision of King Lear* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 81-2.

throne and the nobles have evidently vanished to let the audience witness the heartrending spectacle of the king's decline.

Two other minor Folio variants contribute to stress the king's physical and mental decay. At F 269, Lear rejects France and Burgundy's appeal to reconsider his rash banishment of Cordelia by adding 'I am firme' to the Quarto's 'Nothing, I have sworne' (Q 241). In the Quarto, the king, still in control and in a position of absolute power, does not have to remind himself and his court that his decisions are orders; in the Folio, on the other hand, a visibly aged Lear needs to conjure what is left of his vanishing strength to enforce his last deliberation as a king. At F 405-7 in the following scene, Edmund reports Edgar's view on matters of succession and inheritance of family's patrimony to a gullible Gloucester: 'I have heard him oft maintaine it to be fit, that Sonnes at perfect age, and Fathers *declin'd,* the Father should bee as Ward to the Son, ...'. It is interesting to notice that the Folio 'declin'd' replaces the Quarto 'declining' (Q 363). In the Quarto fathers are declining but are still in power; in the Folio fathers have already declined and the necessity for the younger generation to take over has become more urgent.

A conflation of the first scene of *King Lear,* as it appears in the Quarto and in the Folio, obliterates significant differences in characterization and action: a conflated edition/production of the play shows contradictory sides of the king's character and a confused logic behind the development of the plot, mainly because the changes introduced in the Folio were not meant to be added but to replace the original Quarto readings, which make the king look stronger.

Lear in the Quarto is still as strong as most of his counterparts in the sources. In Higgins and in Holinshed, for example, Lear never resigns. According to Higgins, King Lear punishes his youngest daughter by disowning her and dividing the kingdom between his elder daughters. The succession, however, is postponed till after his death. Cordell happily marries the king of France and only her sisters' greed brings her back to England to defend her father's right to the throne. Similarly in Holinshed, the king proclaims his eldest daughters and their husbands his successors, but does not abdicate. The Lear episode in *The Faerie Queene* is the only noticeable exception: here the king is old and tired and, as in the Folio, he voluntarily 'eases' himself of the crown. The anonymous *Leir*, on the other hand, first expresses a wish to abdicate,

And I would fayne resigne these earthly cares,

> And thinke upon the welfare of my soule:
> Which by no meanes may be effected,
> Then by resigning up the crowne from me,
> In equall dowry to my daughters three.

and then is forced to because of Cordelia's failure to comply with his stratagem:

> This done, because thou shalt not have the hope,
> To have a childs part in the time to come,
> I presently will dispossesse my selfe,
> And set up these upon my princely throne.

In the Quarto, the disappointing outcome of the love-test is the only reason behind Lear's belated decision to step down and let Goneril and Regan take over. Kent and Gloucester's opening exchange,

> Kent. I Thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany, then Cornwall.
> Glou. It did alwayes seeme so to us: But now in the division of the Kingdome, it appeares not which of the Dukes hee valewes most, for qualities are so weigh'd, that curiosity in neither can make choice of eithers moity.

informs the audience that the king's settlement of his daughters' dowries has already taken place, and not, as it is generally assumed when this passage is read retrospectively, or within the context of a conflated *King Lear,* that the king has decided to abdicate.

In his first speech in the Quarto, the king announces his 'darker *purposes*': dividing the kingdom in three parts to bestow on his daughters as their marriage portions, arranging the marriage of his youngest daughter, and testing them to decide who deserves the richest part of his kingdom. As Stern points out, Lear's decision to divide his kingdom is not as politically reckless as it is generally believed. Stern endorses Harry Jaffa's view that 'the division of the kingdom is [in fact] the strategy of a leader skilled in the complexities of *Realpolitik*'.[9] According to Stern, the logic behind Lear's strategy in the first scene betrays the king's wish to *retain,* rather than *resign,* his power: 'if Cordelia inherits her share of the kingdom she will stay in England and Lear

[9]A.Bloom and H.Jaffa, quoted in J.Stern, '*King Lear*: The Transference of the Kingdom', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 41 (1990), p. 299.

with her; that which Lear describes, then, as his darker purpose is in effect, to regain by marrying its new queen(s) the kingdom he has renounced.'[10] Stern's hypothesis applies to the Quarto better than to the Folio. In the Folio, as explained above, the king's age and weakness make his abdication a necessary measure to guarantee the safety of the nation. In the Quarto, though the king mentions his desire 'To shake all cares and business of our state,/ Confirming them on yonger yeares' (Q 40-1), he never announces his resignation 'of Rule,/ [And] Interest of Territory' as in the Folio (F 54-5). The absence of the motif of the succession is made even more noticeable by other minor variants occurring in this speech. The King's 'first intent' in the Quarto is 'To shake all cares and business of our *state,/ Confirming* them on yonger yeares' (Q 40-1). The Folio replaces 'Confirming' with 'Conferring', thus conveying the additional idea of an actual transmission of power, of a bequest. The variant 'age' is preferred to 'state', in order to stress, once again, the king's infirmity. Last, but not least, only in the Folio does the king explicitly express a wish to 'divest' himself of his power. (F 54)

In the Quarto, the king is stronger and totally in control. Richman, who directed a performance of *King Lear* based exclusively on the Quarto, realised that the shorter version of Lear's first speech conveys a stronger image of the king as a ruler:

> The speech in the Quarto works. It presents a clear, strong image of the king which is borne out and developed during the first two acts. Metrical irregularities and all, it is a taut, frank statement of the king's purposes. Quarto's Lear allows nothing to distract him from his division of the kingdom, his disposal of Cordelia in marriage, and the love-test of his daughters.[11]

In the Quarto Lear lays irrational claims on his daughters, but he chairs the trial in a very clear-sighted manner. His strong will and his strength make him appear despotic. It is only after Cordelia's unforeseen disobedience that the king is forced to banish those who challenge his authority and to secure his power in the hands of those who have sworn allegiance. Although the resignation speech is identical in the two versions of *King Lear*,

> ... Cornwall, and Albanie,
> With my two Daughters Dowres, digest the third,

[10]Stern, pp. 299-300.
[11]D.Richman, 'The *King Lear* Quarto in Rehearsal and Performance', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 37 (1986), p. 377.

... I doe invest you joyntly with my power,
Preheminence, and all the large effects
That troope with Majesty. ... onely we [shall] retaine
The name, and all th' addition to a King: the Sway,
Revennew and Execution of the rest,
Beloved Sonnes be yours, which to confirme,
This Coronet part betweene you.
(Q 117-29; F 135-147)

only in the Folio does the king's abdication happen *de facto.* In the Quarto the king retains his title and only renounces the 'cares and business' of his state; in the Folio, the king retains his title, but only as a nostalgic tribute to his former role, which he has resigned in his first speech. The last line of his "resignation speech", which in most productions prompts Lear to take off his crown and hand it over to his sons-in-law, can also be interpreted in two different ways: though the traditional staging of this line is in keeping with the Folio's revised version of the king's abdication, it is however unreconcilable with the king's first speech in the Quarto. The contradiction rests not so much in the Quarto as in the directors' assumption that 'Coronet' is a synonym for crown. The following is the first meaning registered by the *Oxford English Dictionary* for 'Coronet': 'A small or inferior crown; *spec.* a crown denoting a dignity inferior to that of the sovereign, worn by the nobility, and varying in form, according to rank.'[12] In his New Cambridge 1992 *The Tragedy of King Lear*, Jay Halio specifies that 'Shakespeare uses 'coronet' for the diadem of a nobleman in 1H6, 5.4.134, and JC, 1.2.111-16, and ... in *The Tempest*, he explicitly contrasts "crowns and coronets"'. Halio therefore concludes that 'it is unlikely that Lear gives his sons-in-law his own crown to divide between them', and that 'probably Lear refers to the coronet he meant for Cordelia.'[13] Halio also notices that the stage direction prompting an attendant to enter carrying a coronet during the entry procession appears only in the Quarto. Halio's analysis confirms what the Quarto variants analysed above cumulatively suggest, i.e. Quarto Lear never intended to abdicate prior to the disappointing outcome of the love test.

Other variants scattered throughout the first two acts reinforce this theory by showing how the king in the Quarto, who has only formally renounced his power in the first scene, strives to retain it and how those who take sides with him still recognize him

[12] *Oxford English Dictionary*, 'coronet', sb., 1.a..
[13] W.Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of King Lear*, ed. by J.L.Halio (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1.1.32n.

as their king. Two of these variants occur within Kent's trial and Goneril and Regan's trial *in absentia* on the heath, better known as the mock trial. The first variant is directly related to the question of the king's status in the first half of the play. In the Folio, Gloucester's attempt to persuade Cornwall not to offend the king by punishing his messenger is shorter than in the Quarto: Gloucester merely points out that the king is bound to 'take it ill/ That he so slightly valued in his Messenger,/ Should have him thus restrained.' (F1221-3) Gloucester, in other words, feels that the king should be spared another humiliation. The Quarto version reports the following extra lines:

> ... and the good King his maister
> W*ill check him for 't*, your purpost low correction,
> Is such, as belest and contaned wretches for pilfrings
> And most common trespasses are punisht with,
> (Q 1029-32; added emphasis)

In the Quarto, Gloucester is not so much concerned with the king's emotional reaction to yet another instance of slander and disobedience as with a clash of two conflicting powers, the legitimate authority embodied by the king, and the usurping authority of the new elected. According to Gloucester, the king is still in charge and his pre-eminence in judiciary matters indisputable.

The second relevant variant, the omission of the mock trial from the Folio, has been variously interpreted. Most textual scholars and critics have concentrated on its theatrical quality. Roger Warren, for example, has justified its absence from the Folio by stressing its unsatisfactory rendition of the central theme of 'reason in madness'. The reviser, he argues, must have realised that the same theme was illustrated more effectively by 4.6 and therefore decided to dispense with this extra scene, where the outrageous character of the dialogue distracts the audience from the point he was trying to get across.[14] Stephen Urkowitz similarly detects an attempt on the part of the reviser to streamline and simplify the structure of this scene. What this approach overlooks is the fact that the mock trial, despite the degree of the judges' delusion and the improbable character of the proceedings, is still a trial, set up by the king to try his daughters. The king has been turned out of doors and because he can no longer rule and judge in the court, he appoints his new "courtiers" and re-creates that learned body of

[14]R.Warren, 'The Folio Omission of the Mock Trial: Motives and Consequences', in *The Division*, pp.45-58.

officers and magistrates over which he used to preside: 'Come sit thou here most learned Justice/ Thou sapient sir sit here'; 'thou robbed man of Justice take thy place, & thou his yokefellow of equity, bench by his side, you are ot'h commission.' (Q 1730-1; 1741-43) The king in the Quarto has not forgotten how to chair a trial: 'Ile see their triall first, bring in their evidence' (Q 1741); 'I here take my oath before this honorable assembly ... ' (Q 1747-8). In his delusion he carries on exercising some of his main duties as a ruler, i.e. judging and sentencing. The absence of the mock trial from the Folio is therefore more immediately justifiable on a dramatic level as a direct consequence of the overall revision undergone by Lear, from a wilful and despotic king in the Quarto, to a submissive and powerless old man in the Folio.

The first half of the play provides further evidence to support this hypothesis of a revision in the character of the king. Lear's highly variant speech at 2.4 - 'the King would speake with Cornewal, ...' (Q 1167; F 1376) - is most probably the result of authorial revision and compositorial conflation.[15] One alteration in particular is relevant to the present analysis. The Folio presents an extra line at F 1379 - 'Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood:' -, which seems in keeping with at least another minor variant occurring eighteen lines below at F 1397: 'My rising heart! But downe.' The Folio is consistent in stressing the king's weakness and lack of control.

Another instance of Lear's disjointed reactions to the ongoing events occurs later on in the same scene. This time Lear's distraction is expressed through his delayed reactions to the other characters' movements on stage. The Quarto has Goneril enter the stage after Lear has recognised Oswald and struck him. Lear, along with the other characters on stage, whose attention has been attracted by the incident, turns round and sees her after she has delivered her two-line cue, 'Who struck my servant, Regan I have good hope/ Thou didst not know ant.' (Q 1251-2) Lear's acknowledgment of Goneril's presence on stage is temporally timed to coincide with the other characters' realisation of her arrival. In the Folio, as in the Quarto, the stage direction 'Enter Goneril' comes after Lear has struck Oswald, but Goneril's two-line cue is reassigned to Lear and changed slightly into 'Who *stockt* my Servant? Regan, I have good hope/ Thou did'st not know on't.' (F 1477-8) In the Folio, Lear is obviously referring to the punishment

[15]For further details about this variant speech, see the forthcoming J.Bate and S.Massai, 'Adaptation as Edition', in *The Margins of the Text*, ed. by D.Greetham (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, forthcoming in 1996).

inflicted by Cornwall and Regan upon Caius-Kent. The effects of this alteration are manifold: first of all, as Urkowitz has noticed,

> [t]hrough Goneril's entrance, the Folio text keeps Lear at the centre of the action. Lear does not see Goneril until after she is seen by the audience, and probably also after the other characters on stage have noticed her arrival. ... Lear's perception is a step behind the others in the Folio.[16]

What Urkowitz does not mention is the quite remarkable fact that the Folio has Lear repeat a question he had asked a few lines earlier: 'Who put my man i'th stockes' (Q 1243; F 1468). Randall Macleod has examined this variant, but only in relation to the character of Goneril.[17] If considered within the larger context of the Folio's revision of the character of the king, one cannot help noticing that even on this occasion the Folio stresses Lear's petulance and makes his arraignment sound more futile than in the Quarto.

A similar effect is achieved through substantive cuts at the beginning of Act 3. In the Folio, the king challenges the elements to intervene, so 'That things might change, or cease' (F 1622). Lear's titanic struggle with the elements:

> ... teares his white haire,
> Which the impetuous blasts with eyles rage
> Catch in their furie, and make nothing of,
> Strives in his little world of man to outscorne,
> The too and fro conflicting wind and raine.
> (Q 1389-93)

is entirely removed from the Folio. The king in the Quarto cannot 'divest' himself of his old habit of power. His abdication after the love test is evidently just a formal gesture, in that the king never stops acting like one. The king in the Quarto is mad at seeing his power taken away from him and fights against the downward current of his fall. The king in the Folio is mad at seeing his daughters betraying him, and is overwhelmed by self-pity and hysteria. As late as 3.7, Gloucester curses Regan's wolfish greed and scolds her for turning her father out of doors in the middle of a storm. According to Gloucester's report in the Quarto, Lear 'holpt the heavens to *rage*' (Q 1868); the same

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[16]Urkowitz, p. 37.
[17]R.McLeod, '*Gon:* No more, the text is foolish', in *The Division*, p. 181.

line in the Folio however reads 'he holpe the Heavens to *raine*' (F 2134), adding to the pathos of the scene but diminishing the king's original stature.

Revision in the first half of the Folio affects both the character of the king - Quarto Lear is stronger than his counterpart in the Folio and his judgement more arbitrary - and the action - whereas in the Quarto the king abdicates only after the love-test and fights to retain his power, the king in the Folio voluntarily resigns before the love-test and passively laments the loss of his youngest daughter and his lack of discernment. But the Folio's variants analysed above also affect the audience's perception of the king. Although Lear is tried and fails to judge wisely in both versions, the Folio makes allowances for the king's misjudgement and channels the audience's sympathy towards him. As Clayton has observed,

> the major differences between the Quarto and Folio versions of the love test is that the Folio, by spelling out Lear's motives, making him aware of the gravity of his actions, and foreshadowing their consequences, renders him more culpable, human and forgivable.[18]

The Quarto offers the audience a different character, whose fault is not only misjudgement but also a Marlovian wilfulness to retain his power.

The revision of the character of the Fool also contributes to turning Folio Lear into a sympathetic character. John Kerrigan reached the conclusion that the Fool in the Quarto is more interactive and sympathetic towards the king, whereas in the Folio, this character is turned into an emotionally detached and sophisticated courtier, whose dry wit prevents him from helping the king gain a better insight. The following variants show how Kerrigan's conclusions about the role of the fool are hardly sustainable.

The Fool's first speech is addressed to Kent. Kent has just offered his service to a disgraced master and the Fool points out that he should wear his coxcomb because only a fool would choose to take sides with a loser. Lear ignores the Fool's provocative remark and greets him affectionately: 'How now my prety knave, how do't thou?' (Q 557; F 626). The Fool challenges Kent again: 'Sirra! you were best take my coxcombe' (Q 558; F 627). At this point the Quarto and the Folio present two alternative versions: in the Quarto Kent picks up the challenge and questions the Fool, 'Why Foole?'. The Fool, who had ignored Lear's conciliatory 'how doest thou?', answers Kent directly and

[18]Clayton, p. 338.

talks about the king as if he could not hear him: 'this fellow hath banisht two on's daughters ...' (Q 562-3; F631-2). Only at the end of his speech does the Fool acknowledge the king's presence on stage: 'how now nuncle ...' (Q 564-5; F 634). Lear now takes up the challenge and asks the Fool what he means: 'Why my Boy?' (Q 566; F 636). The major difference between the Quarto and the Folio is that the Fool in the Folio is not as defiant in ignoring the king. Kent's 'Why Foole?' is replaced by the king's first 'Why my Boy?'. The Folio has the Fool address the king directly at the beginning of his speech: 'Why? For taking ones part that's out of favour,' (F 629). After this first line, the Fool turns away momentarily from the king to address Caius-Kent: 'thou canst not smile as the wind sits, ...' (F 630), but before the end of his speech, he turns to the king again. One might object that, the king's two lines being identical, one of them, presumably the first one, must be the result of a compositorial mistake. This repetition could indeed be accidental, were it not for other variants showing the same openly defiant attitude on the part of the fool later on in the Quarto. Besides, by having the king repeat his question twice, as at 2.4, when Lear fails to notice Goneril's entrance, the Folio reinforces its peculiar view of the king as a powerless old man.

Only a few lines below, the Fool provokes the king with another riddle: 'Do'st thou know the difference my Boy, betweene a bitter Foole, and a sweet one.' (Q 586-7; F 667-8) Eleven lines are cut from the Folio, and Lear's curiosity, 'No Lad, teach me.' (Q588; F 679), is never satisfied. The Fool in the Folio simply restates the question by firing back another puzzling riddle: 'Nunckle, give me an egge, and Ile give thee two Crownes.' (Q 600; F670-1) In the Quarto, the Fool answers Lear's question and openly calls the king a fool:

> Foole. Doo'st know the difference my boy, betweene a bitter foole, and a sweete foole.
> Lear. No lad, teach mee.
> Foole. That Lord that counsail'd thee to give away thy land,
> Come place him heere by mee, doe thou for him stand,
> The sweet and bitter foole will presently appeare,
> The one in motley here, the other found out there.
> Lear. Do'st thou call mee foole boy?
>
> (Q 586-93)

When Caius-Kent remarks that the Fool's reasoning is not 'altogether foole', the audience is more than likely to agree with him. The Fool insists on this point by

reassuring Caius-Kent that 'Lords and great men' are competing with him and 'will not let [him] have all the foole to [him] selfe' (Q 596-99). If the Fool does not answer Lear's straight request 'No lad, teach mee' in the Folio, it is not, as Kerrigan assumes, because the Fool in the Folio is less supportive and less interactive than in the Quarto. Given the character of his reply in the Quarto, it seems safer to conclude that if the Fool avoids Lear's request in the Folio, it is probably out of respect and tactfulness.

Further evidence to question Kerrigan's reading of the Fool can be found at 3.6, just before the mock trial. In both texts the Fool is still trying to provoke the king: 'Prythee Nunkle tell me, whether a madman be a Gentleman, or a Yeoman.' (Q 1722-3; F 2007-8) Lear is by now more responsive and attuned to the Fool's reasoning. Hence his prompt answer, 'A King, a King' (Q 1724; F 2009). In the Quarto, the king's answer elicits no reply from the Fool. In the Folio, the Fool's solicitous reply, 'No, he's a Yeoman, ...' (F 2010), is probably an attempt to distract the king from the truthfulness of his own answer. So much for Kerrigan's theory according to which the Fool is less interactive and caring in the Folio!

The Fool's detached and unemotional attitude is underlined again during the mock trial in the Quarto, when the Fool points out that what the deluded king is arraigning is not his daughter Goneril, but a stool: 'Cry you mercy I tooke you for a ioyne stoole' (Q 1751). Again, this line clashes with Kerrigan's argument that the Fool in the Quarto is a loyal and supportive servant. This incidental remark shows how the Fool is far from giving in to Lear's illusion. The Fool's sarcasm, although aimed at shaking Lear out of his delusion, is clearly a sign of impassioned detachment. The Fool's extra line in the Folio, 'And Ile go to bed at noone', following Lear's 'so, so, wee'l go to Supper i'th'morning.' (F 2042-3), is touching and visibly in keeping with the sweeter Fool of the Folio. In the Quarto the Fool is a bitter fool, most probably because the king is more arrogant, willful and self-centred than the declaredly older king in the Folio[19]. It is interesting to notice that the king's reflections on the suffering to which the needy are exposed, 'Poore naked wretches, ... ' (Q 1555; F 1809) are introduced by a more personal note in the Folio: 'In Boy, go first. You houselesse povertie,/ Nay get thee in; Ile pray, and then Ile sleepe.' (F 1807-8) R.A.Foakes, who in his 1985 'Textual Revision and the Fool in *King Lear*' substantially redressed Kerrigan's reading of the Fool, noticed that 'the Folio adds [these] two lines to mark

[19]An extra line in the Folio has Lear insist that he is 'a very foolish fond old man,/ Fourescore and upward, *Not an houre more, nor lesse:*' (F 2814-6), whereas Lear in the Quarto avoids stressing his age.

Lear's continuing concern in his lucid moments for the Fool ... [thus] keeping alive the king's tenderness for his "knave"'.[20] The king in the Quarto, on the other hand, shows no solicitude for the Fool. As a result, whereas the audience's sympathy can reach the king through the Fool in the Folio, the bitter Fool in the Quarto prevents the audience from identifying and 'feeling' with the king.

The Quarto channels the audience's sympathy exclusively towards secondary characters: as explained above, short variants, such as Kent's 'Friendship', as opposed to the Folio's 'Freedome', or Cordelia's 'To love my father all', omitted from the Folio, help the audience view Lear's subjects as victims and the king as perpetrator. Even Gloucester is granted two extra lines in the Quarto to express his persuasion of having always been a good father to Edgar: 'To his father, that so tenderly and intirely loves him, heaven and earth!' (Q 385-6). Quarto Lear, however, is punctually denied any such allowances.

The first three acts of Quarto and Folio *King Lear* therefore present two different tragic heroes. The last two acts, on the other hand, show how the Quarto and the Folio must have been conceived as two different tragedies, not so much as motifs and plot are concerned, but in terms of the dramatic effect they are meant to produce. In the second half of the play, the Quarto continues to alienate the audience's sympathy from the king and questions the good characters' elaborate expression of sympathy as a valid response to tragic events. The questioning of sympathy as a traditional response to tragedy, crucial in the Quarto, is thoroughly removed or toned down in the Folio.

The first relevant variant occurs at the end of Act 3. In the Folio, Gloucester's blinding deepens the audience's sympathy for both father-figures. In the Quarto, the audience can only partially share the immediacy of the servants' reaction, mainly because of the Quarto's unsympathetic representation of the king and the stress laid on the king's share of responsibility in the catastrophe. Besides, by omitting the servants' lines, the Folio simply elicits sympathy for Gloucester, without representing it on stage. In the Quarto, the servants' choral lamentation prevents the audience from experiencing sympathy "naturalistically".

The omission of the servants' exchange at the end of Act 3 in the Folio anticipates several similar cuts in the remaining two acts. All the individual lines and scenes where sympathy is staged in the Quarto are either shortened or removed from the

[20]R.A.Foakes, 'Textual Revision and the Fool in *King Lear*', in *Trivium*, 20 (1985), pp. 39-42.

Folio. One example is Albany's arraignment of his wife at 4.2. Richman claimed that Albany's arraignment is the only instance of traditional emotional respite granted to the audience in the second half of the Quarto: although generally uncomfortable with the Quarto's long moralizing passages, Richman defends 4.2 because, he feels, '[it] contains some powerful dramatic writing'.[21] 'Powerful', in Richman's argument, clearly stands for 'emotionally overpowering'. Even this scene, however, is not as emotionally straightforward as Richman suggests. As McLeod has pointed out, 'Albany is judging as a moral man, not as a husband'. Albany's failure to detect the signs of Goneril's infidelity diminishes his stature in the eyes of the audience. Besides, McLeod continues, whereas 'her criticism sticks' - Albany is merely venting out his frustration - 'his criticism is deeply true but a deeply non-practical response; ... Albany's truth may [in fact] remind us somewhat of the widely idealistic truth-telling of Cordelia or Kent'.[22] Furthermore, because France is invading Britain in the Quarto, Albany is forced to side with his wife. Once again, the strong irony in the Quarto prevents the audience from empathising with the "good" characters.

The Folio cuts twenty-two lines from Albany, and twenty-eight lines as a whole from the exchange as it appears in the Quarto. The resulting effect is quite remarkable: husband and wife exchange a smaller number of lines and the audience is not allowed to find out the specific nature of their argument. Albany is therefore given the benefit of the doubt: he is probably aware of his wife's affair and, because France is not invading Britain in the Folio, he is not forced to take sides with Goneril and Regan's army against Cordelia. When he does, the audience can cherish the hope that maybe he has got a plan of his own to avenge Gloucester. Theatrically speaking, as Urkowitz has observed, Albany comes across as a stronger and more decisive character:

> In the Quarto text, Albany rather than Goneril seems to express the greater sense of frustration, particularly when he speaks of the repressed violence he feels. Here, however, when Albany breaks into Goneril's long and insulting preamble, he effectively reduces her to uninspired name-calling. In the Folio, Albany ends the feud.[23]

In the Folio, there is no trace of the Quarto's stress on Albany's moral indignation. Because moral indignation is not staged and associated with an unlikable, feeble

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[21]Richman, p. 382.
[22]McLeod, pp. 184-5.
[23]Urkowitz, p. 29.

character, a Folio audience can afford the luxury of "playing Albany" and getting away with it.

Immediately after 4.2, the Quarto contains an extra scene, where Kent meets the Gentleman he had sent to Dover to deliver his letter to Cordelia at 3.1. This scene contains the most exquisite portrait of sympathy in the Quarto. The gentleman's report provides a detailed account of Cordelia's reactions on receiving the news of her father's misfortunes. This passage is so suggestive of the process whereby sympathy is transformed into a visible theatrical phenomenon in the Quarto that it is worth quoting in length:

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queene to any demonstration of griefe.
Gent. I say she tooke them, read them in my presence,
And now and then an ample teare trild downe
Her delicate cheeke, it seemed she was a queene over her passion,
Who most rebell-like, sought to be King ore her.
Kent. O then it moved her.
Gent. Not to a rage, patience and sorow streme,
Who should expresse her goodliest you have seen,
Sun shine and raine at once, her smiles and teares,
Were like a better way those happie smilets,
That playd on her ripe lip seeme not to know,
What guests were in her eyes which parted thence,
As pearles from diamonds dropt in briefe,
Sorow would be a raritie most beloved,
If all could so become it.
Kent: Made she no verbal question.
Gent. Faith once or twice she heav'd the name of father,
Pantingly forth as if it prest her heart,
Cried sisters, sisters, shame of Ladies sisters:
Kent, father, sisters, what ith storme ith night,
Let pitie not be beleeft there she shooke,
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moystened her, then away she started,
To deale with griefe alone.
Kent. It is the stars, the stars above us governe our conditions,
Else one selfe mate and make could not beget,
Such different issues, ...

(Q 2104-30)

The Gentleman describes Cordelia's manifested and inner reactions to the bad news. Both descriptions are highly emblematic. Cordelia's composure and stillness stress her emblematic quality as a sacred image. The preciousness of sacred images is conjured through traditional images: her tears are 'pearls', her eyes 'diamonds'. Cordelia's image

is static apart from the occasional tear rolling down her cheek. Tears are the only miraculous manifestation of life and movement attributed by popular superstition to pictures or statues representing the virgin. Towards the end of the passage, the comparison becomes even more explicit: her tears become 'holy water' and their source, Cordelia's eyes, are described as 'heavenly'. Cordelia is turned into an emblem, which anticipates, or rather surpasses, in its static perfection, the second image of an inverted Pietà conjured by Lear's entrance in 5.3 with Cordelia in his arms. The Gentleman's description of Cordelia's state of mind, elicited by Kent's obsessive desire to spot a movement in the icon ('Did your letters *pierce* the queene to any *demonstration* of griefe'; 'o then it *moved* her') is no less emblematic. Cordelia's private feelings become the actors of a classical *psychomachia*. Sorrow is personified and described as striving to be '*king*' over Cordelia's emotions. As opposed to Lear, who succumbed to the *mother*, *Histerica Passio*, Cordelia faces up to the king and again triumphs over him.

The Gentleman's description, however, expresses more than noble endurance. Solicited by Kent's curiosity to find out whether Cordelia was *pierced* and *moved* by grief, the Gentleman explains that 'tears' alternated with 'smiles', and that Cordelia 'heav'd the name of father,/ *Pantingly* forth as if it *prest her heart*'. Pain and pleasure are perfectly balanced in Cordelia, who grieves for her father's suffering and is overwhelmed by desire and anticipation for her imminent reunion with her father. As the Gentleman observes, Cordelia's expression of grief and sympathy turns her into an icon of sublime beauty: 'Sorow would be a raritie most beloved,/ If all could so become it.' The Quarto provides the audience with a most attractive example of how grief can be turned into art. Sympathy becomes something 'rich and strange' for the audience to admire, but not to identify with. The heavenly and precious character of the imagery moves Cordelia to a higher level of existence. Cordelia is closer to the gods than to mankind. Once again the audience in the Quarto is kept at a distance from the action and sympathy cannot be felt naturalistically. The Quarto also warns the audience of the dire effects feeling sympathy entails. This image of perfect sympathy leads Kent to a relapse into that fatalism both the Quarto and the Folio condemn through Gloucester's trial at 1.2: 'It is the stars, the stars above us governe our conditions, ...' (Q 2128). Needless to say, this exchange was completely excised from the Folio, where sympathy is never represented, but rather expected to be cherished as a private, *natural* feeling from the very beginning of the play.

Several studies have assessed the role played by Quarto and Folio variants in the last scene of *King Lear*. In his pioneering article 'Quarto and Folio *King Lear* and the Interpretation of Albany and Edgar', Michael Warren argued that whereas Albany is presented as a 'man of righteous wrath, outraged by injustice' in the Quarto, his character is considerably weaker in the Folio. Edgar, on the other hand, grows in the Folio, especially by means of the main changes introduced in the last scene. The omission of Edgar's report of his pathetic reunion with Kent and the reassignment of the last speech bring Edgar into the foreground as a potential successor to the throne. Because Edgar is younger and morally less ambiguous than Albany, Warren concludes that the Folio offers a brighter, more optimistic ending than the Quarto.[24] Steven Urkowitz similarly stresses the importance of the 'diminution' of Albany in the Folio, carried out through a careful rearrangement of the stage movements in the final scene:

> In the Quarto text, [Albany] moves steadily from one emergent occasion to the next. He says he is emotionally tremulous, but he proceeds in an orderly, authoritative, and calm manner. ... In the Folio, Albany responds distractedly, arhythmically: he is visibly distressed. ... Albany's speech and action in the Folio are more in keeping with his statements about the emotional tension he feels.[25]

Urkowitz concludes that Albany in the Folio is no longer in a position to take it upon himself to give orders and succeed the king. Thomas Clayton, on the other hand, stresses the differences in the character of the king and argues that, because Lear has undertaken a journey of self-discovery in the Folio, he can transcend his personal tragedy and Cordelia's death and die redeemed by his emotions in the last scene.

More recent studies have confirmed this reading of the final scene. Richman's theatrical experience with the Quarto has similarly led him to stress, by contrast, the visionary character of the Folio version:

> One's consciousness of the Quarto's differences both from the Folio and from the conflated texts is perhaps strongest at the play's ending. The Folio contains two additional lines which suggest that the king may believe that his daughter is still alive. Thus he is dying like Gloucester "'twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief." [Edgar's] speaking the

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[24]M.Warren, 'Quarto and Folio *King Lear* and the Interpretation of Albany and Edgar', in D.Bevington and J.L.Halio, *Shakespeare, Pattern of Excelling Nature* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1976), p. 100.

[25]Urkowitz, p. 117.

final lines seem[s] most in keeping with the mood of the tragic exaltation in the Folio's version of Lear's last speech.[26]

Although the main variants in 5.3 have been thoroughly analysed and critics seem to agree on their general function and effects in the interpretation of this scene, some variants are worth reconsidering in relation to the different treatment of sympathy observed in Act 4.

The first variant passage includes the Captain's attempt to reason out why he should obey Edmund and kill the old king and his daughter: 'I cannot draw a cart, nor eate dride oats,/ If it bee mans worke ile do't.' (Q 2697-8). The Captain's argument in the Quarto overlooks the moral issue and stresses the material necessity behind human behavior. Whereas evil in the Quarto is represented as human, in the Folio, where the Captain's remark is omitted, evil is represented as *natural* and larger than the characters who perpetrate it. The first conception of evil entails understanding of the motives, the second forbearance.

The second significant Folio omission affects Edgar's pathetic recollections of his past misadventures: whereas in the Folio Edgar obeys Albany's injunction to "hold in" the rest of his sad tale, in the Quarto Edgar ignores Albany and launches himself on a long-winded speech on sympathy:

> This would have seemd a periode to such
> As love not sorow, but another to amplifie too much,
> Would make much more, and top extremitie.
> (Q 2865-7)

Edgar then provides an example of what he evidently regards as a sympathetic reaction in keeping with his sense of tragedy:

> ... with his strong armes
> He fastened on my necke and bellowed out,
> As hee'd burst heaven, threw me on my father,
> Told the most pitious tale of Lear and him,
> That ever eare received, which in recounting
> His griefe grew puissant and the strings of life,
> Began to cracke twice, ...
> (Q 2871-7)

[26]Richman, pp. 379-80.

Once again, while the Folio shies away from a public expression of sympathy, the Quarto insists on its theatricality.

After Albany has finally realised that his delay might have been fatal to the king and his daughter - 'Great thing of us forgot' (Q 2899; F 3192) -, he is distracted again by the macabre spectacle of Goneril and Regan's bodies being brought on stage. Lear's entrance with Cordelia in his arms shakes Albany and the audience out of their sense of regained stability. In the Quarto, Lear's indictment, 'Howle, howle, howle, O you are men of stones' (Q 2921 [howle]; F 3217), rings more ominously than in the Folio, because the Quarto's alienating strategy has put the audience in a position to judge how inadequate sympathy is as a reaction to tragic events. Besides, as anticipated above, Lear's last words in the Folio, 'Do you see this, looke on her? Looke her lips,/ Looke there, looke there.' (F 3282-3), let the audience believe or hope that the dying king can actually catch a glimpse of Cordelia waiting for him on the threshold between life and death. In the Quarto this visionary mode is outweighed by a relentlessly realist description of Lear's death:

> Lear. ... O thou wilt come no more, never, never, never, pray you undo this button, thanke you sir, O, o, o, o.
> Edg. He faints my Lord, my Lord.
> Lear. Breake hart, I prethe breake.
> Edgar. Look up my Lord.
> Kent. Vex not his ghost, O let him passe, ...
> (Q 2968-72)

The most interesting of all the variants contained in 5.3 is the last speech. In the Quarto, Edgar fails to accept Albany's offer to be appointed as the king's successor. Edgar is stunned to silence and Albany is forced to make a last appeal to sympathy as the only possible answer to tragedy: 'The waight of this sad time we must obey,/ Speake what we feele, not what we ought to say.' (Q 2983-4) Because of the Quarto's critical representation of sympathy, Albany's speech sounds futile and ineffective. In the Folio, however, young Edgar shoulders his responsibility and presumably accepts Albany's offer. His appeal to the feelings of pity and compassion and his call for emotional integrity are also more convincing in the Folio because the feelings and moral values shared by the community have not been found empty and inadequate as in the Quarto.

Stephen Booth's reflections on the ending of *King Lear* highlight a peculiar aspect of this tragedy: 'this is the only one of the tragedies where the last lines do not point to an immediate offstage destination and invite the remaining characters to repair to it.'[27] Once again, though, the failure to consider the Quarto and the Folio as separate entities prevents Booth from noticing the different stage action implied by the Quarto's lack of a final stage direction, and the Folio's suggestion that the characters should exit 'with a dead march'. A procession is a strong signal of the strength of the surviving community. The disposing of the dead is in itself a way of returning the dead to nature and overcoming the loss. The Folio provides a ritual ending, the very closure Booth cannot find in *King Lear*, probably because what he analyses is a hybrid of the Quarto and the Folio. The Folio is romantic and cathartic in its conception; grief and Erasmian folly do lead to regeneration. The Folio, through a steady crescendo of the audience's sympathetic involvement achieves what Bloom likes to call the 'Shakespearean Sublime'.[28] The Quarto, instead of reaching this mystical climax, where Aristotelian catharsis purges and regenerates, peels off the values, the emotional and moral certainties upon which Lear's society used to rest, and leaves the audience to contemplate the impassioned image of the end offered by its final scene. As Calderwood puts it, *Lear* begins with 'order' and 'disorder[s] it into art':

> When culture reaches the point where reality has been definitively charted - when fluid forms have petrified into institutions, and live meanings have deadened into clichés - the artist may feel it is high time for turbulence, in which case he will seek to "defamiliarize" with the Russian Formalists, to "alienate" with Brecht, or in other ways to liberate the energy of what Morse Peckham calls "man's rage for chaos".[29]

In the Quarto, Shakespeare alienates his audience from the tragic hero and precludes from them the traditional option of sympathy, leading them to an impassioned understanding beyond political and moral categories.

Gary Taylor, who noticed the more sympathetic rendition of the character of the king in the Folio, advanced a biographical explanation: 'Shakespeare would have been much closer to his own decision to abdicate and retire to Stratford than he had been in

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[27] S.Booth, *'King Lear', 'Macbeth', Indefinition and Tragedy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 16.
[28] H.Bloom, *William Shakespeare: The Tragedies* (New York: Chelsea House, 1985), p. 7.
[29] J.L.Calderwood, 'Creative Uncreation in *King Lear*', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 37 (1986), p. 5.

1605'.[30] Having highlighted a similar change in the perception of the king, of his initial misjudgement, and of the tragic mode in general, the present analysis opts for a different explanation, which relies less on our sense of Shakespeare the man and more on our knowledge of Shakespeare the dramatist: the sceptical lucidity of the Quarto reflects the dramatic quality of *Measure for Measure,* another "philosophical" and "intellectual" play, where the audience's emotional involvement is prevented by the complexity of its plot and characterisation. *Measure for Measure* was written not long before the first *King Lear*. The second version of *King Lear*, on the other hand, was probably written a few years later, around 1609-10, when Shakespeare had already produced the great tragedies and was experimenting with romances and tragicomedy. It is my impression that the visionary character of the final scene in Folio *King Lear* reflects a distinctively romantic perspective. The father, as in the romances, dies regenerated by his daughter's sacrifice. It is true that, even in the Folio, the gods are silent and that no supernatural agent intervenes to rescue the main characters from the final catastrophe. But the Folio's tendency to encourage the audience's involvement recalls another crucial element of the romances. When, at the end of *The Tempest*, Prospero invokes the audience's help to fill up his sails, the magician makes clear that, more than the book and the staff, it is the audience's imagination that conjures the illusion. In *King Lear* the illusion is still feeble and only Lear is totally absorbed by it. The revision in the last two acts of Folio *King Lear* does however encourage involvement and imperceptibly draws the audience into sharing Lear's vision.

Conflating the Quarto and Folio *King Lear* means losing rather than gaining. Both texts contain distinctive features which cannot be assimilated. If the Folio is usually regarded as more bearable because of its romantic conception of theatre, the Quarto is no less rich and enjoyable. The Quarto is one of those rare works of art where the artist reaches what Rose Zimbardo calls "point zero":

> [point zero occurs] when society responds to the abyss that is left when the idea of essential eternity ... of cultural forms is no longer tenable: on the other hand, however, it is also the point of maximum constructive power in that it is the time when [new] basic constructs ... are forged.[31]

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[30]G.Taylor, '*King Lear* and Censorship', in *The Division*, p. 382.

[31]R.Zimbardo, 'At Zero Point: Discourse, Politics, and Satire in Restoration England', *ELH* 59 (1992), p. 789.

The anti-cathartic Quarto is somehow even more "regenerative" than the Folio. In the Folio the illusion makes the tragedy more acceptable; Lear's final delusion is an enlightening but also escapist approach to the unbearable truth of the end, of human finitude. In the Quarto the route to the contemplation of the end is more painful because it is unmediated by the comfort of a traditional tragic frame. The Quarto, like Artaud's theatre of cruelty, is meant to shock the audience out of their torpor, and to excite understanding as opposed to sympathy and emotional involvement. Instead of staging the Quarto and criticising its bleakness, as Richman did - 'the very existence of the Folio ending renders it forever impossible to perform the Quarto ending with any degree of conviction'[32] - directors and critics should start granting the Quarto the attention it deserves and keep in mind what Peter Brook described as the main obstacle to the recovery of holy theatre: 'Sadly, it is the wish for optimism that many writers share that prevents them from finding hope.'[33]

[32]Richman, p. 379.
[33]P.Brook, *The Empty Space* (London: Penguin, 1972), p. 66.

PART III

The Absolution:

Nahum Tate's 'Poetick Dream'

Shakespeare's *King Lear* was staged twice by the Duke's Company after the London theatres reopened in 1660, once in late January 1664, and again on Tuesday, 24 June 1675.[1] In March 1681, however, a revised version of *King Lear* was entered in the *Term Catalogues* and performed no later than the following May. Tate's first attempt at "rectifying" Shakespeare proved extremely successful. *The History of King Lear*[2] was performed again at court on 9 May 1687 and on 20 February 1688. A second Quarto edition appeared in 1689, after which *The History* was regularly reprinted up to 1712. Garrick and Colman reintroduced the Shakespearean original for specific scenes during the second half of the 18th century, but the integral version of Shakespeare's *King Lear* was restored to the stage by Macready only as late as 1838.

Tate turned Shakespeare's tragedy into royalist tragi-comedy[3] by means of notorious "expedients": he enlarged the female roles by developing the love-triangle Regan-Edmund-Goneril and by introducing Edgar and Cordelia's love-affair; he toned down the motif of madness, by omitting the Fool and the mock trial; and, last, but not least, he replaced the tragic ending with Lear's restoration and Edgar and Cordelia's engagement.

In his 1975 critical edition of *The History*, James Black could still claim that Tate's masterpiece was 'one of the most famous unread plays in English'.[4] Black's

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[1]See *The London Stage*, pp. 75, 234.

[2]N.Tate, *The History of King Lear* (London: Cornmarket Press, 1969). All references to the play are based on this facsimile edition unless otherwise specified. The original Quarto, 'Acted at the/ Duke's Theatre.' and 'Reviv'd with Alterations./ By N.Tate', was printed for E.Flesher and sold by R.Bentley and M.Magnes in 'Russel-street near Covent-Garden', in 1681.

[3]Among the main historical-political interpretations of *The History*, see, for example, J.D.Canfield, 'Royalism's Last Dramatic Stand: English Political Tragedy, 1679-89', in *Studies in Philology*, 82 (1985), pp. 234-63; R.E.Lowrey, 'The Theme of the Legitimate Succession in Nahum Tate's *King Lear*', in *Publications of the Arkansas Philological Association*, 4 (1978), pp. 18-24; N.K.Maguire, 'Nahum Tate's *King Lear*: "The King's Blessed Restoration"', in *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*, ed. by J.J.Marsden (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1991), pp. 29-42; and M.H.Wikander, 'The Spitted Infant: Scenic Emblem and Exclusionist Politics in Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 37 (1986), pp. 340-58.

[4]N.Tate, *The History of King Lear*, ed. by J.Black (London: Arnold, 1976), p. xv.

statement no longer applies, in that, as mentioned in the Introduction, the critical fortune of Shakespearean adaptations has considerably changed over the last twenty years. Adaptations, however, are still studied either in relation to Restoration and early Augustan drama, or because of their historical-political significance. Despite Christopher Spencer's advocacy of Tate,[5] no sustained attempt has been made at studying *The History* in relation to Shakespeare's *King Lears*. A systematic investigation of Tate's rewriting of *King Lear* should no longer overlook the fact that there are two different originals Tate could have used as source-texts. Contrary to the current opinion[6], the following analysis of the Quarto and Folio variants Tate retained in *The History* shows how Tate was well aware of the fact that Quarto and Folio *King Lear* offer two distinctive views of the absolute monarch and the consequences of royal misjudgement, and that his choice of a source-text was determined by his own strategy of revision.

Tate's *King Lear* opens with Edmund's soliloquy, 'Thou Nature art my Goddess'. Edmund informs the audience that he has 'practis'd yet on both their [Edgar's and Gloucester's] easie Natures' (B1r l.15), and that his plan is 'so plausible, so boldly utter'd/ And heightned by such lucky Accidents' (B1v ll.1-2) that he will no doubt succeed. The following exchange between Gloucester and Kent is mostly Tate's. The issue of the division of the kingdom has been displaced by the complaints of an enraged father against his elder son, who, to the best of his knowledge, is scheming to take his life and inherit his fortunes. Kent himself, apart from being Shakespeare's loyal counsellor, is himself a father:

> Glouc. You are your self a Father, and may feel
> The sting of disobedience from a Son
> First-born and best Belov'd:
> (B1v ll.-9)

The play therefore begins with a typical romantic emphasis on family-, rather than state-affairs. The consequences of the fore-grounding of Edmund's scheming extend to the following scene.

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[5]See, for example, C.Spencer, 'A Word for Tate's *King Lear*', in *Studies in English Literature*, 3 (1969), pp. 241-51; and C.Spencer, *Nahum Tate* (New York: Twayne, 1972).

[6]See, for example, Black, p.xvi: 'Tate suggests in the Dedication that when he came to *Lear* it was new to him.'

Tate's Lear, like the king in the Quarto, is not abdicating his power: Lear's first speech does not include the Folio passages where the old king explains his reasons for abdicating and dividing his kingdom among his three daughters. Tate's king does want to 'disengage from Our long Toil of State,/ Conferring All upon ... younger years' (B2r ll. 17-8), but like the King in the Quarto will do so by allocating a third of his kingdom to each of his three daughters. A later departure from both the Quarto and the Folio - 'I do invest you jointly with full *Right'* (B3r l.17; both the Quarto and the Folio read 'power') - reinforces the idea of the division of the kingdom, as opposed to that of a full abdication.

The king, as in the Quarto, provides no reasons to justify his decision to divide the kingdom, and therefore sounds wilful and inconsiderate. Tate helps his audience detect this flaw in the king's character by having it mentioned in the opening exchange:

> Glouc. My Lord, you wait the King who comes resolv'd
> To quit the Toils of Empire, and divide
> His Realms amongst his Daughters, Heaven succeed it,
> But much I fear the Change.
> Kent. I grieve to see him
> With such wild starts of passion hourly seiz'd,
> As renders Majesty beneath it self.
> Glouc. Alas! 'tis the Infirmity of his Age,
> Yet has his Temper ever been unfixt,
> Chol'rick and suddain; ...
> (B1v ll. 30-7; B2r ll.1-2)

Because Sharkey overlooks the differences in the characterisation of the king in the Quarto and the Folio, he is led to conclude that 'King Lear possessed no "tragic flaw" until Tate endowed him with one'.[7] Black expounds on Sharkey's observation by arguing that

> [i]n Tate's version Lear is not guilty to the extent that he is in Shakespeare; ... Attempting to make the king more understandable, or at least more recognisable, he prepares for Lear's irrational behaviour by introducing "choler" as a tragic flaw.[8]

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[7]P.L.Sharkey, 'Performing Nahum Tate's *King Lear*: Coming Hither by Going Hence', in *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 54 (1968), p. 400.
[8]Black, p. xx.

My objection to this argument is that Tate did not have to invent a new tragic flaw for his king. He simply accentuated the tragic flaw he found in the Quarto.

As in the Quarto, both Kent and Cordelia are conciliatory and considerate: Tate omits Cordelia's second, defiant 'Nothing' and retains Cordelia's protestation 'To Love my Father All' (B2v l.31). Tate's Kent similarly regrets the end of a 'Friendship', as opposed to his counterpart in the Folio, who had regretted the loss of his 'Freedome' (B3v l.18). Cordelia's divided allegiance between her father and Edgar compromises the original dignity of her character: when she retorts 'So young my Lord and True' (B3r l.2), the audience know that she is actually lying.

Although Tate's tampering with Cordelia's characterisation does not make Lear less culpable or less wilful, the addition of the love-affair between Edgar and Cordelia and the extra emphasis put on Edmund's machinations affect the nature of Lear's mistake and, consequently, his share of responsibility in the ensuing events. Lear's rage stems not so much from his blindness and his misjudgement of Cordelia's motives, as from his keen perspicacity. Tate's Lear is not blind; he sees through Cordelia's pretence. Cordelia's first aside discloses her plan to the audience:

> Cord. Now comes my Trial, how am I distrest,
> That must with cold speech tempt the chol'rick King
> Rather to leave me Dowerless, than condemn me
> To loath'd Embraces!
> (B2v ll. 6-9)

The king's incredulity, 'And goes thy Heart with this?' (B2v l.32), which Tate borrowed from the original, is followed by the king's denunciation of Cordelia's ulterior motives:

> Lear. 'Tis said that I am Chol'rick, judge me Gods,
> Is there not cause? now Minion I perceive
> The Truth of what has been suggested to Us,
> Thy Fondness for the Rebel Son of Gloster,
> False to his Father, as Thou art to my Hopes:
> (B2v ll. 33-7)

The initial disclaimer, 'Tis said that I am Chol'rick', makes Lear's mistake seem less serious. Besides, whereas in the original Lear punishes Cordelia for her unaccountable silence, here Lear punishes his daughter because she is scheming behind his shoulders. In Shakespeare, Lear is misled in his judgement, but in Tate he knows better than his

daughter. It also worth noticing that whereas in the original Lear is guilty for the way he handles both a private and a public crisis, in Tate Lear acts as a wilful, inconsiderate father, but he proves a considerate monarch, as, to the best of his knowledge, Cordelia's marriage to the 'Rebel Son of Gloster' would endanger the succession.

To sum up, Tate's Lear is as wilful and culpable as the king in the Quarto, but Lear's flaw is reduced to a natural emotional weakness, and his mistake to the understandable reaction of a cheated father. Although the evidence available is too sparse to establish a direct link between *The History* and *King Leir*,[9] the resemblance between Tate's king and the old Leir, who sacrifices his daughter's personal happiness to the interest of the state, is undoubtedly significant in itself. As in the opening of the play, Tate's rewriting of *King Lear*, with his emphasis of the private over the public, is steering back towards romance.

An analysis of the Quarto and Folio variants retained by Tate in Act 2 and 3 reinforces this reading of the king. Tate, for example, retains three Quarto variants, which suggest how the wilful king of the first scene is still in control of his actions and, most definitively, still in charge of his kingdom. The first variant occurs at the end of Kent's confrontation with Goneril's messenger at Gloucester's castle. As in the Quarto, Gloucester begs Cornwall and Regan to reconsider their decision to punish the king's messenger. Gloucester reminds them that although 'His fault is much, the good King his Master/ Will check him for't,' (D1r ll. 2-3). Tate's king, like his Quarto counterpart, has never abdicated, and Cornwall and Regan's provocation is therefore more open and objectionable than in the Folio, where, because the king *has* resigned his power, their decision represents lack of tact and respect for their old father, rather than insubordination. Gloucester's warning, redundant in the Folio, was retained by Tate, because it is in keeping with his recasting of the character of the king in Act 1.

The second variant occurs after Lear has discovered Kent-as-Caius in the stocks. Like Shakespeare's Lear, he interprets Kent's punishment as an open defiance of his authority and a personal offence. As in the original, he demands to see his daughter and son-in-law to get them to justify their decision to stock his messenger. Although Tate followed the Folio in assigning the lines, 'Who stockt my Servant? Regan, I have hope/ Thou didst not know it.' (D3r ll. 22-3), to Lear and not to Goneril, his king resembles

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[9]For more details about the controversial relation between *The History* and *Leir*, see Black, p. 97, and J.F.Solomon, '"King" in Lear: a Semiotic for Communal Adaptation', in *The American Journal of Semiotics*, 3 (1984), p. 60.

the king in the Quarto more closely. Lear's original reaction at the sight of Goneril's messenger is expanded to read:

> Enter Gonerill's Gentleman
> Lear. More Torture still?
> This is a Slave whose easie borrow'd pride
> Dwells in the fickle Grace of her he follows;
> *A Fashion-fop that spends the day in Dressing,*
> *And all to bear his Ladie's flatt'ring Message,*
> *That can deliver with a Grace her Lie,*
> *And with as bold a face bring back a greater.*
> Out Varlet from my sight.
> (D3r ll. 13-20)

The lines in italics represent Tate's addition to the original passage. There is a telling similarity between Lear's new lines here and the insulting language Kent uses in the original against Goneril's messenger:

> Stew. What dost thou know me for?
> Kent. A knave, a rascall, an eater of broken meates, a base, proud, shallow, beggerly, three snyted hundred pound, filthy wosted stocken knave, a lilly lyver'd action taking knave, a whorson glassegazing supersinicall rogue, one truncke inheriting slave, one that would'st bee a baud in way of good service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, begger, coward, ...
> (Q 908-915)

Lear in Tate is not overwhelmed by *Hysterica Passio*. He instead borrows Kent's forceful language to express his disgust at seeing that such a "fashionable" liar like Goneril's gentleman should be preferred to his messenger. This first change shows the audience that the king is still wilful and capable of indignation as he was at the beginning of the play.

Straight after Lear's arraignment of Goneril's messenger, Cornwall asks the king, 'What means your Grace?' (D3r l.21), and Lear speaks the lines quoted above, 'Who stockt my Servant? ...' Only at this point does Goneril enter the stage. Though Tate followed the Folio in having Lear repeat his question twice, he moved the SD '*Enter* Gonerill.' from its original position in the Quarto and in the Folio, after Cornwall's 'What means your Grace?', to the end of Lear's 'Who stockt my Servant? ...'. As a consequence, Lear, who in the Folio fails to realise that Goneril has already

walked onto the stage, appears more alert and more in control. As in the Quarto, where Goneril's line 'Who struck my servant' attracts everybody's attention, Lear's included, in *The History* Lear does not seem to have lost touch with the on-going events.

The Quarto variants Tate retained in the first three acts of *The History* therefore provide a rather unflattering version of the king, who is as culpable, wilful and inconsiderate as in the Quarto, although, as a whole, guilty of a lesser crime. Up to the very end of Act 1, the king is also as unsympathetic as his counterpart in the Quarto. The original Folio variant line, 'Well, you may feare too farre' (F 849), through which Albany is given to express a mild disagreement with Goneril's strict treatment of her old father, is not altogether omitted as in the Quarto, where the king is denied any sympathetic reactions from the characters on stage, but modified so as to read, 'Well, you may *bear* too far'. (C2v l.33) Up to the end of Act 1, even Albany, who will act as a champion of royalty in Act 5 and restore Lear to the throne, makes no allowances for the wilful King.

The beginning of Act 2 marks the beginning of an inversion of strategy on Tate's part, which will become fully manifest in Act 3. Towards the beginning of Act 2 the audience start finding blemishes in Lear's opponents. Regan's aside 'A charming Youth and worth my further Thought' (C4r l.14), for example, anticipates the motif of the evil sisters' lustful love for Edmund in the second half of the play. The audience, on the other hand, find confirmation of the virtuous nature of Lear's allies: Kent, among them, is less defiant and less insulting in his arraignment of Goneril's servant and is therefore 'more sinned against than sinning'. Lear himself starts wavering towards the end of act 2: at D2r l. 20, Tate retains a Folio line - 'Are they inform'd of this? my Breath and Blood!' - whereby the king attracts attention, for the first time, to his despondency. This isolated example shows what Black has classified as a 'sentimental ingredient': '[a]nother sentimental effect is contrived by the way in which Tate's speakers invariably turn the pathos back upon themselves'.[10] Tate is slowly starting to rely on the Folio and its sympathetic view of its tragic hero. By the end of Act 2, Goneril and Regan's unsympathetic remarks about their father - Reg. 'How lewd a thing is Passion!' Gon. 'So old and stomachfull' - are still justified by the king's actual deficiencies, emphasised by Tate through his borrowings from the Quarto. But, at the

[10]Black, p. xxxi.

same time, Tate's isolated borrowings from the Folio and his improvement of the good characters arouse the audience's indignant disapproval of Lear's opponents.

The omission of the Fool and the overall reduction of the motif of madness are the main alterations in Act 3 that directly affect the characterisation of the king. Tate, for example, rearranged the sequence of the original dialogues in the field scenes. In Shakespeare, Lear's collapse is painstakingly protracted over two scenes (Act 3, sc. 4-6). In the intervening scene the audience is made aware of the impending danger for the king and his affiliates. The king has to be moved twice, first away from the rage of the elements, and, soon after, away from Gloucester's castle and his conspiring evil daughters. In Shakespeare the king is totally dependent on his loyal servants and oblivious to what is happening around him. In Tate, on the other hand, Lear is clearly more in control of his emotions. The sight of the 'thing itself' elicits a more articulated response: 'Off, Off, ye vain Disguises, empty Lendings./ *I'll be my Original Self*, quick, quick, Uncase me.' (E4r ll. 11-2) Lear "interviews" Edgar by prompting him with somewhat banal and ordinary questions, such as 'One point I had forgot; what's your Name' at E4r l. 14. Tate's Lear also appropriates some of the questions the Fool had asked him in the original: at E4r l. 26-7 Lear mockingly challenges Edgar with one of the Fool's riddles: 'tell me, is a Madman a Gentleman, or a Yeoman?'. Edgar never answers Lear's questions directly, but the king laughs heartily at Edgar's reply, as if amused at his failure to find a solution to his conundrum: 'Right, ha! ha! was it not pleasant ...?' (E4r l.32). Lear laughs at his own jokes in Tate, and his madness is contained within the tradition of wit and sarcasm originally associated with the Fool. Even his initial defiant appeal to the elements is interrupted by some lucid, introspective analysis: 'I will forget my Nature, what? so kind a Father, I, there's the point.' (D4v ll. 23-4) His remark can be interpreted both as a reproach directed at his 'two pernicious Daughters' (D4v l. 18), or as an early sign of repentance for his mistreatment of Cordelia.

The omission of the Fool and the revision of the motif of madness shift the focus of the field scenes on Lear alone and on his internal progress towards a better understanding of his mistake. L.D.Green, who regards Tate's omission of the Fool as the most enduring influence the *History* has had on the reception of Shakespeare's *Lear*, explains the effects of this major alteration in a similar way:

> The Fool's lines used to be the stepping stones for Lear's rising passion. ... Without the Fool to help to supply the context, [Lear] is not free to rage. Instead he must explain to the audience that he is raging. ... In short, Tate's text required the actor to create an internal reality apart from the play. ... The play [therefore] becomes secondary to an interest in the internal workings of Lear's mind.[11]

Sharkey similarly points out that although most contemporary productions of *Lear* concentrate on the king's "pathology", the interest in what Green calls 'the internal workings of Lear's mind' was Tate's far more than Shakespeare's.[12]

The heath in Tate is no longer uncontrolled madness and despair, but a mixture of the philosophical convention of reason-in-madness and the green world of romance, where the sense of impending danger is less threatening and soon defused and contained. As Ogden pointed out, since the theatrical success of *The History*, the heath, which is Tate's own invention, has become a recognisable convention, associated with 'soul-searching' and introspection.[13] Instead of using the Fool to alienate or gain the audience's sympathy for the king, as in the Quarto and in the Folio, Tate exposed the king's feelings to the full view of the audience, and by means of a less subtle mechanism replaced the unflattering character of the first two acts with a now wiser, wronged, old king. If the king's 'ruling passion'[14] in the first two acts was 'rage', the new ruling passions, which gain the king the audience's sympathy, are 'repentance' and 'forbearance'.

The field scenes are also reduced in length: the second part of Act 3 is occupied by Edgar's intervention to rescue Cordelia from Edmund and by the pathetic reunion of the two lovers. Cordelia's role is considerably expanded: instead of keeping Cordelia off-stage until the reunion scene at the end of Act 4, as in the Folio, or getting another character to describe her reactions at the news of her father's mistreatment, as in the Quarto, Tate keeps banished Cordelia in England so that she can rejoin the action as early as the second half of Act 3. Thus Tate creates several opportunities for a pathetic anticipation of the long awaited reunion of Act 4, and replaces the Gentleman's description of Cordelia's sympathetic response to the bad news with the living portrait of weeping Cordelia:

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[11]L.D.Green, 'Where's My Fool?' - Some Consequences of the Omission of the Fool in Tate's *Lear*', in *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 12 (1972), pp. 259-74.
[12]Sharkey, p. 402.
[13]J.Ogden, 'Lear's Blasted Heath', in *Durham University Journal*, 80 (1987), p. 20.
[14]Sharkey, p. 399.

Cor. As 'tis too probable this furious Night
Has pierc'd his tender Body, the bleak Winds
And cold Rain chill'd, or Lightening struck him Dead;
If it be so your Promise is discharg'd,
And I have only one poor Boon to beg,
That you'd Convey me to his breathless Trunk,
With my torn Robes to wrap his hoary Head,
With my torn Hair to bind his Hands and Feet,
Then with a show'r of Tears
To wash his Clay-smear'd Cheeks, and Die beside him.
(E2r ll. 26-35)

The image of an inverted Pietà offered by Lear's entrance with dead Cordelia in his arms in the original last scene is replaced with a living Pietà here. Although Tate avoids the tragic ending, he exploits its pathetic potential. This passage again exposes the character's feelings to the full view of the audience, who are therefore prompted to empathise and participate in this spectacle of pity.

Analysing the effects Cordelia's display of sympathy has on the on-stage audience is probably the best way to establish the kind of response Tate meant to elicit from his real audience. Gloucester, who has questioned Cordelia's motives for wanting to rescue the man who wronged her in Act 1, is finally persuaded of her good intentions: 'Rise, fair Cordelia, thou hast Piety/ Enough t'attone for both thy Sisters Crimes.' (E2r l.36 - E2v l.1) By showing the effects of Cordelia's speech on Gloucester, Tate indirectly invites his audience to forgive Cordelia her initial disobedience and to forget the ambiguity the addition of the love-affair had cast upon her character. If, in the first scene, the audience are shown how both Cordelia and her evil sisters, although for different reasons, lie to their father, the audience are here reassured of the fundamental difference between the good and the bad daughters. Cordelia swears that 'What have not Women dar'd for vicious Love, /And we'll be shining Proofs that they can dare/ For Piety as much.' (E2v ll. 17-9) Although her sisters have proved extreme in vice, she now promises to act as the 'shining proof' of virtue.

Far more interesting, however, is the reaction Cordelia's tears elicit from the other character on stage. Unseen by Gloucester and Cordelia, Edmund is spying on them, and like Milton's Satan, he is entranced by his vision:

Bast. O charming Sorrow! how her Tears adorn her
Like Dew on Flow'rs, but she is Virtuous,

And I must quench this hopeless Fire i'th'Kindling.
...
I'll gaze no more - and yet my Eyes are Charm'd.
(E2r ll. 15-24)

Edmund's psychology is symptomatic of the main vice associated by Milton with his Satan, which had been immortalised by Francis Bacon in one of his most famous essays, 'Of Envy':

> A man that hath no virtue in himself ever envieth virtue in others; for men's minds will either feed upon their own good, or upon others' evil; and who wanteth the one will prey upon the other; and whoso is out of hope to attain to another's virtue, will seek to come at even hand, by depressing another's fortune.[15]

According to Bacon, virtue inspires sympathy in the virtuous, and envy in the vicious. Tate's Edmund, however, is not attracted only by his Eve's beauty and unspotted innocence alone, like the serpent in Milton:

> Such pleasure took the serpent to behold
> This flowery path, the sweet recess of Eve
> Thus early, thus alone; her heavenly form
> Angelic, but more soft, and feminine,
> Her graceful innocence, her every air
> Of gesture or least action ...
> (Book IX, ll. 455-60)[16]

Edmund is primarily attracted by Cordelia's distress. He claims that Cordelia's tears adorn her like dew on flowers. In Tate it is not only beauty and virtue that move the voyeuristic pleasure of the on-looker, but virtue in distress. The representation of suffering in the just excites pleasure, and pleasure is channelled by the virtuous towards pity and sympathy, by the vicious towards destructive envy and aggression.

The third major intervention in Act 3, which is similarly aimed at securing the audience's sympathy for the king and his supporters, occurs after Gloucester's blinding. Whereas this episode in the Quarto is followed by an emblematic gesture of sympathy on the part of the second servant - 'ile fetch some flaxe and whites of egges to apply to his bleeding face,' (Q1913-4) - and in the Folio by the dry cruelty of Cornwall's orders -

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[15]F.Bacon, *Essays and Other Writings* (London: Cassell, 1907), p. 35.
[16]J.Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. by A.Fowler (London: Longman, 1968).

'Turne out that eyelesse Villaine: throw this Slave/ Upon the Dunghill:' (F 2174-5) -, the same episode in Tate ends with a long monologue, in which Gloucester laments the sudden change of his fortune. To the original, heartrending line, 'All Dark and Comfortless ...', Tate added twenty-six lines. The register of this monologue is set by its opening lines:

> Glouc. Where are those various Objects that but now
> Employ'd my busie Eyes? where those Eyes?
> Dead are their piercing Rays that lately shot
> O're flowry Vales to distant Sunny Hills,
> And drew with Joy the vast Horizon in.
> (F4r ll. 8-12)

Gloucester's recollection is blatantly out of place, most of all because the idyllic landscape described here does not belong to Lear's universe: all the audience are given to see once the action moves out of Lear's court and Gloucester and Goneril's castles is a blasted heath, a ravine and a battle field. This passage is however crucial in Tate's strategy of revision of the original, in that it shows how words and the externalisation of grief can bridge the abyss and turn black despair into restoring pathos. When Gloucester asks himself 'what words can sound my Grief?' (F4r l.15), he is far from lost for words, and soon resumes his recollections:

> Glouc. At once from Business and from Pleasure bar'd;
> No more to view the Beauty of the Spring,
> Nor see the Face of Kindred, or of Friend.
> (F4r ll. 18-20)

Although Tate's Gloucester seems more concerned with his personal loss than disturbed by the sudden discovery of his fatal misjudgement of loyal Edgar, the thought of suicide does cross his mind for a moment. Suicide is however soon dismissed in favour of revenge. Only after his revenge, the 'Glorious Mischief', is under way, will Gloucester contemplate suicide again. Unlike his counterpart in Shakespeare, Gloucester pictures his death as a deserved apotheosis:

> Glouc. ... my freed Soul to her bright Sphear shall fly,
> Through boundless Orbs, eternal Regions spy,
> And like the Sun, be All one glorious Eye.
> (F4r ll. 31-3)

Gloucester is perfectly reconciled with his destiny. His responsibility in precipitating Lear's and his own downfall does not seem to prevent him from thinking that revenge can put Lear's topsy-turvy universe aright. Whereas Shakespeare's Gloucester is crushed by his own despair, Tate's Gloucester will make use of his suffering to help the king:

> Glouc. ... with these bleeding Rings
> I will present me to the pittying Crowd,
> And with the Rhetorick of these dropping Veins
> Enflame 'em to Revenge their King and me;
> (F4r ll. 24-7)

Gloucester's world is unshaken by his misfortunes and its values are never questioned. His grief does not prevent him from seeking a redress of justice; on the contrary, his grief, like Cordelia's tears, becomes the weapon whereby he will overcome his enemy. His certainty of an ultimate success rests on the fact that Gloucester, like Tate, knows that a sympathetic audience can be stirred to take his side through a simple display of his undeserved suffering. This kind of sympathy, excised not through fear and terror, like in Aristotelian tragedy, but through pity, implies a shared belief in the political and aesthetic necessity of poetic justice. All the changes Tate introduced in Act 3 contribute to alter the original emblematic representation of sympathy in the Quarto and to explore the path towards redemptive sympathy merely outlined in the Folio.

Act 4 opens with another confirmation of the characters' belief in a providential order. Edgar's famous speech, 'Yet better thus, and knowne to be contemn'd', is shortened, and the original line, 'The lamentable change is from the best,/ The Worst returnes to laughter,' is altered to read, 'The lamentable Change is from the Best,/ The Worst returns to *Better.*' (G1r ll. 25-6) Edgar's despair is also effectively defused: although Tate's Edgar, like Shakespeare's, regards himself as 'The lowest and most abject Thing of Fortune' (G1r l. 23), he has already found some occasion of relief and comfort in Act 3, where he rescues Cordelia from Edmund's servants and finds out that Cordelia's cruelty in Act 1 was only part of her plan to test his loyalty.

After Edgar has agreed to escort Gloucester to Dover, he "stumbles" into Cordelia again. Dramatically speaking, this episode is the most superfluous and

awkward in *The History*. This meeting strains the plot to breakpoint: while Gloucester rejoices at finding out that Kent has never left the country, Edgar and Cordelia, who have already met, lament their 'Season so distrest' (G2v l. 7). This episode does not serve a specific dramatic function. Tate did not even have to bring these four characters together in order to let Kent and Cordelia learn about the rebellion against Goneril and Regan stirred up by Gloucester, because, as the audience learn at the beginning of Act 4, the rebellion is already well under way: 'Off. The Peasants are all up in Mutiny,/ And only want a Chief to lead 'em on/ To Storm your Palace.'(G1r l.6-8) The addition of this new scene merely anticipates the endless reunions and reconciliations of Act 5, and renews the characters and the audience's confidence that undeserved wrongs will be punished.

The poignancy of the Dover cliff episode is predictably spoilt by this all-pervading sense of an impending comic resolution. Although Edgar borrows from his predecessors in the Quarto and in the Folio the idea of 'trifling' with his father's despair to cure him of his death wish, Tate's Gloucester does not need to be cured at all. As already mentioned, Gloucester sees his death as the coronation of his heroic attempts to stir up the rebellion, and not as the desperate gesture of a vanquished man. His enthusiasm after his miraculous survival reveals the discrepancy between the original Gloucester and Tate's rereading of this character: '*'Tis wonderful*; henceforth I'll bear Affliction/ Till it expire.' (G4r ll. 20-1; added material in italics).

By highlighting the main departures from Quarto and Folio *King Lear*, the present analysis has mapped out the strategy of revision followed by Tate to rewrite his version of the Lear story. The occasional inconsistencies in the plot of *The History* have been studied in detail, but they have not been used to censure Tate's shortcomings as a dramatist, or to reaffirm the dramatic superiority of his model. Inconsistencies have been rather regarded as symptoms of the tension created by the imposition of the reviser's new idea of the play over the original story. A problem with plot or characterisation often reveals key elements of the adapter's revision, which, because of their novelty, do not blend in with the original context. It is on such occasions that the overall strategy of revision behind the adapter's individual interventions become easier to detect.

The application of this method of analysis to *The History* has revealed two main principles behind Tate's revision. In Act 1 and 2, Tate turns the king into a more recognisable tragic character. Lear's tendency to take irrational and hasty decisions prevents him from judging his daughters wisely. The original motif of the king's misjudgement is however considerably toned down. The king's banishment of Cordelia is a sensible political move: knowing that Edgar has rebelled against his father, Lear could not possibly approve of Cordelia's choice. The fact that Edgar is in fact innocent is irrelevant; the king, like Gloucester, has been led to believe that Edgar might be a potential danger to the stability of his kingdom and therefore punishes Cordelia. As Spencer has put it,

> Cordelia's motive has the far-reaching effect of relieving Lear of some responsibility for his error. Since Cordelia, like her sisters, deliberately misleads her father, Lear is presented with a choice not between Falsity and Truth but between two kinds of Falsity: he is more misled than misleading, and Cordelia must share the responsibility for the results.[17]

The characterisation of the king remains overall pretty unflattering throughout the first two acts.

The first discernible signs of a change occur towards the end of Act 2, where the king's rage is replaced by more and more frequent manifestations of his grief, related to a greater and greater awareness of his initial mistake. Act 3 is the dramatic heart of Tate's adaptation: here suffering is elaborately expressed and externalised by the king and the good characters and, at the same time, contained and transformed into pity. Pain in Tate is no longer a symptom of the isolation of the individual, who is suddenly unable to identify himself with the values and beliefs upon which his society rests. Pain, as it were, is no longer associated with a tragic sense of loss, waste and disorientation, as in the Quarto; neither is it the source of a redemptive, but nonetheless tragic, resolution, as in the Folio; pain, in Tate, becomes the object of a public display, thus inviting both the on-stage and the real audience to share the characters' experience. The externalisation of grief requires participation and generates pity, compassion, sympathy. In Tate these feelings are not exposed to a radical criticism, as in the Quarto, or granted a mild approval as a possible response to tragedy, as in the Folio. In Tate, the feelings of sympathy, pity and compassion imply a communion of values and beliefs between the

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[17] 'A Word', p. 245.

characters and their fictional and real audiences, and make the happy ending not only dramatically plausible, but also emotionally and ideologically desirable. Lear's delusive certainty that the Gods will take pity on Cordelia and himself is transferred to Cordelia, 'Upon such Sacrifices/ The Gods themselves throw Incense' (I1v ll. 32-3), who, unlike her father, is not hallucinating, but foreseeing the inevitable.

Given the character of Tate's revision, the predominance of Quarto variants in the first two acts and Tate's increasing reliance on the Folio in the remaining three acts does not seem to be purely casual. Tate must have chosen to rely on the Quarto while rewriting Act 1 and 2, in that, as observed above, the Quarto provides a culpable, wilful king, as opposed to the Folio, where Lear is portrayed as an old king, 'more sinned against than sinning'. Once Tate reached the end of Act 2, he must have realised that, in order to excite pity and compassion, he had to transform the king into a more sympathetic character and introduce new opportunities for the "good" characters to express their grief. At this point Tate must have also realised that the Quarto would not support his vision of the "Lear story" and his strategy of revision throughout the play. He therefore started to rely on the Folio more and more often, in that the Folio, if not to the same extent as Tate's own revision, encourages its audience to regard sympathy as a positive response to tragedy. Hence the omission of most of the "moralising" Quarto passages omitted from the Folio, such as the Gentleman's description of Cordelia and Albany's arraignment of his wife.

This analysis of Tate's revision of *King Lear* is confirmed by the results of a more thorough investigation of the textual evidence available, i.e. the substantive and accidental variants Tate retained from his original source-texts (See Appendix: 'Tate's Critical "Editing" of his Source-Text(s) for *The History of King Lear*'). The results of this investigation have undermined James Black's theory according to which Tate used a copy of the second Quarto (1619) while rewriting Act 1, and a copy of F1 for the remaining four acts. The textual evidence collected in the first five tables included in the Appendix shows how Tate in fact used a copy of the first Quarto (1608), and not only during his revision of Act 1, but more or less constantly, if less frequently, during Act 2, 3 and 4. Table 2.1, on the other hand, contains evidence which questions Black's identification of Tate's Folio source with F1. A thorough investigation of the textual evidence available therefore supports the present analysis of Tate's overall strategy of revision in *The History*. Contrary to Black's hypothesis, according to which Tate

swapped from his Quarto to his Folio source because of the formal superiority of the latter, an analysis of Tate's choice between Quarto and Folio variants shows how he was well aware of the main differences between the two texts, and how his use of his source-texts was affected not so much by their respective formal merits or demerits, as by their relevance to his carefully planned strategy of revision.

CHAPTER III

'Pericles' in Perspective:

Hereditary and Elective Affinities

In 1898, Albert Henry Smyth defined *Pericles* as the 'most singular example in Elizabethan literature of a consistent copying of a venerable and far-travelled story.'[1] In 1956, Maxwell observed that 'the complicated episodic narrative of the sources is followed in a fashion unparalleled in Shakespeare.'[2] In 1976, Northrop Frye reached approximately the same conclusion: '*Pericles* seems to be a deliberate experiment in presenting a traditional archetypal sequence as nakedly and baldly as possible.'[3] Although 20th century Shakespearean criticism has granted *Pericles* unprecedented attention, it is still regarded as an exceptionally unshakespearean play. Internal evidence and stylistic tests may substantiate the hypothesis that Shakespeare wrote at least the last three acts of *Pericles*; Shakespeare's prominent position within the King's Men may suggest that, although somebody else, most probably George Wilkins, wrote the first two acts, Shakespeare must have authorised, or personally supervised, the first production; nonetheless, most Shakespearean scholars are still wondering who really wrote this play.

Instead of engaging with the controversial issue of *Pericles*' authorship, I have attempted an alternative approach, in order to demonstrate that *Pericles*, be it wholly Shakespearean, as Philip Edwards believes,[4] or collaborative, as most revisionists since Malone have alternatively suggested,[5] is not a 'consistent copying of a venerable and far-travelled story', but a highly experimental play, which anticipates both themes and conventions of the later romances. Theatrically speaking, *Pericles* is, in Hoeniger's

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[1]A.H.Smyth, *Shakespeare's 'Pericles' and Apollonius of Tyre: A Study in Comparative Literature* (Philadelphia: MacCalla, 1898), p. 5.
[2]W.Shakespeare, *Pericles*, ed. by J.C.Maxwell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. xi.
[3]N.Frye, *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 51.
[4]Edwards, pp. 31-41.
[5]See, for example, W.Shakespeare, *Pericles*, ed. by F.D.Hoeniger (London: Methuen, 1963), pp. lii-liv; Honigmann, pp. 196-7; *A Textual Companion*, p. 557.

words, 'Gower's narrative in visual form.'[6] A perfect exemplification of Peter Brook's dramaturgy, according to which 'Holy Theatre' can be attained only through the daring simplicity of 'Rough Theatre',[7] *Pericles* demands the full, unconditional collaboration of its audience. As Ben Jonson sardonically remarked in the Induction to *Every Man Out of his Humour*, 'we see ... many seas, countries, and kingdoms passed over with ... admirable dexterity'[8] in *Pericles*, and Gower's dusty rhymes are our only guidance through shipwrecks, abductions and supernatural apparitions.[9]

Dramatically speaking, *Pericles* also represents a noticeable departure from its principal sources, John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (1393) and Lawrence Twine's *The Patterne of Painful Adventures of Apollonius of Tyre* (1576).[10] Despite obvious stylistic discrepancies, both the first and the second half of the play develop the motif of incest, originally exhausted by the end of Apollonius' first adventure in Antioch. Whereas the surrealist character of *Pericles* appeals to contemporary directors and audiences alike, and has contributed to bring *Pericles* back on stage, Shakespearean scholars still seem affected by an old prejudice against this early romance, which prevents them from looking for patterns of meaning or topical allusions to relevant extra-dramatic issues. It is my impression that the interest aroused by *The Tempest* among post-colonialist and new-historicist scholars over the last few years, and *Pericles*' still marginal role within contemporary critical discourse, reflect not so much their respective dramatic value as a deep-rooted concern with authenticity and authority. My analysis of *Pericles* in relation to its direct sources and Lillo's 1738 adaptation *Marina* highlights the crucial emphasis placed on incest when the old legend of Apollonius of Tyre was revised and staged by the King's Men at the beginning of the 17th century, and speculates on the reasons behind its disappearance after the Restoration. The present analysis, in other words, relies on the evidence provided by the play itself, rather than on the assumption that *Pericles* was written by Shakespeare, or by Shakespeare in collaboration with Wilkins, or by Wilkins himself, and only subsequently revised by Shakespeare. Once the problem of *Pericles*' origin is set aside, it becomes easier to overlook the play's obvious shortcomings, and to appreciate its complex structure, its rich imagery, its dramatic

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[6]Hoeniger, p. lxxvii.
[7]Brook, p. 108-9.
[8]B.Jonson, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, in *The Complete Plays of Ben Jonson*, ed. by G.A.Wilkes, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981-2), I, ll. 269-71.
[9]For a more detailed discussion of the innovative function of the choric convention in *Pericles*, see Hoeniger, pp. xix-xxiii.
[10]Page references are to Bullough, VI.

power and its significance in relation to topical issues, such as the nature of monarchical authority and the strategy of its transmission. Although this approach overlooks the issue of *Pericles*' authorship, it lends some insight on individual textual cruxes, and, most of all, shows how *Pericles*, although of uncertain origin, possesses the rare qualities of Shakespeare's mature romances.

PART I

From Apollonius to Pericles:

Periculum Incesti

Repetition is an important structural element of Shakespearean romance; in *Pericles* and its main sources, however, repetition is also a crucial motif of the plot. Apollonius/Pericles (Appolinus in Gower) first appears as a royal suitor at Antiochus' court. Despite the romantic medieval motif of *l'amor de loin*, the focus of the episode remains on the nefarious consequences of Antiochus' incestuous relationship with his nameless daughter. Pericles' virtue is tested and eventually prevails over his passions. By solving the riddle, Pericles violates Antiochus' secret, and he is forced to flee his country in order to protect himself. The second episode in the first half of the story/play presents Apollonius/Pericles as the mythological Fisher King, who voluntary undergoes a period of sterility and self-sacrifice to guarantee prosperity and fertility to his own and other kingdoms. During his first sea-voyage, Apollonius/Pericles relieves the city of Tharsus from a terrible famine. He brings corn to the starving population who, in exchange, worship him as a God. The third and last episode marks the end of the period of sterility. Apollonius/Pericles is again tested at the court of Aristrates/Simonides, and this time, by showing his skills and noble virtues, he wins the favours of the king's daughter. Even on this occasion the romantic element is eclipsed by the political implication of a royal marriage. In both *Pericles* and its immediate sources, there is no hint at the pleasures of married life; what matters is that through marriage the kingdom is blessed with the advent of a successor. The first movement of the story is over when Pericles has secured order and stability through succession.

It is worth noting that the stylistic discrepancy between the first two acts and the remaining three acts in *Pericles* corresponds to an actual watershed in the plot. The second movement is very similar to the first one, except for the shift of focus from Apollonius/Pericles to Tharsia/Marina (Thaise in Gower). As her father before her, the heroine escapes a death sentence and her virtue is tested. Whereas the father's integrity

is challenged by the alluring, but corrupt, beauty of Antiochus' daughter, the young princess is tested in a brothel. The risk of incest - vicious self-consumption - is opposed to the risk of prostitution - wasteful dispersion. Tharsia/Marina manages to preserve her virtue, and endures self-sacrifice to redeem Mytilene from the plague of prostitution, which endangered the future of the town as badly as the famine had threatened the city of Tharsus in the first movement of the story. By winning free from the brothel Tharsia/Marina becomes a saintly figure, repeatedly associated with Diana, goddess of fruitful and married chastity. The second movement comes to an end when the daughter is reunited with her father. Marina's marriage to Athanagoras/Lysimachus enables Pericles to transmit his power through his daughter to the new royal couple.

When single elements of the plot are examined within this double structure common to both *Pericles* and its main sources, they acquire a specifically political significance. The structural principle of repetition reflects the dramatic motif of royal succession, i.e. the process through which power "repeats" and "reproduces" itself. The first movement opens with an unmarried king and ends with the advent of his successor. The second movement begins with Tharsia/Marina's abduction and ends with a reunion and transmission of power through a second royal marriage. Both movements describe the process through which both father and daughter are proven to possess the qualities of true royalty. What distinguishes *Pericles* from its sources is the nature of the obstacles both father and daughter are challenged by.

1.1 The Avoidance of Incest.

All versions of the story of Apollonius of Tyre open with the episode of Antiochus' incestuous love for his daughter. Antiochus is invariably portrayed as a tyrant, devoured by ambition. Twine thus explains that when he 'builded the goodly citie of Antiochia in Syria, ... [he] called it after his own name'.[1] Antiochus' incestuous

[1]Bullough, p. 426.

desire is depicted as a compelling drive towards self-consumption: he hinders the natural process of succession and regeneration, by violating his daughter's body, and becoming himself his own successor.

The three versions of this episode differ in their characterisation of Antiochus' daughter and her reactions to incest. In the sources the nameless daughter is the innocent victim of his father's greed. In *Confessio Amantis*, she is described as 'tender' and 'full of drede', and she is pitied because 'She couth nought hir maydenhede/ Defende'.[2] The association between incest and cannibalism, used in *Pericles* to qualify the daughter's sinful replacement of her mother - 'And shee an eater of her Mothers flesh,/ By the defiling of her Parents bed' (*Pericles*, ll. 197-8)[3] - is conjured in Gower through the motif of the king's devouring lust: 'The wilde fader thus devoureth/ His owne flesh, which none socoureth ... '[4] In Gower, incest is primarily condemned as sinful, moral and physical, devastation. The nameless daughter's lines:

> Thinge which my bodie firste begate
> In to this worlde, onelich that
> My worldes worship hath berefte.[5]

probably inspired the author of *Pericles*, who rephrased them - 'Oh come hither,/ thou that begetst him that did thee beget.' (*Pericles*, ll. 2193-4) - in order to describe Marina's opposite restorative effect on her father after their reunion. In Gower, however, incest is not only morally condemnable but also politically dangerous. The root of Antiochus' incestuous desire is his power - 'But whan a man hath welth at wille/ The flesh is freel and falleth ofte'[6] -, and the infringement of the taboo turns him into a tyrant - 'This tyranne of his felonie'.[7] In Gower, incest impairs the succession and endangers the survival of Pericles and Antiochus' kingdoms.

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[2]Bullough, p. 377.
[3]All quotation from *Pericles* are followed by line-reference to *A Diplomatic Reprint of Pericles (1609)*, in *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works, Original-Spelling Edition*, ed. by S.Wells and G.Taylor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).
[4]Bullough, p. 377.
[5]Bullough, p. 377.
[6]Bullough, p. 376.
[7]Bullough, p. 381.

In Twine, the focus of this first episode remains on the act itself and on its shattering effects on the daughter. As opposed to all the other versions, Twine describes the father's assault on his daughter as rape:

> [O]n a certaine day hee came into his daughters chamber, and bidding all that were there for to depart, as though he had had some secret matter to conferre with her: the furious rage of lust pricking him forward thereunto, he violently forced her, though seely maiden she withstood him long to her power, and threwe away all regard of his owne honestie and unlosed the knot of her virginitie.[8]

After the assault, the daughter regrets the loss of both her name and her father's. As a consequence of incest, both father and daughter lose their former identity. But the daughter is also perfectly aware that her father, and not herself, should be held responsible for that loss: 'Where is my father? For if you well understoode the matter, the name of the Father is lost in me'.[9] The father no longer devours his daughter's body and name, but rather loses himself in her. Incest is here a private tragedy, through which a king loses his identity as *pater familiae*, and, as a consequence, his public role as ideal father of his country. The private and personal consequences of incest, however, are always in the foreground.

In *Pericles*, on the other hand, incest is consensual from the very beginning. Violence is replaced by seduction: Antiochus, as the dramatist suggests, 'to Incest did provoke' (*Pericles*, l. 48). The nameless daughter is called 'Bad child' and 'sinfull Dame' (*Pericles*, l. 49, l.53) and therefore shares responsibility with her father for their abhorred sin. Even her unlucky suitors are attracted by her beauty and want her as 'bedfellow,/ In maryage pleasures, playfellow' (*Pericles*, ll. 55-6). Moral indignation is toned down, and the audience is invited to contemplate the public and political consequences of incest, rather than to pity the victim and condemn the perpetrator, as in the sources. Pericles, for example, complains that because 'Kinges are earths Gods; in vice, their law's their will:' (*Pericles*, l. 170), and that Antiochus' dreadful act has destroyed many potential successors and future kings: 'How many worthie Princes blouds were shed,/ To keepe his bed of blacknesse unlayde ope.' (*Pericles*, ll. 334-5)

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[8]Bullough, p. 426.
[9]Bullough, p. 427.

Pericles' own kingdom is now in danger: the young prince fears that in order to protect his secret, Antiochus will 'stop the course by which it might be knowne,/ [And] With hostile forces ... ore-spread the land' (*Pericles*, ll. 267-8). Incest in *Pericles* is not the direct cause of personal tragedy or straightforward moral indignation, but of political censure.

These radically different views of incest in relation to royal succession, along with the necessity of transmitting and regenerating power, reflect different conceptions of kingship. *Confessio Amantis* was written around 1393, when the monarch was still regarded as a nobleman among his peers, although invested with extraordinary powers. The king, as a matter of fact, ruled not over, but through the aristocracy. As Black has perceptively argued,

> [t]he view of the Middle Ages as more authoritarian than later times needs to be carefully restated. The theocratic notion that the king derived his authority from God (*rex dei gratia*) did not mean that royal power was unlimited ... There was no absolute secular monarchy in this period, perhaps because the necessary means of communication and control were lacking.[10]

At the end of the 14th century, monarchy still relied on a complex system of allegiances and patronage, and incest was politically disastrous, as well as morally condemnable, in that it undermined the delicate balance of power regulated through royal and aristocratic marriages, i.e. through the re-distribution of benefits and properties.

Lawrence Twine's translation *The Painful Patterne* was published under the reign of Elizabeth. The shift of focus from the public to the personal consequences of incest, and the stress put upon Antiochus' violence were probably the result of the increasing popularity of the cult of Elizabeth. The queen was associated alternatively with Diana, Astrea, Cynthia or Belphoebe, and with the ideals of chastity and justice these pagan divinities stand for. As mentioned above,[11] Elizabeth had managed to legitimise her position as the first female English monarch by promoting her image as the Virgin Queen. It is hardly surprising that Antiochus' nameless daughter is more outstanding than any of her counterparts, and it is also understandable that, given the

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[10]A.Black, *Political Thought in Europe: 1250-1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 137.

[11]The cult of Elizabeth was briefly dealt with in Chapter I, Part III.

Queen's choice not to marry and provide her kingdom with a successor, Twine avoided stressing the nefarious consequences of a monarch's interference with natural succession and the orderly transmission of his power.

Boehrer has perceptively noticed that 'in some basic ways, the English Renaissance is about incest'.[12] The slow process whereby feudal monarchy was turned into a modern, centralised state was well under way under the Tudors, although James I was the first monarch who theorised absolutism and established the prerogatives of an absolute ruler. Absolutist theories encouraged the notion that the king embodied the undivided, divine authority upon which the natural, social and political order rested. Incestuous fantasies therefore appealed to Tudor and, most of all, Stuart monarchs, because incest can conjure the same sense of undivided, if unnatural, wholeness. Henry VIII, for example, used incest to invalidate his marriages with Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn, and consequently gain absolute control over his succession. Elizabeth on the other hand, avoided marriage by claiming to be the mother, wife and daughter of the English people. James I, despite being born from an endogamous marriage between Mary Stuart and Henry Stuart, both of Tudor descent, was not Elizabeth's direct successor. He therefore used the imagery of incest to legitimise his succession: after disowning his natural mother, Mary Queen of Scots, when she was imprisoned by Elizabeth for high treason, he declared himself cousin, brother and foster child of Queen Elizabeth. The risk of incest in association with royal dynasties had never been more blatant. Elizabeth had died without a successor; her policy, however successful while she was alive, had brought the Tudor dynasty to its natural extinction. The succession crisis had dispelled the optimism of Elizabeth's early reign. The rather peaceful and smooth transition to the Stuarts relieved some of the tension, but James' political ideals and the increasing distance between the monarch and his subjects, between the court and the rest of the nation, contributed to excite, rather than pacify, the uneasiness evoked by the incest motif. *Pericles*' concern with the public consequences of Antiochus' infringement of the taboo, inherited directly from Gower, acquired a special relevance under James. Hence the much greater attention devoted to the hero's confrontation with the taboo.

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[12]Boehrer, p. 5.

Gower's Appolinus solves the riddle and simply shuns the king's wrath. As he explains to the king, the secret concealed in the riddle only 'toucheth all the privitee/ Betwene thyn owne childe and thee'.[13] The hero is untouched by the secret he learns through the riddle. In Twine, knowledge similarly implies no guilt or recognition. Apollonius successfully identifies the referents of the first person pronouns in the riddle with Antiochus - '*I am carried with mischiefe*: you have not lied, for looke unto your owne selfe' - and his daughter - '*I eate my mothers flesh*, looke upon your daughter'[14] -, but he consults books to dispel his doubts. Knowledge evidently comes not from within.

In *Pericles*, as Leggatt has observed, 'to encounter sin in another character is to entertain the possibility of sin in oneself.'[15] The young prince is enthralled by a self-destructive passion, which makes him disturbingly similar to Antiochus. Pericles wishes to taste the fruits of a 'celestiall tree' (*Pericles*, l. 87), which, as Antiochus points out, are 'golden ..., but dangerous to be toucht' (*Pericles*, l. 94). These images suggest the infringement of a divine prohibition. Even if the actual nature of the prohibition is not explicitly stated, as John Pitcher observes, '[t]he connections between death, sexual desire, and the fruit of a tree have an unmistakable resonance'.[16] Pericles suffers from a strong death wish: he thanks Antiochus for showing him the grim face of death, and 'as sickemen doe' (*Pericles*, l. 113), he is ready to renounce the world to enjoy his daughter's love, which, far from celestial, is described by Antiochus himself, as 'deaths net' (*Pericles*, l. 106). It is also worth noting that Pericles wishes to be/become Antiochus' son: 'Anti. Prince Pericles. Peri. That would be sonne to great Antiochus.' (*Pericles*, ll. 91-2) The word 'sonne' clearly stands for son-in-law, but it leaves open the possibility of interpreting it literally. Pericles' later identification of Simonides with the memory of his own dead father, will bring back the ghost of Antiochus, and along with it, the re-emergence of the motif of incest. As Leggatt pointed out, 'the Antiochus episode is not just an arbitrary way to start the hero's adventures but an appropriate introduction to the play as a whole.'[17]

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[13]Bullough, p. 380.
[14]Bullough, p. 428.
[15]A.Leggatt, 'The Shadow of Antioch: Sexuality in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*', in *Parallel Lives: Spanish and English National Drama, 1580-1680*, ed. by L. and P.Fothergill-Payne (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1991), p. 171.
[16]J.Pitcher, 'The Poet and Taboo: The Riddle of Shakespeare's *Pericles*', in *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, 35 (1982), p. 15.
[17]Leggatt, p. 169.

1.2 The Recovery of Incest as a Symbolic Practice.

The second episode is not significantly variant: in each version Apollonius/Pericles relieves Tharsus from the famine. As opposed to Antioch, who kills any intruder, Tharsus is connoted by its open gates. All the riches and opulence of the past have drifted away. Both Antioch's self-enclosure and Tharsus' openness lead to sterility/starvation. The third episode, Apollonius/Pericles' shipwreck and his arrival at Altistrates/Simonides' court (Artestrates in Gower), shows how Pentapolis reconciles the two extremes of Antioch and Tharsus and secures fertility and prosperity to the kingdom.

Apollonius/Pericles' trial at Alistrates/Simonides' court varies consistently from one version to the other. In *Confessio Amantis*, Appolinus takes part in a '*ludus gimnasi*',[18] where all the participants are naked, and his financial destitution is not betrayed by his outer appearance. In *The Patterne of Painefull Adventures*, Apollonius is engaged in a tournament and he is 'ashamed to come into [the king's] presence, by reason of his base aray'.[19] Apollonius distinguishes himself not for his courage and physical prowess, as in *Confessio Amantis*, but for his 'cunning' and his 'nimblenesse'.[20] In *Pericles*, the trial is a joust, which takes place off stage and is preceded by a ritual parade and the interpretation of the six knights' emblematic shields and their mottoes. As Edwards has noticed, '[m]edievalism is much more noticeable in the play than it is in the genuine medieval version which the real John Gower told in his *Confessio Amantis*.'[21]

The most important discrepancy between the rendition of this episode in the sources and in *Pericles* is the addition of a new motif, that is, Simonides' pretended opposition to the marriage between Pericles and Thaisa, which forces the audience to

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[18]Bullough, p. 386.
[19]Bullough, p. 436.
[20]Bullough, p. 435.
[21]Edwards, p. 11.

notice a sinister resemblance between Antioch and Pentapolis. Edwards denies any analogy between the two episodes:

> This innocent little picture of father, daughter, and suitor is put there in all its ingenuousness, and in the theatre it produces the pleasure appropriate to it. In the strong chiaroscuro of this play it stands against the darkness of evil in Antiochus ... .[22]

John Pitcher, on the other hand, spotted some interesting parallels:

> In the court at Pentapolis, Pericles is again, as in Antioch, put to a test which endangers his life (albeit the trial is ritualised into a tournament), and again a king attempts to trap him in a daughter's words, though here the snare is a letter rather than a riddle.[23]

A third alternative reading of the Pentapolis episode reconciles Edwards and Pitcher's positions. Lewis, for example, agrees that 'the threatening aspect of the father, which Pericles had witnessed in Antioch, seems to reappear in Pentapolis'. But the similarity only makes the differences stand out more clearly; and 'what *Pericles* makes clear', Lewis continues,

> is the difference between the kinds of eating and sexuality which are licit and sustaining, and those forms which are not. Thaisa and Simonides stand as corrective examples against which Pericles and the audience can measure the perversely sustaining habits of Antiochus and his daughter.[24]

Although Lewis highlights some crucial differences, he overlooks striking analogies, which have not been sufficiently stressed before.

Simonides, another king without a queen, introduces his daughter to his guests in a way which is likely to remind the audience of Antiochus' ambiguity: Simonides' lines, 'Sits heere like Beauties child, whom Nature gat,/ For men to see; and seeing, woonder at.' (*Pericles*, ll. 735-6), echo Antiochus' earlier lines, 'bring in our daughter, clothed like a bride,/ For embracements even of Jove himselfe;/ At whose conception ... Nature

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[22]Edwards, p. 19.
[23]Pitcher, p. 17.
[24]A.J.Lewis, '"I Feed on my Mother's Flesh": Incest and Eating in *Pericles*', in *Essays in Literature*, 15 (1988), p. 155.

this dowry gave; ...' (*Pericles*, ll. 71-4). Pericles himself, on the other hand, is repeatedly addressed or referred to as a stranger: 'Thai. Hee seemes to be a Stranger:' (*Pericles*, l. 772); '2 Lord. He well may be a Stranger,' (*Pericles*, l. 781); 'Tha. Alas my Father, it befits not mee,/ Unto a stranger Knight to be so bold,' (*Pericles*, ll. 857-8). Pericles is defined by his "otherness", and although Simonides is genuinely hospitable, Pericles still feels like an intruder, like the potential suitor Antiochus had tried to kill. Simonides only pretends to oppose his daughter's decision to marry the young gentleman from Tyre, 'king. Soft, heere he comes,/ I must dissemble it.' (*Pericles*, ll. 991-2), but his lines, 'Will you not, having my consent,/ Bestow your love and your affections,/ Upon a Stranger?' (*Pericles*, ll. 1048-50), are likely to bring back memories of Antiochus' unnatural wish to deny his daughter to any stranger. Pericles fears for his life again: he suspects that Thaisa's letter is only 'the Kings subtiltie to have [his] life' (*Pericles*, l. 1014).

Yet, this time, Simonides suddenly, maybe too suddenly, turns into a "good" father, and joins Pericles and Thaisa in marriage: 'Either be rul'd by mee, or Ile make you,/ Man and wife: nay come, your hands' (*Pericles*, ll. 1055-6). An uncanny recognition between the king and the future son-in-law neutralises Pericles' otherness and Simonides' pretended or, perhaps, badly hidden hostility. Pericles first notices a resemblance between his future father-in-law and his natural father: 'You Kings to mee, like to my fathers picture' (*Pericles*, l. 828). Simonides also recognises Pericles:

> a Stranger? who for ought I know,
> May be (nor can I thinke the contrary)
> As great in blood as I my selfe.
> (*Pericles*, ll. 1050-2)

This uncanny recognition evokes memories of incest, but this time, the memory, as opposed to the practice, of incest makes Pericles the perfect suitor. His claim as Simonides' successor is both elective, in that he is a stranger and loved by Thaisa independently of her father's will, and hereditary, because of the affinity between father and son-in-law, which makes them view each other as natural father and child. Although Pericles' love for Thaisa is not incestuous, the ideal blood-relation between Pericles and Simonides makes their marriage ideally endogamous. Although the risk of incest is

evoked only to be overcome, incest in Pentapolis is recovered as a symbolic practice through which the outsider Pericles becomes what Arens calls a 'genetic replicant' of the present ruler.[25]

The transmission of monarchical authority in England had always relied on the principle of hereditary primogenital succession. As Canning observes,

> [t]he most conspicuous interruption in succession, the accession of Henry IV, was managed so as to minimise the strain on conventional theories .. . The potential for elective monarchy was never developed. Each departure from hereditary succession was justified individually, without modifying the general theory.[26]

In 1603, however, Elizabeth's death sanctioned the end of a purely hereditary succession. As Caroline Bingham points out,

> to the last Elizabeth had made no public acknowledgement of James as her heir ... His peaceful accession had been the work of Robert Cecil, supported on the Queen's death, by the English Privy Council.[27]

The addition of a new scene in *Pericles* provides a model for an elective monarchy. Whereas in the sources the citizens in Tyre mourn the departure of their king as an irreparable loss, in *Pericles* they ask Helicanus to replace the missing ruler. The First Lord in *Pericles* insists that Helicanus should give them 'cause to mourne [Pericles'] funerall,/ And leave [them] to [their] free election'. (*Pericles*, ll. 942-3) Helicanus rejects this request and asks the lords to 'forbeare [their] suffrages' (*Pericles*, l. 951) and go and seek their king: 'Whom if you find, and winne unto returne,' Helicanus reassures them, 'You shall like Diamonds sit about his Crowne' (*Pericles*, ll. 962-3). Helicanus rejects free election in favour of a medieval concept of kingship as a corporation, where the success of the ruler depends on the collaboration of his noble subjects - 'When Peeres thus knit,' Helicanus concludes, 'a Kingdome ever stands' (*Pericles*, l. 968).

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[25]W.Arens, *The Original Sin: Incest and Its Meaning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p..
[26]J.P.Canning, 'Law, Sovereignty and Corporation Theory, 1300-1450', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, ed. by J.H.Burns and M.Goldie (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 498.
[27]C.Bingham, *James I of England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981), p. 8.

Helicanus declines the Lords' offer to replace Pericles, and the idea of an elective succession is eventually discarded in favour of hereditary succession.

This short additional scene occurs between the banquet at Simonides' court and the arrangement of Pericles and Thaisa's marriage the following morning. The intermission of this scene between the banquet and the marriage is not a direct consequence of the episodic character of the play; on the contrary, this scene contributes to highlight the relevance of the issue of royal succession in the Pentapolis episode. Although elective monarchy *per se* is discarded by Helicanus, Simonides' decision to accept Pericles as his daughter's husband and his future successor shows how the elective principle can in fact be successfully reconciled to the hereditary through a recovery of the symbology of incest. It is significant that, as briefly mentioned above, James I, "elected" by Cecil and the Privy Council to succeed Elizabeth, resorted to a similar strategy to legitimise his claim to the throne of England.

1.3 The Second Ship-Wreck: the Relapse.

The second half of the play opens with a violent sea storm. Thaisa apparently dies in childbirth, Marina, Pericles' new-born baby, is left behind in Tharsus, and Pericles continues his journey to Tyre on his own. This strange set of circumstances deprives Pericles of his wife and creates the opportunity for a re-emergence of the incest motif. If, in the first half of the play, Pericles learns how to avoid incest while attempting to become the 'genetic replicant' of the king (his father?), in the second half of the play he makes two fatal mistakes, as a consequence of which he unwittingly exposes himself yet again to the risk of incest: as opposed to Apollonius, Pericles resigns himself too easily to the death of his wife, and lets his daughter grow into a stranger.

When Gower's Appolinus is informed of his wife's death, he thrusts himself on her lifeless body and 'A thousande sithes he hir kiste'.[28] In *Pericles* there is no reference to such intimacy. Besides, when the sailors ask Appolinus to get rid of the corpse, he does not object to their decision, but he also specifies that he is not so much concerned

[28]Bullough, p. 397.

about his personal safety, but the safety of his crew: 'I am (quod he) but one alone,/ So wolde I not for my persone.'[29] In Twine, Apollonius first objects to the sailors' request, but then he is persuaded of the necessity of such measure. In *Pericles*, the king's sudden change from his first reaction, 'That's your superstition' (*Pericles*, l. 1187), to his dismissive next line, 'As you thinke meet' (*Pericles*, l. 1190), betrays uneasiness and unjustified haste. The nurse's announcement of Thaisa's death and Marina's birth suggests the irony of Pericles' situation: 'Take in your armes this *peece* of your dead Queene./ ... Heer's all that is left living of your Queene;/ A litle Daughter:' (*Pericles*, ll. 1151-55; added emphasis). Pericles has lost a wife and gained a daughter. The timing of these two crucial events suggests a dangerous coincidence. Marina is all Pericles has got left of his Queen; Marina is the living replacement of the dead Queen. Besides, the word 'peece' has a strong sexual connotation in Shakespeare, and in *Pericles* in particular. The Bawd's lewd remark on Marina's attractive figure is an illustrative example: 'When Nature framde this peece, shee meant thee a good turne.' (*Pericles*, ll. 1676-7)

The haste with which Pericles settles the question of Thaisa's sea-burial is matched by the urgency with which he heads towards Tharsus to entrust his daughter with Cleon and Dyoniza. Gower provides no explanation to justify Appolinus' decision, because, presumably, it is not regarded as problematical. Royal offspring were not usually brought up by their natural parents, both because the latter were too busy looking after public affairs and because tutors were supposed to provide a more professional guidance and education. Twine adds realistic details and imposes a more immediately visible logic on the events. Apollonius' is both a short and a long term decision: he asks Strangulio and Dionisiades to look after Tharsia not only while he is busy recovering his kingdom, but also afterwards: 'I will not returne backe againe unto king Altistrates my father-in-law, whose daughter alas, I have lost in the sea, but meaning rather to exercise the trade of merchandize, I commit my daughter unto you.'[30] Pericles, on the other hand, provides too many reasons for leaving Marina behind in Tharsus temporarily - 'the Babe/ Cannot hold out to Tyrus' (*Pericles*, ll. 1215-16), and later on, 'I must needs be gone, my twelve months are expir'd, and Tyrus standes in a litigious peace' (*Pericles*, ll. 1335-6) - but none to justify his decision to leave her there

[29]Bullough, p. 398.
[30]Bullough, p. 451.

permanently. As Helms points out, Pericles' separation from his daughter acquires a peculiar connotation because of the 'scripted silences' in his motivations.[31] As mentioned above, distance and separation turn father and daughter into utter strangers. The fact that Pericles will meet his daughter, whom he believes dead, when she is still ransoming herself from the Bawd in Mytilene, shows the potential danger of the situation both the Fates and Pericles himself have conspired to create. Pitcher found in *Pericles* 'the symmetry of the most famous of incestuous tragedies,' Sophocles' *Oedipus*:

> The [two] stories are ... closely related if one considers how conscious the heroes are of the danger carried within them. Fearful of the prophecy that he will kill his father and mate with his mother, Oedipus flees *knowingly* from his adoptive parents: *unknowingly* he murders his father at the cross-roads, and begets children by his mother, Jocasta. In this medieval variation, Apollonius flees knowingly from the evil of incest, but he may, all too easily and unconsciously, participate in the very crime he had abhorred, sexual intercourse with a daughter.[32]

1.4 'Flesh of thy Flesh': the Final Reunion.

In the closing scenes of *Pericles*, as in the Pentapolis episode, recognition is activated by incestuous attraction and uncanny affinities. The role played by the memory of incest in the final reunion in *Pericles* is, yet again, unparalleled in the sources.

In *Confessio Amantis*, Thaise, like Marina, talks to her father through riddles and 'demandes strange',[33] but her words have no beneficial effect on him, until she discloses her identity. As a consequence, the final recognition strikes the reader as purely accidental and fortuitous. As Gower explains:

> Fro this daie forth fortune hath sworne

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[31]L.Helms, 'The Saint in the Brothel: Or, Eloquence Rewarded', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 41 (1990), p. 331.
[32]Pitcher, p. 20.
[33]Bullough, p. 414.

To set hym upwarde on the whele.
So goth the worlde, now wo, now wele.[34]

The same lack of motivation surrounds Thaise's marriage: in *Confessio Amantis*, being young and unmarried makes Athenagoras a suitable husband. In Twine, Athanagoras is recast into a more complex character: unlike his predecessor, he meets his future bride in the brothel. Athanagoras is moved not by Tharsia's arguments, as in *Pericles*, but by her misfortunes; Tharsia, as opposed to Marina, discloses her identity straightaway, and uses her noble origins and not her virtues as a safeguard against her assailant. Twine's revision of Athanagoras creates a few problems later on. When Athanagoras meets Apollonius, he knows already that he is Tharsia's father, and one wonders why, when he complains that he 'cannot perswade [him] to come up out of that darke place into the light',[35] he does not simply tell him that his daughter is in Machilenta (Mytilene). Athanagoras eventually decides to send for Tharsia, but only because 'she hath wisdom, & can move pleasant talke'.[36] When Tharsia meets Apollonius, Athanagoras does not tell her that the old man might be her father. Only when she realises that persuasion and eloquence are wasted on Apollonius does Tharsia reveal her identity. Recognition is not attained gradually, and there is no development from utter despair to unbearable joy. Whereas in Gower the final reunion is a fortuitous circumstance, Twine turned this final episode into a farcical anticlimax.

Pericles' reunion with Marina is an extenuating but dramatically well-mastered crescendo. Pericles initially rejects Marina and pushes her away, but his interest is aroused by her defiant reaction: Marina claims to have 'endured a griefe might equall [his]', and that '[her] derivation was from ancestors, who stood equivolent with mightie Kings' (*Pericles*, ll. 2091-94). As soon as Pericles looks at Marina, he notices a striking resemblance with his dead wife:

> my dearest wife was like this maid, and sucha one my daughter might have beene: My Queenes square browes, her stature to an inch, as wandlike-straight, as silver voyst, her eyes as Jewell-like, and caste as richly, in pace an other Juno. Who starves the eares shee feedes, and makes them hungrie, the more she gives them speech.

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[34]Bullough, p. 415.
[35]Bullough, p. 463.
[36]Bullough, p. 463.

(*Pericles*, ll. 2108-14)

Before recognising Marina as his daughter, Pericles mistakes her for his wife: 'thou lookest like one I loved indeede.' (*Pericles*, l. 2126) Pericles, who had shunned the risk of incest in Antioch, is now unwittingly courting his daughter, another nameless virgin: 'howe lost thou thy name, my most kinde Virgin? recount I doe beseech thee, Come sit by mee.' (*Pericles*, ll. 2139-41) When the nameless virgin announces that her name is Marina, Pericles does not embrace his long-lost daughter straightaway, but protests against the irony of his destiny: 'Oh I am mockt, and thou by some insenced God sent hither to make the world to laugh at me.' (*Pericles*, ll. 2143-4) Pericles was attracted to the young virgin, because she is the living image of his dead wife. When he moves towards her to touch his vision, the vision utters the unspeakable: 'My name is Marina.' (*Pericles*, l. 2142) Pericles can hardly contain his shock - 'howe thou doest startle me to call thy selfe Marina.' (*Pericles*, ll. 2146-7) -, and, instinctively tries to dispel the illusion, 'the rarest dreame/ That ere duld sleepe did mocke sad fooles withall' (*Pericles*, ll. 2162-3). When Pericles eventually grasps the meaning of his daughter's words, he welcomes her with a riddling praise: 'Oh come hither,/ thou that begetst him that did thee beget.' (*Pericles*, ll. 2193-4) Pericles' recognition rings ominously with Antiochus' riddle: 'Hee's Father, Sonne, and Husband milde;/ I, Mother, Wife; and yet his child.' (*Pericles*, ll. 135-6)

In Pentapolis, the memory of incest had helped Pericles and Simonides to recognise each other as father and child, and had made Pericles the perfect husband for Thaisa and the perfect successor to Simonides. Now, the memory of incest enables Pericles to recognise his daughter. Pericles exorcises the risk of continuing to see Marina as his wife and daughter by re-enacting his parenthood: 'I am great with woe, and shall deliver weeping.' (*Pericles*, l. 2108) Pericles also guesses at Marina's origins, before she reveals her name, as if royalty were an intrinsic quality: 'thou seemest a Pallas for the crownd truth to dwell in.' (*Pericles*, ll. 2123-4) When Marina pronounces her mother's name, Pericles can finally bless her: 'Now blessing on thee, rise th'art my child.' (*Pericles*, l. 2210) Pericles' impression that Marina 'like patience, gaz[es] on Kings graves, and smil[es] extremitie out of act.' (*Pericles*, ll. 2137-8) is now confirmed: Marina comes to rescue the old king, who thought he would die heirless, the

fool of Fortune. Although the risk of incest is exorcised, the memory of incest has turned Marina into Pericles' ideal successor, his 'genetic replicant': 'Thou hast beene God-like perfit, the heir of kingdomes,/ And an other like to Pericles thy father.' (*Pericles*, 2205-6)

Diana's intervention leads Pericles to Ephesus, where the royal family is finally reunited. I agree with Barber that 'the recognition with Thaisa is anticlimactic, not only because it is foreknown, but also because the symbolic action of recovering the relationship has already been completed'.[37] I do not however agree with him in so far as the nature of this second recognition scene is concerned. Barber explains Marina's regeneration of her father in terms of Pericles' 'acceptance of [his] daughter's independent femininity'.[38] Pericles does overcome his unwittingly incestuous desire for his daughter, but the memory of incest is functional to both his recognition of Marina and to his final reunion with his wife. Barber's hypothesis according to which Marina finally gains an independent and mature sexual identity after her reunion with Pericles is invalidated by the imagery and the language used in the description of the second recognition scene. Pericles prays the Gods that 'on the touching of her (Thaisa's) lips [he] may melt, and no more be seene' (*Pericles*, l. 2318-9). Similarly, he asks Thaisa to embrace him and 'be buried a second time within [his] armes' (*Pericles*, l. 2319). Husband and wife merge and dissolve into a sort of natural death, which leads to a symbolic rebirth into a higher unity, within which their separate identities are no longer visible. Marina wishes to rejoin her parents and become one with them: 'My heart leaps to be gone into my mothers bosome.' (*Pericles*, 2320-1) The play comes to an end when Antiochus' riddle and the risk of incest are finally exorcised, but not before their ultimate sense of belonging, unity and wholeness is recovered to reconcile the conflicting principles of hereditary and elective monarchy.

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[37]C.L.Barber, '"Thou That Beget'st Him That Did Thee Beget": Transformation in *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale*', in *Shakespeare Survey*, 22 (1969), p. 64.
[38]Barber, p. 64.

PART II

[The Painfull Adventures of]

Pericles, Prince of Tyre:

Flesh of thy Flesh?

Irony often reaches beyond the author's control, but hardly ever as blatantly as in the case of George Wilkins' *The Painfull Adventures of Pericles Prince of Tyre* (1608) and the assumedly Shakespearean 1609 Quarto *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*. While critics are fascinated by the characters' literal and symbolic relationships - Antiochus' nameless daughter and Marina are mother, wife and daughter to their fathers, who simultaneously act as parents, partners and offspring to their daughters - textual scholars are vexed by the uncertainty surrounding the origin of these two contemporary texts. Was Wilkins used as a source by the Quarto's author(s)? Or is it a prose rendition of another play, the elusive *Ur-Pericles*? Or is it rather a prose adaptation of the Quarto, which Wilkins hastily put together following the remarkable success of Quarto *Pericles* in the theatre? Textual scholars are caught in the same dilemma as the fictional characters: is Wilkins a source, a contemporary text or an adaptation? Or, by analogy, is it the parent, the partner or the offspring of the Quarto?

The textual and the fictional genealogies are equally perverse and inextricable. If textual scholars agree that Wilkins is a later adaptation, or reported text, of the play as it was performed by the King's Men, i.e. the "offspring", they have to account for the presence of several passages taken almost literally from Twine's *The Patterne of Painefull Adventures*, one of the play's principal sources, i.e. the "parent". If, alternatively, textual scholars regard Wilkins as another source of the Quarto, i.e. the "parent", the large presence of dramatic dialogue and blank verse in Wilkins leads to the assumption that the latter is also the prose rendition, i.e. the "offspring", of another play, with the same title, the same plot and the same action as the Quarto. Both alternatives lead the textual scholar to contemplate the unspeakable taboo.

The first alternative is by far the most popular and widely accepted. Dugdale Sykes' theory, according to which Wilkins' novel served as a source for the Quarto,[1] has been repeatedly confuted, although his assumption that the novel contains dramatic passages from an earlier play has found some supporters.[2] Regarding Wilkins as a later prose rendition of *Pericles*, on the other hand, has important consequences for the editing of the Quarto. Ever since Wilkins' novel was first discovered in 1839, editors have used it to support their otherwise purely conjectural emendations to the text of the Quarto. The extent to which the novel has been used, however, has varied according to how closely Wilkins is assumed to have relied on the text of the play. Hoeniger, for example, who believes that 'whether the play Wilkins depended on was *Pericles* or an earlier version of it, his report is a patched up and highly inaccurate affair',[3] used Wilkins to restore evidently corrupt readings and stage-directions, but included longer passages and scenes reconstructed from Wilkins in Appendix C, rather than in the main body of his 1963 edition. Taylor and Wells, on the other hand, regard Wilkins as a substantive, reported text of the Quarto, rather than a prose rendering, and consequently replaced a dozen original lines with the alternative provided by the novel, and introduced about twenty new passages (ca 90 lines as a whole) and a new scene in their 1986 Oxford edition, *A Reconstructed Text of Pericles*.

A contrastive analysis of Wilkins with the direct sources of *Pericles* provides fresh evidence to support this second theory, according to which Wilkins' *The Painfull Adventures* represents a reported text. Traditional methods have already gathered all the bibliographical, textual and stylistic evidence available and have reached no definitive conclusion. The present method of analysis, which compares perspectives and variations of shared motifs between interrelated texts, shows how the treatment of the incest motif in Wilkins, despite the strong presence of Twine, is irreconcilable with any of the known sources of *Pericles*, and that Wilkins' novel is therefore more likely to have been based on the play as we know it from the Quarto, rather than viceversa.

As noticed by Bullough, Wilkins' account of Antiochus' incestuous relationship with his daughter merely 'expands Twine's first chapter, with occasional phrases from

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[1]H.D.Sykes, *Sidelights on Shakespeare* (Stratford-upon-Avon: The Shakespeare Head Press, 1919), pp. 143-203.

[2]See, for example, G.Wilkins, *The Painfull Adventures of Pericles Prince of Tyre*, ed. by K.Muir (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1953), p. iv-xv.

[3]Hoeniger, p. xliv.

the dramatic source'.[4] On this occasion, Wilkins had no choice but to rely on Twine, because the author of *Pericles* condensed the first episode into Gower's first chorus. Wilkins' second chapter, however, is evidently structured following the Quarto: the sequence of events in the novel - Antiochus' attempt at dissuading Pericles, Pericles' reflections upon 'frayle mortalitie' (*Pericles*, l. 108), the riddle and the nameless daughter's encouragement 'I wish thee happinesse' (*Pericles*, l. 126) - corresponds to the sequence of the main speeches in the play. The text of the riddle is taken exclusively from the Quarto and some lines are reproduced almost literally.[5] More importantly, Wilkins preserves two elements which are absent from the sources, and which play a crucial role in the author's revision of the incest motif in *Pericles*, that is Pericles' death wish and his melancholy, following the discovery of incest in Antioch. Neither source mentions Apollonius' willingness to put his life at risk in order to gain Antiochus' daughter's hand in marriage, whose beauty he regards as more worthy than any earthly joy. Similarly, Gower records no discomfort in Appolinus after he has solved the riddle, but merely apprehension for his own safety. Twine's Apollonius is confused and not perfectly sure that he has solved the riddle: only after 'perus[ing] all his bookes concerning the kings probleame, finding none other solution, than that which he had alreadie told the king',[6] can he confidently conclude that he has guessed right and that his life is in danger. Wilkins ignored Twine's version of this episode and paraphrased Pericles' introspective reflections upon his melancholic state of mind:

> he was so troubled in mind, that no advise of counsell could perswade him, no delights of the eye content him, neither pleasure whatsoever comfort him, but sill taking to heart, that should Antiochus make warre upon him, as fearing lest he should speake his shame which he intended not to reveale, his misfortune should be the ruine of his harmlesse people.[7]

The Pentapolis episode in Wilkins also retains most of the new elements first introduced in *Pericles*. In Gower, Appolinus competes with other young gymnasts and he is invited to court for showing outstanding skills. The occasion is a 'comune game',[8] and not the birthday celebrations in honour of the king's daughter. The competitors are

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[4]Bullough, p. 495n.
[5]Cf., for example, the Quarto's 'wee'le joy in such a Sonne' (*Pericles*, l. 185) with Wilkins' 'he would rejoyce to joy in such a sonne' (Bullough, p. 499).
[6]Bullough, p. 429.
[7]Bullough, p. 500.
[8]Bullough, p. 387.

not suitors, and the prize is not the king's daughter, but honour and celebrity: 'who moste wothie was of dede,/ Receive he shulde a certaine mede,/ And in the citee bere a price.'[9] Wilkins turned down the similar alternative provided by Twine: in *The Patterne of Painefull Adventures*, Apollonius impresses the king during a tennis match! Wilkins, once again, recovered most of the dramatic elements which in *Pericles* contribute to conjure the memory of incest and establish a parallel between Antioch and Pentapolis. After the ship-wreck, Pericles recovers his father's armour, which allows him to take part in the tournament. The competitors are now trying to 'approove their chivalry, but especially (being her fathers only child,) in hope to gaine her love'. Pericles' wish, 'Were but my fortunes aunswerable to my desires some should feele that I would be one there',[10] echoes Pericles' lines in the Quarto, 'Were my fortunes equall to my desires,/I could wish to make one there.' (*Pericles*, ll. 676-7)

Wilkins overlooked, or forgot to include, the passage where Pericles spots a resemblance between his father and Simonides, but he reported the strange loss of appetite which afflicts the king and his daughter in the Quarto: 'as it were by some divine operation, both King and daughter at one instant were so strucke in love with the noblenesse of his woorth, that they could not spare so much time to satisfie themselves with the delicacie of their viands, for talking of his prayses.'[11] In Twine, Apollonius is the only character to be afflicted with lack of appetite. Besides, his eating disorder is not the direct consequence of an uncanny recognition: in Twine, Apollonius cannot bring himself to eat because the richness of Simonides' court reminds him of his former greatness. Twine's Apollonius is significantly rewarded for his services, not only through the king's consent to the marriage, but also through generous gifts: Lucina, the king's daughter, moved by Apollonius' music decides to reward him, by giving him 'two hundred talents of gold, foure hundred poundes of silver, sotre of reiment, twentie men servants, and tenne handmaidens'.[12]

The central element of the revision related to the incest motif in *Pericles*, i.e. the king's unaccountable decision to dissemble his approval of his daughter's choice, is reproduced faithfully in Wilkins' novel. Once again Wilkins ignored Twine, where the king never pretends to cross his daughter's will:

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[9]Bullough, p. 387.
[10]Bullough, p. 507.
[11]Bullough, p. 510.
[12]Bullough, p. 438.

> [w]hen Altistrates hearde his daughters talke, he smiled within himselfe, when hee perceived the warmed affection kindled within her breast, which with so seemely a pretence she had covered, as the desire to learne, and determined in part presently to satisfie her request.[13]

When Lucina opens her heart to her father, she is immediately granted her wish: 'My sweete Lucina be of good cheere, and take not thought for anie thing, and assure thy selfe thou hast chosen the man that I like of asoone as I first sawe him.'[14] In Wilkins, like in the Quarto, the king decides to 'dissemble that in shew, which hee had determined on in heart'.[15] The result is slightly awkward and comical, rather than intensively dramatic as in the play - 'In briefe, the king continued still his rage, the Lady her constancie, while Pericles stoode amazed at both'[16] - but not because of any visible or intentional change in the overall design of this episode. The change in tone is rather a consequence of Wilkins' omission of other important details, such as Pericles' armour or Simonides' resemblance to his father, through which the ghost of Antiochus and the incest motif are conjured in the quarto, and Wilkins' obvious limitations, when it comes to unravelling the play's 'scripted silences'.

The resumption of the incest motif at the beginning of the second half of Wilkins' novel is even stronger than in the Quarto. In the Quarto, the memory of incest is rekindled by Pericles' involuntary loss of his wife and by his decision to leave Marina behind in Tharsus. Pericles thus allows his daughter to grow into a stranger and, indirectly, recreates the conditions for a relapse into the abhorred crime he had initially overcome in Antioch. By means of small but significant additions, Wilkins makes the risk of incest even more immediately perceptible. When the sailors ask for Pericles' permission to dispose of Thaisa's corpse, they mention the baby in order to shake their master out of his stupor: 'we must intreate you to temperance sir (quoth the Maister) as you respect your owne safety, or the prosperitie of that prety Babe in your armes'. Although it takes more reasoning to persuade him, their words have a visible effect on Pericles: 'At the naming of which word Babe, Pericles looking mournfully upon it,

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[13]Bullough, p. 439.
[14]Bullough, p. 442.
[15]Bullough, p. 514.
[16]Bullough, p. 516.

shooke his head, and wept.'[17] What matters, though, is that the sailors establish a connection between the death of the mother and the survival of the child.

This addition might be regarded as an attempt on Wilkins' part to heighten the pathos of this episode, if it was not followed by another minor digression in the following chapter, which reinforces the possibility of a relapse into incest. Before setting off for Tyre, Pericles asks Cleon, Dyonysa and Lycorida, Thaisa's nurse, not to 'make knowne unto her [Marina], that she was a braunch sproong from him, but onely be brought uppe as the daughter of Cleon and Dyonysa, lest the knowledge of her high birth, should make her growe prowd to their instructions.'[18] The fact that Lycorida disobeys Pericles' orders and informs Marina of her parentage on her death-bed makes the addition narratologically superfluous, and, consequently, deliberate. Pericles' desire to keep his daughter in the dark about her true origins makes the risk of incest all the more tangible.

In his description of the final reunion, Wilkins relied consistently on Twine. A few significant departures from the earlier source, however, testify to Wilkins' intention to keep the incest motif in the foreground. Wilkins, for example, retained the Quarto line 'thou that begetst him that did thee beget' (*Pericles*, l. 2194), although it loses much of its pristine strength because it is now addressed to Lysimachus: '[he] thanketh Lysimachus that so fortunately had brought her to begette life in the father who begot her.'[19] Wilkins omits the passage where Pericles describes Marina through his recollection of his wife's features, but he also omits a similar passage in Twine where other characters notice a striking resemblance between father and child:

> And when Athanagoras and the servants looked earnestly upon him, and upon his daughter, they wondred, saying, O my lord Apollonius, how like in countenance is your daughter Tharsia unto you? that if you had no other argument, this were sufficient proofe to shewe that she is your childe.[20]

Although Wilkins overlooked a crucial passage, which, in the Quarto, helps the audience realise how an unwittingly incestuous fantasy eventually leads to the recovery of the father-daughter relationship, he omitted the above-quoted passage, which would have had the counterproductive effect of bypassing the memory of incest altogether.

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[17]Bullough, p. 520.
[18]Bullough, p. 524.
[19]Bullough, p. 544.
[20]Bullough, p. 468.

The last noteworthy departure from Twine shows Wilkins' Pericles reluctant to come to terms with the fact that his wife is still alive. In Twine, although Apollonius does not recognise his wife immediately, he is struck by her royal qualities:

> Whom when Apollonius beheld, although he knew not what she was, yet such was the exceeding brightnes and majestie of her countenance, that he fel down at her feet, with his sonne in law likewise and his daughter, for hee thought shee glittered like a diademe, and exceeded the brightest starres in beautie.[21]

Twine's emphasis on the recognition between husband and wife is not unprecedented. In Gower there is no anticipation of the final recognition, but Appolinus finds no difficulty in interpreting his wife's cryptic introduction: 'Ah blessed be the high sonde/ That I may se my husbonde./ Whiche whilom he and I were one.' These three lines are enough to persuade Appolinus that the abbess is in fact his long-lost wife: 'The kynge with that knew hir anone,/ And toke hir in his arme, and kist.'[22] In Wilkins, when Thaisa 'ranne hastily unto him, imbraced him in her armes, and would have kissed him, ... hee [Pericles] was mooved *with disdaine*.'[23] (added emphasis) Along with Pericles' perplexity, Wilkins retained another interesting detail: whereas in Twine and Gower, the king's daughter gets married to the governor of Mytilene as soon as her royal origins are revealed, in Wilkins the marriage is postponed until Pericles is reunited with his wife. Wilkins' selective use of the Quarto in the reconstruction of an episode for which he relied consistently on Twine reveals a manifest attempt to compensate for the absence of the incest motif in his main source.

An analysis of Wilkins' novel shows a distinctive pattern in the way its two main sources were used: Wilkins either retained the additions the author of *Pericles* introduced in the original story in order to extend and revise the incest motif, or ignored Twine, whenever the latter openly contradicts or neutralises the new conception of incest offered by the 1609 Quarto. On a few isolated occasions, Wilkins departs from both its prose and its dramatic sources in order to emphasise a Quarto-like view of incest, not only as an abhorred sin but also as a symbolic practice through which elective affinities are reconciled with the principle of hereditary succession.

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[21]Bullough, p. 472.
[22]Bullough, p. 419.
[23]Bullough, p. 545.

A contrastive analysis of the dramatic passages contained in Wilkins and in the Quarto shows an uncanny resemblance in their treatment of the incest motif. Besides, no external evidence has been found so far to prove the existence of a second play dealing with the Apollonius/Pericles story. According to the principle of Occam's Razor, it would be far-fetched to assume that another play, the elusive *Ur-Pericles*, offered the same view of incest which distinguishes the 1609 Quarto from its main sources. It seems more sensible to conclude that the dramatic source behind Wilkins' novel was the same play imperfectly preserved by the Quarto. The fact that Wilkins himself might have collaborated in writing its first two acts conjures up familiar incestuous-intertextual fantasies, and reinforces the present hypothesis according to which Wilkins' novel and the Quarto are two reported texts of the same play.

The conclusions reached here are not definitive, but this new approach, which overlooks the issue of *Pericles'* authorship and concentrates instead on the dramatic qualities of the play and its relationship with Gower, Twine and Wilkins, has the extra advantage of helping editors decide how and when Wilkins' novel should be used in order to improve the maimed text of the Quarto.

Wilkins seems especially useful to supplement the Quarto stage-directions, which, according to Hoeniger are 'notable for their frequent omission',[24] and to compensate for obvious inconsistencies in the action. Taylor and Wells, for example, add several stage-directions to the tournament scene, along with three extra passages, where the king explains the meaning of three of the six knights' mottoes to his daughter. These additions make the whole scene appear more regular in structure and in performance. The extra material is entirely derived from Wilkins, although the original order with which the six knights present themselves to the king and his daughter is maintained unaltered. This slight difference between the Quarto and Wilkins, which had prevented former editors from emending this scene,[25] is voluntarily ignored by Taylor and Wells, and their rendition of the tournament acquires regularity and elegance. Another improvement introduced by Taylor and Wells at the expense of the Quarto is the addition of a new scene, where Pericles asks for an instrument 'with which,/ ... To

[24]Hoeniger, p. xxx.

[25]See, for example, Hoeniger, p. xlvi: 'Might one then make use of Wilkins to fill out what look like unintentional omissions in Q's report? The answer, unfortunately, is not a simple 'yes', for though the devices and mottoes in Wilkins and in Q are the same, their order is not, and it is hardly possible to decide which of the versions is in this respect the more accurate.'

pass away the tediousness of night.'[26] This new scene provides the context for Simonides' otherwise unjustified praise in the next scene: 'I am beholden to you/ For your sweet music this last night.'[27]

On other occasions, however, editorial intervention on the Quarto, although supported by Wilkins, may not be necessary. The oath taken by Pericles after his wife's death and Lysimachus and Marina's central exchange in the brothel are two such cases.

Pericles' first oath in the Quarto,

> till she be maried,
> Madame, by bright Diana, whom we honour,
> All unsisterd shall this heyre of mine remayne,
> Though I shew will in't;
> (*Pericles*, ll. 1358-61)

is generally emended to read approximately as in Wilkins. What follows is Taylor and Wells, and the actual passage in Wilkins to which their edition is indebted:

> Till she be married, madam,
> By bright Diana, whom we honour all,
> Unscissored shall this hair of mine remain,
> Though I show ill in't.[28]

> and vowing solemnely by othe to himselfe, his head should grow uncisserd, his beard untrimmed, himselfe in all uncomely, since he had lost his Queene, and till he had married his daughter at ripe years.[29]

Editorial intervention on Pericles' first oath in the Quarto is justified by both external and internal evidence. Wilkins' 'uncisserd' is confirmed by the sources. Gower and Twine's heroes take a similar oath after the death of their wives:

> And this avowe to god I make,
> That I shall never for hir sake
> *My herde for no likynge shave*,

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[26] *Pericles: By William Shakespeare and George Wilkins, A Reconstructed Text*, in *The Complete Works*, sc. 8a, ll. 3-5.

[27] *A Reconstructed Text*, sc. 9, ll. 23-4.

[28] *A Reconstructed Text*, sc. 13, ll. 27-30. See, also, Hoeniger, 3.3.27-30: 'Till she be married, madam,/ By bright Diana, whom we honour, all/ Unscissor'd shall this hair of mine remain,/ Though I show ill in't.'; and Edwards' slightly variant, 'Till she be married, madam,/ By bright Diana, whom we honour, all/ Unscissored shall this hair of mine remain,/ Though I show will in't.', in Edwards, 3.3.27-30.

[29] Bullough, p. 524.

> Till it befalle, that I have
> In covenable tyme of age
> Besette hir unto mariage.[30]
> (added emphasis)

> and he sware a solemne othe, that *he would not poule his head, clip his beard*, not pare his nailes, untill hee had married his daughter at ripe years. They wondred much at so strange an othe ... .[31]
> (added emphasis)

Moreover, when Pericles announces his daughter's imminent marriage to his newly-found wife, he reminds the audience of the oath he first took when he left Marina behind in Tharsus:

> this Prince, the faire betrothed of your daughter, shall marrie her at Pentapolis, and now this ornament makes mee looke dismall, will I clip to forme, and *what this fourteene yeeres no razer touch't*, to grace thy marridge-day, Ile beautifie.
> (*Pericles*, ll. 2347-51; added emphasis)

Marina's marriage marks the end of Pericles' penitential neglect of his own appearance and, retrospectively, confirms Wilkins' use of 'uncisserd'.

The parallels with the direct sources, the internal consistency between Pericles' first oath as it appears in Wilkins and Pericles' announcement of Marina's marriage, along with the strong verbal resemblance between 'uncisserd' and 'unsisterd', 'ill' and 'will', have led most editors to assume that the Quarto preserves a compositorial misreading, and Wilkins' novel the original reading. As a result, most editions of *Pericles* published this century contain two almost identical oaths: the first one, taken after Thaisa's death, is emended to read like Wilkins; the second one, taken after Marina's death, is instead reproduced almost *verbatim* from Gower's fifth Chorus in the Quarto - 'hee sweares/ Never to wash his face, nor cut his hayres:/ Hee put on a sack-cloth, and to Sea he beares,' (*Pericles*, ll. 1772-4).

Without disregarding the arguments in favour of editorial intervention, I would like to attract editors' attention to the intriguing complexity and pertinence of Pericles' first oath in the Quarto. George Lillo, who could not avail himself of the support offered

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[30]Bullough, p. 403.
[31]Bullough, p. 451.

by Wilkins' novel to the editors of *Pericles* since 1839, made perfect dramatic sense of the Quarto on this occasion:

> I vow'd too then, though it show'd wilfull in me,
> That all unsister'd should this heir of mine
> Remain till she were married.
> (*Marina*, D2r, ll. 17-9)[32]

Lillo must have perceived a connection between Thaisa's death and Pericles' decision to forgo a second marriage until Marina is married herself, and, consequently, a deeper connection between Thaisa's death and the re-emergence of the incest motif, conjured by yet another reminder of the dangerous dependence of the father's sexuality on the daughter's.

The words 'heyre' and 'will', traditionally regarded as a corruption of 'hair' and 'ill' are similarly appropriate to their original context. 'Heyre' is not a variant spelling for 'hair', as contemporary editors seem to assume; 'heyre' is in fact an alternative spelling for 'heir', which up to the 17th c. applied to both male and female.[33] 'To show will', on the other hand, is a rare but recorded phrase, meaning 'to seem wayward', or 'going astray in thought, belief or conduct.'[34]

The external evidence provided by Wilkins is also questionable on this particular occasion. Wilkins' agreement with the main sources and its verbal resemblance with the text of the oath as it appears in the Quarto can be explained as a case of memorial contamination in the novel, rather than as a compositorial misreading in the Quarto. It has been convincingly argued that Wilkins did not consult the official prompt-book used by the King's Men or any substantive copy of the play while writing *The Painfull Adventures*, and that he made up for the inevitable lapses of his memory by resorting to Twine.[35] With regard to Pericles' first oath, there are in fact good reasons to believe that

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[32]All quotations from *Marina* are followed by line-reference to G.Lillo, *Marina* (London: Cornmarket, 1969).

[33]According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 'heyr', and not 'heyre', is an alternative spelling for 'hair' (see, 'hair', sb. Forms); 'heyre', on the other hand, is listed as an old spelling variant of 'heir' (see, 'heir', sb, 1.a.).

[34]*Oxford English Dictionary*, 'will', a. (adv.), 2.

[35]See, for example, Hoeniger, p. xliii: 'His [Muir's] conclusion ... that 'Wilkins obviously followed the play when he could, only falling back on the novel when the play was deficient', does not quite meet the case. The distribution of verbal echoes of Twine over all but a few pages of *The Painfull Adventures* ... would rather indicate that Wilkins consulted a copy of Twine almost constantly while at work on his own revision. His dependence on Twine was indeed greater than his reliance on the play itself. And this makes one wonder whether there was perhaps no other way for Wilkins; whether his memory of the play was so faulty that he needed Twine to be able to write his novel at all.' Although Taylor and Wells regard

Wilkins took it over from Twine and not from the play. The verbal parallels between Twine and Wilkins are striking:

> and hee sware a *solemne othe*, that he would not poule his *head*, clip his *beard*, nor pare his nailes, *untill hee had married his daughter at ripe years*. They wondred much at so strange an othe, ...

> and vowing *solemnely* by *othe* to himselfe, his *head* should grow uncisserd, his *beard* untrimmed, himselfe in all uncomely, since he had lost Queene, *and till he had married his daughter at ripe years*.

The omission of Pericles' invocation of Diana reported by the Quarto suggests that Wilkins forgot that Pericles' first oath in the play was slightly variant from its equivalent in the sources. The phonetic resemblance between 'unsisterd' and 'uncisserd' might consequently indicate that although Wilkins had forgotten the actual meaning of Pericles' first oath, he could still recall the unusual assonance in 'unsisterd', and reproduced it by using 'uncisserd' to describe Pericles' resolution to let his hair grow.

Further evidence to support this hypothesis is provided by Wilkins' failure to recall Pericles' second oath. After the news of Marina's death, Pericles 'fell into a swownd; ... from which trance being at the length recovered, *hee apparrelles himselfe in sacke-cloth*, [and] running hastily unto his shippes, desireth the Sea to take him into their wombe, since neither land nor water was fortunate unto him.'[36] Wilkins' version is clearly based on Twine's: 'he fell into a sowne, from which so soone as ever he was once revived, immediatelie hee went unto the shippes unto his servantes, unto whome hee saide, cast mee, I beseech you, unto the very bottome of the sea, for I have no joy of my life, ...'[37] As in the case of 'unsisterd', Wilkins seems to have forgotten the substance of the second oath, but he obviously recollected and added a little detail of the dramatic version to Twine: 'hee sweares/ Never to wash his face, nor cut his hayres:/ *Hee put on a sack-cloth*, and to Sea he beares, ...'

The dubious origins of Wilkins' two oaths, along with the dramatic strength and textual complexity of Pericles' first oath as it appears in the Quarto, undermine the hypothesis of compositorial misreading. Whereas it is unlikely that a compositor could

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Wilkins as a substantive text of the play, they still regard Wilkins as a reported text, that is a text reconstructed from memory. (*Textual Companion*, p. 557)

[36]Bullough, p. 540.

[37]Bullough, p. 460.

replace 'uncissored' and 'hair' with the more unusual and dramatically pertinent 'unsisterd' and 'heyre', it is tempting to assume that the author of *Pericles*, while recovering the original image of unshorn hair from his sources, unconsciously superimposed the additional meaning of penitential abstinence on the original oath, by writing 'unsisterd' instead of 'uncissored', and 'heyre' instead of 'hair'.

Walter Whiter, in his 1794 *An Attempt to Explain and Illustrate Various Passages of Shakspeare on a New Principle of Criticism, Derived from Mr.Locke's Doctrine of the Association of Ideas*,[38] convincingly argued in favour of an ambiguous line in *Timon of Athens*, by suggesting that the author unconsciously used the adjective 'moist' in relation to trees, because of a previous association between 'chamberlain', 'shirt', and 'warm':

> What, think'st
> That the bleak air, thy boisterous chamberlain,
> Will put thy shirt on warm? Will these moist trees,
> That have outliv'd the eagle, ...[39]

After warning his reader that '*warm* and *moist* were the appropriate terms in the days of Shakespeare for what we should now call an *air'd* and a *damp* shirt',[40] Whiter concludes that 'though [the author] was himself unconscious how he came by it', he must have been affected in his choice of the adjective 'moist' by the 'fascinating power ... of so strange an association'.[41]

In *Pericles*, the association between penitence and sexual abstinence, between enforced chastity and the unconscious avoidance/allure of incest is far from 'strange', and might indeed have been responsible for the author's involuntary pun. The close phonetic resemblance between 'uncissored' and 'unsisterd', and 'hair' and 'heyre', guarantees the survival of both meanings in the theatre. On the printed page, however, this multivalence of meaning inevitably disappears. Although replacing the Quarto with Wilkins ensures dramatic consistency with Pericles' later recollection of his fourteen years of penitence, it also neutralises the Quarto's original complexity. Instead of dismissing the Quarto altogether, editors should maybe make their readers aware of one

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[38] W.Whiter, *A Specimen of a Commentary on Shakspeare*, ed. by A.Over and M.Bell (London: Methuen, 1967)
[39] Quoted in Whiter, p. 71.
[40] Whiter, p. 71.
[41] Whiter, p. 72.

of those rare occasions on which the text of *Pericles* can redeem itself from its unfortunately deserved bad reputation.

The exchange between Lysimachus and Marina in the brothel is regarded as the most problematical crux in the play. Although the dialogue had never been emended as radically as in Taylor and Wells' *A Reconstructed Text*, most editors have often expressed their disappointment with the dramatic quality of this specific scene. Some suspect non-authorial intervention, some others tampering in the printing house. Taylor and Wells have advanced the hypothesis of censorship, and consequently emended those lines where Lysimachus confesses to be in the brothel only as a reformer, with the equivalent passages in Wilkins, where a repentant Lysimachus, struck by Marina's virtue, pleads for her forgiveness. Along with this specific emendation, Taylor and Wells have also reintroduced longer passages in both Lysimachus and Marina's speeches, which stand out from the rest of Wilkins' prose for their dramatic strength and poignancy. Whereas the latter additions restore that consistency and proportion the dialogue in the Quarto certainly lacks, their intervention to turn Lysimachus "the reformer" into Lysimachus "the whore-monger" is dramatically unnecessary.

If the hypothesis of censorship is in itself plausible, it is equally possible that Wilkins derived his model for Lysimachus "the whore-monger" from Twine, rather than from an uncensored production of *Pericles*. Whereas Gower's Athenagoras only meets Thaise after she has been recognised by her father, Twine's Athanagoras sees Marina in the market-place, and bewitched by her beauty, tries to outbid the bawd and buy Marina himself. Athanagoras changes his mind and lets the bawd take Marina away, because, as befits a character in Twine's mercantile and money-conscious society, he realises that he can enjoy Marina in the brothel for much less! When he eventually meets Marina he is moved by her misfortunes (Marina reveals her royal origins straight away), and by the fact that Marina is approximately his daughter's age. In Wilkins, Lysimachus is similarly tempted by Marina's beauty. Although Lysimachus is now more restrained, and regards the Pander and the Bawd as two 'poisonous and devouring serpents', he is tempted nevertheless: 'yet at last, being inflamed with a little sinnefull concupiscence, by the power of her face, he resolved himselfe that since shee must fall, it were farre more fitter, into his own armes.'[42] Once Lysimachus gives his 'sensual race the rein', he is as 'confident in evil'[43] as Twine's Athanagoras. Lysimachus is similarly moved by

[42]Bullough, p. 533
[43]Bullough, p. 535.

Marina's misfortunes and by her argumentative skills - 'Now surely this is Virtues image, or rather, Vertues selfe, sent downe from heaven, a while to raigne on earth, to teach us what we should be.'[44] - and repents himself - 'I hither came with thoughtes intemperate, foule and deformed, the which your paines so will have laved, that they are now white.'[45]

Lysimachus in the Quarto is a reformer, visiting the brothel in disguise in order to punish rather than to indulge in whore-mongering himself. Although Lysimachus' language is abusive and bawdy - 'How now, how a douzen of virginities?' (*Pericles*, l. 1825) - he never uses physical violence, as in Wilkins: 'But the Governour suspecting these teares, but to be some new cunning, ... tolde her so, and now beganne to be more rough with her, urging her, that he was the Governour, ...'[46] Although the shortness of the exchange in the Quarto might suggest some accidental omissions, Lysimachus' motivation is clearly stated and consistent with the context: Marina does not need to plead to such a great length as in Wilkins because Lysimachus had never intended to violate her in the first place: 'I came with no ill intent, for to me the very dores and windows savor viley.' (*Pericles* ll. 1906-7). Despite his honourable motives, Lysimachus is touched by Marina's unexpected grace and moral strength: 'had I brought hither a corrupted minde, thy speeche had altered it.' (*Pericles*, ll. 1901-2)

The authority of this short exchange in the Quarto has often been questioned because of the manifold interpretative problems it raises. First of all, the abruptness of the dialogue casts a lasting shadow upon Lysimachus. Although Lysimachus is more credible as a reformer, Edwards maintains, he cannot be easily forgiven for the cruel determination with which he tests Marina's integrity: 'Lysimachus offers no word of explanation to Marina, and makes no apology for the strain and distress he has subjected her to.'[47] This objection rests on extra-dramatic assumptions, according to which Marina's future husband should match her dramatic stature. The issue of Marina's marriage, however, is more marginal than many critics, Edwards included, seem to believe. The marriage is anticipated by no courtship or signs of mutual affection between Lysimachus and Marina, and is arranged without Marina's direct consent, in the space of a few lines:

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[44]Bullough, p. 536.
[45]Bullough, p. 536.
[46]Bullough, p. 535.
[47]Edwards, p. 24.

Lys. Sir, with all my heart, and when you come a shore,
I have another sleight.
Per. You shall prevaile were it to wooe my daughter, for it seemes you have beene noble towards her.
Lys. Sir, lend me your arme.
(*Pericles*, ll. 2250-4)

The marriage is clearly not an issue in itself, but merely functional to Pericles' personal regeneration. As Schanzer observed, Lysimachus is totally 'perfunctory': 'Marina exists primarily not in relation to a lover but to a father. ... Shakespeare was clearly not at all interested in the Marina-Lysimachus relationship.'[48]

Even on this occasion, Lillo's *Marina* provides a useful term of comparison for the Quarto, and indirectly substantiates Schanzer's reading of Lysimachus. In Lillo, Lysimachus is still a reformer. Although he anticipates that '[he] came ... bent to detect/ And punish these bad people', he capitulates to the charms of Marina's beauty: 'when sin/ Appears in such a form, the firmest virtue/ Dissolves to air before it.' (*Marina*, E1r, ll. 28-30, E1v, ll.1-2) Although Lillo's Lysimachus is tempted and falls, his 'short liv'd error' (*Marina*, E3r, l. 27) makes him a more sympathetic character. Although he is enthralled by passion, his admiration for Marina is essentially noble: he addresses Marina as a proper suitor - 'Thou brightest star that ever left its sphere ...' (*Marina*, E1v, l. 20) - and only tries to abuse her because he is misled into thinking that she is a prostitute. Lysimachus' 'short liv'd error' gives Marina a much better chance than in the Quarto to show the strength of her virtue. Lysimachus' metamorphosis from a stern reformer to a well-meaning, but fallible, young governor makes him a more sympathetic character, and, consequently, a more suitable husband for Marina. Whereas sympathy is crucial in Lillo's Lysimachus, because of the greater emphasis put on the young couple at the expense of older generation, a sympathetic Lysimachus in *Pericles* is simply redundant.

Edwards raises another objection against the hypothesis that the Quarto, despite missing some of the original lines, is perfectly consistent in presenting Lysimachus as a rather callous reformer. Edwards quite rightly observes that Lysimachus is not 'invested with the same kind of dignity and awe which we associate with those grand deceivers

[48] W.Shakespeare, *Pericles*, ed. by E.Schanzer, in *The Complete Signet Classic Shakespeare* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972), p. 1413.

the Duke in *Measure for Measure* and Prospero in *The Tempest*'.[49] Edwards however implies, that since Lysimachus is never on a level with the Duke and Prospero, he should not be believed when he tells Marina that he is only a reformer, and not a sinner. Edwards' argument is flawed, because a reformer of the same stature as Duke Vincentio or Prospero would be utterly out of place in *Pericles*. As Part I has demonstrated, *Pericles* is not only about sin, guilt, atonement and regeneration, but also about power, the necessity of transmitting power while retaining it undivided, and, most of all, about incest, the direct consequence of this paradox, and its solution. Lysimachus in the Quarto is a reformer, and if he does not act on his realisation that Marina is innocent and exploited by the Pander and the Bawd it is not because he might just be pretending to be a reformer, but because there is no space for such a development in *Pericles*. It might be worth noting that whereas in both Twine and Wilkins, Pericles punishes the Bawd by burning him/her at the stake, in the Quarto, Marina's persecutors are never mentioned again after the brothel scenes.

Wilkins provides invaluable help to both critics and editors. As shown above, Wilkins' novel is likely to be a reported text of *Pericles*, and can help restore those parts of the play which were accidentally omitted or tampered with during the transmission and printing of the Quarto. Sometimes, however, the poor quality of the Quarto and the supplementary evidence provided by Wilkins encourage editors to intervene on the text of the Quarto, even when it is not strictly necessary. When two reported texts disagree, it is useful to consider other texts, like Lillo's *Marina*, as control texts. Lillo's *Marina* does not obviously possess the same authority as Wilkins, but does certainly provide an interesting source of information about the play's editorial and critical history. In the prologue to *Marina*, Lillo justifies his intention to adapt *Pericles* as follows:

> Though some mean scenes, injurious to his fame,
> Have long usurp'd the honour of his Name;
> To glean and clear from chaff his least remains,
> Is just to him, and richly worth our pains.
> (A4r, ll. 13-6)

Like contemporary editors, Lillo is aware of the possibility of mixed authorship: 'We dare not charge the whole unequal play/ Of *Pericles* on him.' 'Yet', he adds, 'let us say,/ As gold though mix'd with baser matter shines,/ So do his bright inimitable lines.' (A4r,

[49]Edwards, pp. 23-4.

ll. 17-20) Presumably Lillo maintained unaltered what he regarded as Shakespeare's 'bright inimitable lines', although he did not hesitate to adapt the play according to his own strategy of revision. (See Part III)

Given the paucity of evidence available to edit the Quarto, Lillo's opinion should be regarded as valuable as the contribution of early editors. As shown above, Lillo provides precious insights to both editors and critics, when Wilkins and the Quarto disagree. Considering what Malone, Steevens *and* Lillo regarded as Shakespearean provides confirmation for conjectural emendations, and forces us to question editorial intervention on the Quarto, when it improves the quality of its *text*, at the expense of its original *meaning*.

PART III

From 'Pericles' to 'Marina':

'while Women are to be had

for money, love, or importunity'

> This world, to me, is like a lasting storm
> That swallows, piece by piece, the merchant's wealth,
> And in the end himself.
>
> (*Marina*, B1v, ll. 18-20)

George Lillo's reputation as a playwright rests exclusively on his best known play *The London Merchant, Or the History of George Barnwell.* This play secured him vast success and popularity during his life-time,[1] and enduring credit among theatre scholars: with *George Barnwell* Lillo reformed the late 17th century heroic tragedy, by granting low class characters tragic dignity, by making the familiar a suitable subject for tragedies, and by replacing the worn out heroic couplet with fresh, realistic prose.

One might wonder what attracted the author of a very successful bourgeois domestic tragedy to *Pericles* and its romantic vagaries. One possible reason is Lillo's alertness to the taste and expectations of a quite influential part of his audience. Lillo pays his respect and homage to this peculiar group of theatre-goers in the Epilogue at the end of *Marina*:

> When worse than barbarism had sunk your taste,
> When nothing pleas'd but what laid virtue waste,
> A sacred band, determin'd, wise, and good,
> They jointly rose to stop th' exotick flood,
> And strove to wake, by Shakespear's nervous lays,
> The manly genius of Eliza's days.
>
> (*Marina*, H2v, ll. 9-14)

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[1]See, for example, G.H.Nettleton, *English Drama of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1642-1780)* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1928), p. 207: '*George Barnwell* achieved some twenty performances during the [1731] summer season and became a stock play at Drury Lane.'

This unnamed 'band' has been identified with a group of London gentlewomen, the "Shakespeare Ladies' Club", who, by opposing the current taste for Italian Opera and vulgar entertainment and reclaiming Shakespeare to the stage, 'proved decisive', according to Pearson, 'in changing theatrical repertoires in the 1730s'.[2] By acknowledging the influence of "The Ladies" on his decision to "revive" Shakespeare, Lillo openly showed to conform to what Pearson defines as a 'feminine aesthetic'.[3] It is likely that The Ladies' concern with decorum and sensibility led Lillo to reduce the original play to a 'single tale' (*Marina*, A4r, l. 24), with the distressed heroine as its main title-character.

Apart from providing his predominantly female audience with a stereotypical heroine in distress, Lillo's excision of the first two acts and most of those later episodes which are not directly related with Marina seems to have been determined by another central concern, the shift of focus from the incest motif to prostitution. In Lillo, prostitution becomes the main obstacle in the lawful transmission of power, legitimacy and property. By investigating the political and social implications of Lillo's revision of the incest motif, we can gain a better insight into the extra-dramatic reasons which prompted Lillo to revise *Pericles*, and, by contrast, into the role the incest motif plays in the original.

3.1 *Conjugal Lewdness, Or Marital Whoredom*:[4] The Fading Line between Marriage and Prostitution.

The incest motif was not simply removed from *Marina* as a consequence of the omission of the first two acts of *Pericles*. As observed in Part I, the incest motif had

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[2]J.Pearson, *The Prostituted Muse: Images of Women and Women Dramatists* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988), p. 41. For more details, see also, Dobson, pp. 146-58.
[3]Pearson, p. 39.
[4]D.Defoe, *Conjugal Lewdness, Or Marital Whoredom* (London: Warner, 1727)

been extended by the author of *Pericles* from the young hero's discovery of incest in Antioch to the later episodes contained in the last three acts of the play. Lillo had to introduce specific changes in order to tone down the incest motif in the second half of the play: Pericles, for example, does not voluntarily allow Marina to grow into a stranger. He leaves Marina in Tharsus because he is needed in Tyre, and goes back to collect her as soon as the civil broils in Tyre are under control: 'Those commotions,/ That long embroil'd me, being now compos'd;/ I'm come to pay my thanks, and claim my daughter.' (*Marina*, D2r, ll. 19-21) Lillo also modifies the sequence of events in the final reunion scene, so that Pericles' perception of the resemblance between Marina and her mother is anticipated by Thaisa's recognition of Pericles:

> What strange unlikelihood assaults my mind!
> My wild, ungovern'd fancy would perswade
> My memory to find some traces there,
> In that marr'd face, yet unobliterated,
> Of my long dead, long drowned Pericles.
> (*Marina*, G1v, 24-8)

As a consequence, the husband-wife relationship, rather than being the result of the previous reunion between father and daughter, as in the original, becomes more important and significant in itself.

Some traces of the old incest motif however survive in *Marina*. Philotene complains that 'when foreign Princes,/ Drawn by the fame of [her] high rank and beauty,/ As suitors, throng [her] court', they are attracted by Marina's 'destested charms' and she is 'streight neglected' (*Marina*, B1r, ll. 18-20; B1v, ll. 1-2). She therefore plans to have Marina murdered, but hypocritically exhorts Marina to stop mourning for her foster mother's death and to look after herself for her father's sake:

> Shou'd your good father come at length to seek you,
> And find his hopes, and all report so blasted,
> He may repent the breadth of his great voyage,
> And blame our want of care.

(*Marina*, B2r, ll. 2-5)

Pericles is associated with the other suitors, because, like them, he is pleased by the 'report' of Marina's beauty and will undertake a sea voyage to claim her back. Similarly, when Pericles finally arrives at Tharsus, he reminds himself and the audience that Marina was 'Born when her Mother dy'd' (*Marina*, D1v, l. 15), and that Marina is to him as another Thaisa: 'I come to seek the Phenix that took like/ From her dead ashes.' (*Marina*, D2r, ll. 5-6) Lillo also retains the two different oaths Pericles takes after his wife and his daughter's death in the original. In addition, he gives Thaisa a few remarkably ambiguous extra lines, whereby she endorses Lysimachus' suggestion that they should let Marina try and cure the foreign king's melancholy:

> 'Tis well bethought, my Lord.
> She, questionless, with her sweet harmony,
> And other choice attractions, wou'd allure him,
> And melt his fix'd resolves:
> (*Marina*, G1r, ll. 27-30)

The incest motif is therefore not simply removed, but carefully toned down in Lillo. Marina's trial in the brothel, on the other hand, whilst merely marginal in the original, is now considerably expanded.

The shift of focus from incest to prostitution in Lillo's *Marina* seems connected to an unprecedented interest in the vicissitudes of prostitutes, street-walkers or kept mistresses in many fictional and non-fictional works of the period. The sudden interest early eighteenth century writers, playwrights, philosophers and politicians took in prostitution has a parallel only in the growing concern for an apparently devastating surge of crime in general, and of theft and robbery in particular. Last regards this phenomenon as a consequence of the emergence of a new conception of patrimony and private property in the first half of the 18th century:

> Was there a real emergency? Could it have been that the events were exaggerated so that the authorities could assert their power and at the same time protect property which was becoming more and more valuable and more and more symbolic of status as time went on?[5]

The term "Robinocracy", first used in contemporary political satire and pamphlets, came to embody the aristocracy and upper classes' distrust of the new philosophy of government introduced by Sir Robert Walpole, which valued money and self-interest more than tradition, and supported the emerging mercantile middle class rather than the landed interests of the gentry. John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, for example, is based on the idea that the highly sophisticated organisation of the gangs of criminals which ruled the London underworld was surpassed and eclipsed only by the legal associations of statesmen, lawyers and politicians, who hid their criminal activities under an aura of legality and respectability. Land-owners felt that their properties were seriously threatened under the new government. For the emerging class of merchants, bankers and stock-brokers, on the other hand, the acquisition and increase of personal properties became the easiest way of gaining social respectability. At the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, when England was turning into a colonial power, private property became the fundamental principle around which society was organised, and robbery, as any other form of offence against property, started to be regarded as a terribly serious threat against society.

The increased preoccupation with prostitution can be similarly interpreted not so much as the direct consequence of an actual increase in the number of the brothels in Drury Lane and Covent Garden around 1720-30,[6] as an indirect effect of the discomfiture with which the new values ushered in by Walpole's administration were regarded by the upper classes. The fact that money and financial prosperity came to represent a priority and industry a paragon of virtue led to a significant improvement in the general attitude towards the dignity of professions. As Speck notices,

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[5]B.W.Last, *Politics and Letters in the Age of Walpole* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Avero, 1987), p. 89.
[6]*The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 616.

> the eighteenth century marks a crucial phase in the history of the professions. ... At the outset they were all generally regarded as corrupt; ... by the end of the century they ... had acquired respectability and honesty, qualities associated with the professions ever since.[7]

Prostitution, the "oldest profession", certainly did not enjoy a similar re-evaluation, but it became a problematic phenomenon, in that it could be cynically seen as a "trade", through which "goods" were exchanged for a "service", and which, like any other profession, created richness, or, in most cases, a means of survival for the poorest. As money became the supreme value, necessity became the strongest motivation and justification for people's actions. Old Wilmot in Lillo's *Fatal Curiosity*,[8] while planning the murder of a young man, whom he does not as yet recognise as his only son, reaches the conclusion that, no matter how morally objectionable, murder becomes legitimate when 'Necessity, impatience and despair,/ The three wide mouths of that true Cerberus,/ Grim poverty, demands.' (*Fatal Curiosity*, 3.1.171-3) George Barnwell, the young apprentice in Lillo's *The London Merchant*, is similarly talked into stealing his master's money by Millwood, a young but experienced prostitute. Taken in by Millwood's lies, Barnwell is convinced that stealing is justified by a noble end: 'if my heart deceives me not, compassion and generosity were my motives.' (*The London Merchant*, 2.14.4-6) Following the same logic, Barnwell betrays his master Thorougood and his friend Trueman, and kills his uncle to inherit the family patrimony. Even if the names of Thorougood and Trueman, and the affirmative and peremptory confidence with which the playwright condemns Barnwell's moral short-sightedness and Millwood's wickedness might remind the reader of the black-and-white tones of an old morality, Lillo states the motives underlying his characters' actions convincingly enough for the

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[7]W.A.Speck, 'The Harlot's Progress in Eighteen-Century England', in *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 3 (1980), p. 127.

[8]Quotations from *Fatal Curiosity* and *The London Merchant* are followed by line-reference to G.Lillo, *The London Merchant, Or the History of George Barnwell and Fatal Curiosity*, ed. by A.W.Ward (London: Heath, 1906).

audience to take them temporarily on board. Lillo, for example, allows Millwood to explain why she embraced and persevered in the practice of prostitution. When Trueman accuses her of abusing her 'uncommon perfections of mind and body', she replies that

> [i]f such I had, well may I curse your barbarous sex, who robb'd me of 'em, e'er I knew their worth, then left me, too late, to count their value by their loss. Another and another spoiler came; and all my gain was poverty and reproach. My soul disdain'd, and yet disdains, dependance and contempt. Riches, no matter by what means obtain'd, I saw, secur'd the worst of men from both; I found it therefore necessary to be rich; and, to that end, I summon'd all my arts. You call 'em wicked; be it so!
>
> (*The London Merchant*, 4.18.15-25)

Millwood's strong indictment of society is echoed in the new lines Lillo assigned to Bolt and the Bawd in *Marina*. The Bawd describes her activity as a 'service to the publick' (*Marina*, B4r, ll. 20-1). As Bolt explains to Marina, 'This is no place for squeamish modesty: We live by lewdness here, and you were bought to carry on the trade' (*Marina*, C2v, ll. 10-2). Business and survival outweigh virtues and moral principles. What the Bawd tries to teach Marina is a new set of "moral" values, 'honesty, modesty, and religion with a vengeance' (*Marina*, C3v, ll. 24-5). Traditional values are banned and the Bawd considers her profession as perfectly lawful: 'what trades are honest, as they are us'd? We are no worse than others.' (*Marina*, C1r, ll. 1-3) This cynical view of prostitution is condemned by Lillo. When the brothel is shut down, one of the officers insinuates that the Bawd has never made an effort to earn a living honestly; the Bawd's reply, 'No, nor ever will. A Gentlewoman, and/ work! I'll see you all hang'd first.' (*Marina*, F1r, ll. 21-2), confirms that she has never considered that alternative. The Bawd, however, is a funny character, very likely to arouse the audience's sympathy. Besides, Lillo makes clear that the ultimate responsibility for prostitution rests on society. Prostitution will continue to exist, in the Bawd's own words, while 'The necessities of Gentlemen/ must be supply'd' (*Marina*, B4r, ll. 25-6). In other words, the "customers" are as guilty as those directly involved in the

profession, in that they create the "demand" that keeps the business going. Lillo's own voice can be heard when the Bawd observes that the 'great persecutor[s] of persons of [her] profession ... are [her] best customers and surest friends in private' (*Marina*, D4v, ll. 25-8).

Prostitution started to be viewed as a "profession", and, more disquietingly, as recorded by John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, or Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, as a means to achieve social respectability and financial comfort within wedlock. Pearson observes that in the 18th century women had to put up with much lower standards of living than in the past:

> Middle class wives and daughters were increasingly kept away from the family business and regarded as decorative adjuncts rather than working members of the family ... The situation was still more disastrous for poor women alone, who found it increasingly difficult ... to earn a living from the work available to them, and had to support themselves by marriage or prostitution.[9]

The equation marriage-prostitution emerges very often in both fictional and non-fictional works of the period. Marriages of interest were not a new phenomenon in England but became the target of severe censure at the beginning of the century as a form of legalised prostitution. Moreover, the progressive decline of the Puritan standards that had informed both public and private aspects of life in the seventeenth century 'encouraged', in Stone's words,

> the more open admission of sexual passion into the marital relationship with a resultant reshaping of the ideal role-model of the wife to include sexual and affective functions previously performed by the mistress.[10]

The distinction between wife and kept mistress was no longer clear-cut. Fictional works like Lillo's *Marina* articulate the need to re-establish it.

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[9]Pearson, p. 17.
[10]Stone, p. 543.

3.2 'Are You a Woman?': Re-defining Female Sexuality.

One of the most visible consequences of the increasing ambiguity surrounding the institution of marriage is a distorted and contradictory conception of female sexuality. In contemporary fiction, women were either praised as asexual, chaste, celestial creatures or chastised as rapacious, lustful witches; women were either seen as saint-like, God-fearing inhabitants of the temple or pagan, mock-pastoral presiding deities of the brothel. This dichotomy is markedly evident in *Marina*. The contrast between chastity and perverse sexuality is sharpened by the addition of new lines. Marina's virtues, for example, are often extolled by Lillo: a woman, as Marina explains to the amused Bawd, should be not only honest, as in the original, but also 'modest' and 'religious' (*Marina*, C3r, l. 29), and have 'sense of shame', 'fear of laws', and 'rev'rence of the Gods' (*Marina*, E4r, ll. 29-30). Marina in Lillo is emboldened by her virtues. When Bolt tries to take advantage of her, she forcefully breaks from him, and scolds him harshly: 'Hence, thou detested slave, thou shameless villain.' (*Marina*, C2v, ll. 13-4). Even under threat, Marina is proud and class-conscious. Marina is turned by Lillo into a strict, indignant chastiser of vice. She addresses the Governor as a 'Vain, rash, mistaken man' (*Marina*, E2v, l. 31), and when he repents, she praises him condescendingly: 'Now you're a true and worthy Gentleman, The gracious Gods preserve you.' (*Marina*, E3r, ll. 29-30) Chastity is a militant virtue, and, in Thaisa's case, '[a]dds whiteness to the silver robe [she] wear[s]' (*Marina*, F4r, l. 29).

The underworld of bawds and prostitutes, on the other hand, is described more extensively and in much darker tones than in the original. The Bawd is physically repulsive, as we can infer from Valdes' merciless description of her features:

> Let any one be judge, whether my chin, somewhat black and rough I must confess, or thine, that's cover'd with grey down, like a goose's

> rump, be the more comely. Thy face is a *memento mori* for thy own sex, and to ours an antidote against the sin you live by.
> (*Marina*, C1r, ll. 11-6)

The word 'antidote' reinforces the sense of pollution, contamination and disease already present in the original.

As observed above, this black-and-white distinction between chastity and corruption, suggestive of the moral certainties of an old morality, is undermined by wider social concerns. The recurrent reference to venereal diseases is symptomatic of a radical change in the perception of prostitution: no longer viewed only as a private sin or personal trial, prostitution started to be regarded as a public issue, which could only be tackled through appropriate social reforms. Several factors concurred to encourage a more active involvement of political and social institutions in the reformation of customs: among them, the progressive decline of the bawdy courts, religious institutions which had enforced good morals in England since the Norman Conquest,[11] and the rising of a modern notion of medicine as a science. As Roy Porter explains, medicine

> took on more public roles ... Doctors began to examine the relations between epidemics and environment, pressing for better public health provisions and legislations ... . Illness came to be seen less as a visitation, trial or punishment, death less as a fate or divine retribution.[12]

Prostitution was consequently considered not only as a threat to the institution of marriage, but also as a source of infection, contamination and illness.

These complex social changes found their way into Lillo's *Marina*. Whereas in the original Lysimachus did not intervene to rescue Marina from the brothel, in Lillo he sends officers to shut the brothel down. In another added speech, the Bawd mentions a 'new order, so much talk'd of, for suppressing publick lewdness' (*Marina*, B4r, ll. 12-3); since Lillo's adaptation was completed by 1738, it is possible that the 'new order'

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[11]E.J.Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance: Purity Movements in Britain since 1700* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1977), p. 12.
[12]R.Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Penguin, 1982), p. 302.

mentioned by the Bawd refers to one of the first disciplinary measures taken by the London authorities against prostitution at the beginning of the 30s, otherwise known as "the 1730 drive".[13] Authority in Lillo's *Marina* engages an unprecedented trial of strength with the underworld.

The increasingly public role of medical sciences investigated by Porter is similarly documented in Lillo's *Marina*. When Bolt finally manages to gain financial independence from the Bawd, he scornfully reminds her that, as a consequence of the new order, she will never be able to get 'a new vamped up wench, just come out of an hospital, to accommodate a friend with' (*Marina*, F1v, ll. 14-6). Towards the end of the same scene, Bolt's teasing provokes the Bawd to such a frenzy of rage that she swears she'd rather 'die of the pip without the comfort of an hospital to hide [her] shame and misery from the world' (*Marina*, F2v, ll. 18-20), than die unrevenged. Even if the Magdalene Hospital for Penitent Prostitutes was not open until 1758, twenty years after Lillo completed *Marina*, the changed attitude towards prostitution and the new public role attributed to medicine had already created the right conditions for the opening of several specialised hospitals for venereal diseases.

The hospital, previously an asylum, a 'place of "hospitality" for the needy', became, according to Porter, a 'centre of healing for the sick poor'.[14] What Porter however fails to stress is that, as the full denomination of the Magdalene Hospital suggests, the hospital was also seen a 'reformatory', the antechamber of prison. It became increasingly clear that the purity of the temple and the household depended on the isolation of the brothel; vice had to be circumscribed and fought as such in order to keep morality and legal institutions like marriage uncontaminated. The Bawd shows a foreboding understanding when she objects that the authorities' attempt to 'push the lewd out of sight'[15] would not free society from the curse of prostitution: 'if they will turn iniquity out of the high-ways, they must expect to find it in their families.' (*Marina*,

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[13]Bristow, p. 26.
[14]*English Society*, p. 302.
[15]Bristow, p. 22.

B4r, ll. 22-4) Not until much later on did the Victorians realise that only the institutionalisation of public lewdness could guarantee a counterbalancing contrast to private virtue.[16]

3.3 The 'Detested Charms' of 'Painted Clay': Learning how to Tell a Prostitute from a Virtuous Wife.

Marina's obduracy against vice in the original proves her a worthy successor to her father, whereas in Lillo, she is primarily tested as the potential wife of governor Lysimachus. Prostitution, formerly a crucial stage in the recovery of the father-daughter relationship, is now a trial, from which the future royal couple emerges successfully.

The revision of Lysimachus is one of the most significant alterations in *Marina*: whereas in *Pericles* Lysimachus is a marginal figure, in *Marina* he becomes a fully-rounded character. Not without some irony, Lysimachus is described as a 'great man' (*Marina*, E1v, l. 9), a current pseudonym for Sir Robert Walpole, particularly popular among his political opponents.[17] Lillo's governor, as his counterpart in *Pericles*, is a reformer and not one of the Bawd's usual customers. Unlike his predecessor, however, he fails. As mentioned in Part II, Lysimachus forgets his good intentions as soon as he catches a glimpse of Marina. But, unlike his predecessor, Lillo's Lysimachus is also changed by his experience in the brothel. Marina teaches him the difference between lawful and unlawful love: 'Shall painted clay, shall white and red, less pure/ Than that which decks the lilly and the rose,/ Seduce you from the bright unfading joys/ Your goodness yields!' (*Marina*, E2v, ll. 2-5) Physical attraction is clearly irreconcilable with virtue. Enlightened by Marina's moral teachings, Lysimachus is no longer attracted only by Marina's 'form' but also by her inner qualities: 'She's all a miracle, as chaste as

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[16]See, for example, E.Trudgill, 'Prostitution and *Paterfamilias*', in *The Victorian City: Images and Realities*, ed. by H.Dyos and M.Wolff (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973).

[17]For more details on the ironic use of 'great man' in contemporary satire, see J.Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*, ed. by P.E.Lewis (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1973), p. 16.

fair.' (*Marina*, E3r, l. 21) At the beginning, the governor is deceived by appearances and indulges his instincts because the image of the prostitute obliterates Marina and prevents him from seeing her as a potential partner: 'had I known thee before - What a thought! -/ But sully'd as thou art I must possess thee.' (*Marina*, E2v, ll. 9-10) Only after Marina's words have dispelled this image, can Lysimachus see her for what she is: 'Thou art a piece of virtue, and I doubt not/ But that thy birth and training both were noble.' (*Marina*, E3v, ll. 2-3) If Marina's beauty was the cause of his 'short liv'd error .../, [her] goodness and [her] wisdom have corrected [it]' (*Marina*, E3r, ll. 27-8).

Marina is also changed by her trial in the brothel. The brothel is a frighteningly new world to Marina: as a royal virgin, her virginity was regarded as the means through which Pericles' power would be transmitted to the next generation; as a virgin prostitute, her virginity becomes a commodity. From being the *subject* of a lawful exchange, Marina becomes the *object* of an execrable trade. When first ordered to perform her duties, she cannot understand the language used by her guardian: she first wonders whether Bolt's mind is 'sound', and then protests that he talks 'strangely' (*Marina*, C2r, ll. 15, 19). By the time she is introduced to Lysimachus she has grown familiar with the "economic" implications of her new position. She still pleads for mercy in the name of good morals and human dignity, but she also masters a new idiom. The following speech is organised around a double register: the first three lines belong to the moralist Marina - 'To think me, Sir,/ A creature so abandon'd yet pursue me,/ Is sure as mean and infamous, as wicked.' - whereas the remaining four belong to a new Marina, who has grown aware of the different "value" attached to her virginity in the brothel:

> What! waste your youth in arms that each lewd ruffian
> Who pays the price may fill; lavish your wealth,
> And yield your sacred honour to the hand
> Of an improvident and wastful Wanton,
> Who does not guard her own!
>
> (*Marina*, E2v, ll. 12-9)

Should Lysimachus enjoy her as a prostitute, Marina reminds him, he would not only commit a sinful crime but also endanger his patrimony, reputation and social position.

In the brothel, both Lysimachus and Marina overcome the risks involved in the practise of prostitution. Lysimachus learns how to distinguish between purely physical attraction and chaste love, or, in other words, how to love Marina as a wife and not as a prostitute. Marina, already an unfaltering champion of good morals at the beginning of the play, grows aware of the fact that the economical "value" attached to her virginity changes according to her location; she therefore shuns the brothel, where her virginity is merely an object of exchange, to seek refuge in Diana's temple, where her virginity makes her the powerful subject of a lawful exchange, i.e. royal marriage. Both Lysimachus and Marina learn not only the moral but also the political and economical differences between marriage and prostitution.

3.4 Lillo's Royal Couple: Election and Lineage.

The only political aspect of Lillo's work which has been sufficiently discussed is his attempt to improve the image of the merchant and dignify his profession and position in society. But Lillo's political interests stretched much further than the promotion of the emerging mercantile middle class. Lillo's revision of the incest motif and the shift of focus from incest to prostitution reveal a new conception of monarchical authority and of the strategy of its transmission.

In Lillo's mercantile England, the concept of divine authority and its association with the institution of monarchy had faded considerably; even if royal authority was still regarded as "divine", its political role in society was merely symbolic. Real authority derived from power and power derived from material goods, such as landed properties, family and personal estates, and political allegiances. The transmission of power came therefore to be identified with the transmission of titles and properties. Marriage, the main channel through which properties were transmitted, is a predominantly elective

practice that involves a double movement of goods, "vertical", from one generation to the next, through the mechanism of dowries and bequests, and "horizontal", between different households. In Walpole's England, where trade became the main source of financial and political power, the "horizontal" transmission of private properties became as important as the "vertical" hereditary strategy of transmission of power illustrated in *Pericles*. Whilst incest in *Pericles* represents the most dangerous obstacle for a "vertical" hereditary succession, prostitution in Lillo becomes a threat against a lawful, "horizontal" transmission of private properties through marriage. If incest as a literal practice is condemned in *Pericles* because it eventually leads to the extinction of the royal lineage, prostitution in Lillo is similarly abhorred in that it is both literally and metaphorically associated with the danger of pollution, waste and dispersion.

As mentioned above, the incest motif is considerably toned down, but not entirely removed by Lillo. Although monarchy had evolved from Jacobean absolutism into a parliamentary institution, where the king's authority came both from God and from his subjects' consent, expressed through their representatives in the two Houses of Parliament, the dynastic privilege of primogeniture remained practically unaltered. Significantly enough, the first example of elective monarchy in England, the coronation of William d'Orange in 1688, was not purely elective: if William represented the prototype of a new ruler, whose legitimacy depended on his people's support rather than on his title and lineage, his wife Mary, Charles II's daughter, provided a strong link with the previous dynasty and therefore with tradition. Free election and the "horizontal" transmission of power were still limited by "vertical" rules of descent and inheritance.

The same blend of hereditary and elective strategies for the transmission of power and properties is reflected in *Marina*. The succession described in *Marina* - power descends from Pericles to Lysimachus through Marina - re-enacts the genesis of the first elective monarchy in England - power descended from Charles II to William III through Mary. Lillo therefore shifts the emphasis from the "vertical" father-daughter relationship explored in *Pericles*, essential for the perpetuation of absolute monarchical

power, to the "horizontal" axis of the royal couple, but without obliterating the former completely.

Lillo's revision of the incest motif in *Marina* was therefore affected by one of the main political issues in Walpole's England, i.e. the debate about the role of the monarchy. The Tories saw in the English monarchy a 'symbol of liberty, honour and tradition',[18] the only safeguard against the new philosophy of government ushered in by Walpole, who had replaced members of the aristocracy with professional politicians. The Tories rejected Walpole's pragmatism as machiavellian and immoral and advocated for the recovery of traditional values through the re-establishment of a pre-Restoration model of monarchy. Henry Saint John Bolingbroke, in his dissertation *The Patriot King,* associated the cause of the English monarchy with nationalism: 'within the monarch is a unity of national purpose and a belief in the righteousness of the cause of one's country.'[19] If the Tories made the mistake of looking at the past to find a remedy for the corruption of the present, the Whigs did not manage to find a valid alternative to the symbolic power embodied by the monarchy, and they were often accused of being not only anti-monarchical but also anti-nationalistic. Lillo in *Marina* seems to be suggesting a shrewd compromise: although himself a merchant and open supporter of Walpole,[20] he was well aware of the symbolic value of the monarchy. The harmonious blend of free election and royalty in Lillo's adaptation represents one of the most advanced political theories at the time: while contemporary satirical playwrights were too busy exposing Walpole to ridicule, Lillo promoted an ideal of monarchy, which, although fairly conservative when compared to the political ideals in Joseph Addison's *Cato*, or John

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[18]Last, p. 52.

[19]Quoted in Last, p. 56.

[20]Lillo seems to have been one of the many supporters of Walpole's intelligent fiscal policy, whereby he had lowered taxes and raised interests rates to secure himself the support of both the landed gentry and the bankers of the city of London. (For more details, see S.H.Wood, *Walpole and Early Eighteenth Century England* (London: Methuen, 1973), pp. 49-51) In *The London Merchant*, Lillo expresses his approval through Trueman, who praises Elizabeth because 'unlike to former princes', she did not 'oppress [her] subjects by taxes great and grievous to be born' (1.1.57-60).

Locke's *Two Treatises on Government*, proved extremely successful and enduring in England.

Reading *Marina* as a "revision" of *Pericles*, and *Pericles* as a revised version of the far-travelled story of Apollonius Prince of Tyre, necessarily implies a selective approach. The emergence of the incest motif in *Pericles*, for example, calls for an analysis of the evolution of the same motif in Lillo. Although selective, this method overcomes the risks of "over-interpretation": analysing the interpretative consequences of the shift from incest to prostitution in Lillo does not account for many other aspects of Lillo's playwriting, but it does highlight the main concerns and guiding principles behind Lillo's revision of *Pericles*.

A comparative study of sources and adaptations enables us to identify the peculiar perspective of interrelated texts on a shared motif, like royal misjudgement in *King Lear*, or incest in *Pericles*. Though it cannot provide objective evidence, this approach offers a solid basis for interpretation. By gaining a better understanding of the cultural context within which a playtext was produced, we can tackle notorious interpretative dilemmas, like the characterisation of the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, from a different angle, and find answers, which, instead of reflecting our personal views of the Duke, throw light on how his character was supposed to be viewed by a Jacobean audience.

This kind of approach also reinforces the idea reinforced by the revisionist movement in the early 1980s that interpretation can provide invaluable evidence to support or question editorial intervention. A detailed analysis of the evolution of the motif of royal misjudgement in the Lear story, for example, provides fresh evidence to justify separate editions of the 1608 Quarto and the 1623 Folio *King Lear*. The evidence examined in this third chapter, on the other hand, provides answers to crucial textual issues, such as the relationship between the 1609 Quarto edition of *Pericles* and Wilkins' novel, or to specific textual cruxes, such as Lysimachus and Marina's exchange in the brothel.

The theoretical principle behind this method of analysis is very simple: comparison is less subjective than intuition and more imaginative than paleography or traditional bibliographical studies. Its effectiveness, on the other hand, should be

measured against the familiar scenario of contemporary theatre studies and traditional editing, which, instead of joining arms and reconciling textual and critical expertise, are pulling further and further away from the text and from each other.

APPENDIX

Tate's Critical "Editing"

of his Source-Text(s) for 'The History of King Lear'

The purpose of this appendix is to identify the source-text(s) Nahum Tate used while rewriting *King Lear,*[1] and to establish their respective influence on *The History of King Lear.*[2] A recently renewed interest in the role derivative texts could play in relation to the interpretation and/or editing[3] of their originals and Tate's as yet unassessed "editorial" contribution as a forerunner of the great editing tradition of Shakespeare in the 18th century make such identification mandatory.

Previous attempts to identify Tate's sources for his *Lear* lack the support of systematically presented evidence and reach contradictory conclusions. Rudolf Erzgraeber, in his 1897 *Nahum Tate und George Chapman's Buhnenbearbeitungen des Shakespear'schen "King Lear"*, first advanced the hypothesis of a double source. He concluded that Tate used a copy of Q2 as his main source and a copy of F3, or some no-better identified text in the "theatrical library" of Shakespeare, in order to amend Q2's most obvious archaisms.[4] Erzgraeber's theory was fully endorsed by Hazelton Spencer in 1927. Spencer confidently confirmed that 'Tate's source [was] *certainly* the text of the Quartos, not of the Folios' and more hesitantly agreed that Q2 was the most likely source among the three Quarto editions available at the time. He however allowed that Tate's *Lear* presented some complications: he specified that 'there [were] many exceptions, including Folio corrections, which point at some attempt at collation'.[5] As

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[1]The Quarto editions of *King Lear* relevant to the present analysis are the First (1608), the second (1619) and the Third Quarto (1655) - hereinafter Q1, Q2, and Q3. The abbreviation Q indicates that no specific edition is being referred to, and that Q1, Q2 and Q3 are considered as a group. The Folio editions referred to in this Appendix are the First (1623), the Second (1632) and the Third Folio (1663-4) - hereinafter F1, F2 and F3. The Fourth Folio (1685) cannot have served as copy-text for *The History*, which was first printed in 1681; even though the Fourth Folio has not been included in the present analysis, the abbreviation F4 is used for occasional references. The abbreviation F indicates that no specific edition is being referred to, and that F1, F2 and F3 are considered as a group.

[2]All references to the play are based on the 1969 Cornmarket facsimile edition unless otherwise specified.

[3]See Introduction, pp.7-9

[4]*Shakespeare Improved*, p. 250.

[5]*Shakespeare Improved*, p. 250.

James Black pointed out,[6] Spencer's confident reliance on previous German studies was blatantly misplaced. Erzgraeber had alas gathered his evidence from a German translation of *The History*! Black rejected the hypothesis of the Folio's secondary role as a source-text for Tate by arguing that a Quarto had been used alongside F1 (and not F3) only in Act 1 and that F1 was the sole source of the remaining four Acts. He however confirmed Erzgraeber's theory that the Quarto source Tate used in Act 1 was actually a copy of Q2. Black's analysis presents no fresh evidence to justify the identification of the Quarto source with Q2. It is likely that Black simply endorsed Spencer's theory according to which Restoration adapters *usually* used the latest pre-war Quartos as a source for their adaptations.

By drawing attention to Shakespeare's "theatrical library", Erzgraeber is the only critic who envisaged an alternative to printed Shakespeare. The Smock Alley Promptbook[7] is the only surviving specimen of a larger group of dramatic texts circulating in the 17th century. But, as Professor Richard Knowles has kindly pointed out,

> [a]nyone might make his own promptbook for private performance, either by marking up a Quarto or Folio, or by making a fresh transcript, such as the Douai play scripts that Gwynne Evans has written about (*Philological Quarterly* 1962), or by making a transcript of a marked Quarto or Folio, such as the famous Dering MS of *Henry IV* at the Folger.[8]

The list of possible alternatives to the Quarto and Folio editions available around the time when Tate adapted *King Lear* becomes even longer if , as Knowles suggests, one takes into account "presentation" transcripts, that is elegant copies the author or the company offered to their patrons, or old promptbooks, which the company occasionally had to have replaced, and which, in theory, might have circulated. Finally, Tate might have had direct access to the company's current promptbook.[9]

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[6]Black, p. 97.

[7](Dublin: Joseph Ashbury, 1670 ?) Catalogue no. *Lear*, *Smock Alley*, Shattuck 1.

[8]Personal communication.

[9]Black dismissed Nicoll's hypothesis according to which Tate might have used a manuscript copy of *King Lear* now lost, by arguing that, Tate being a 'free-lance worker', he could not have had access to the scripts and prompt-books in possession of the Duke's theatre. (Black, p.99) But, by the 1680s, Tate was an established playwright and his previous dramatic works, *Brutus of Alba* (1678) and *The Loyal General* (1679), had both been performed at Dorset Garden by the Duke's company. There seems therefore to be no reason why Tate should not have had access to the company's library. External evidence also supports this hypothesis. Tate dedicated *The History* to his 'Esteemed Friend, Thomas Boteler, Esq.', without whose 'Perswasion' and 'Advice', he would never have undertaken the rewriting of so great a

The plethora of possible sources complicates but does not undermine the purpose of this Appendix. All the dramatic texts existing and circulating in the second half of the 17th century necessarily derived from either a printed copy or from a transcript edition of the Quarto or the Folio. If the annotations in the margins of a marked copy might be behind some of the modifications introduced by Tate, the evidence provided by the accidentals, those features such as spelling, punctuation, and line-division which are unconsciously reproduced by a revising author or a scribe, has highlighted the influence of both a Quarto and a Folio source in *The History*. The aim of this Appendix is to identify the Quarto and the Folio edition, and not the *physical* copy or transcript, which Tate decided to use as his source-texts.

The evidence presented below shows how Black's conclusions are as misleading as those of his predecessors. Through a thorough collation of the printed editions of Shakespeare's *King Lear* prior to Tate and the text of *The History* itself, it is possible to establish that a Quarto source was used not only in Act 1 but also, if certainly to a lesser extent, in Acts 2 and 3, and more significantly in Act 4 (Part I). A further analysis of the variants between Q1 and Q2[10] and F1, F2 and F3 proves that Tate used a copy of Q1 and not a copy of Q2, and that there is too little evidence to identify his Folio source with any of the three Folio editions available (Part II). The last part of this Appendix addresses the controversial issue of the early stages of the 18th century editorial practice of conflation, and argues that, contrary to what most textual scholars still maintain, conflation was first carried out as early as 1681 by Tate, and proved more popular and far-reaching than his notorious happy ending (Part III).

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masterpiece as *King Lear*. There is to date no definitive evidence to establish the identity of Tate's friend. Black rejected an old theory according to which Sir Thomas Boteler was directly related to Sir Thomas Boteler, Earl of Ormond, on the ground that the 'familiarity of Tate's address' would have been extremely unbecoming for a nobleman. Black granted more credibility to an alternative identification of Boteler with 'Sir Butler', a minor poet who, along with Tate and other poets and translators, contributed to Dryden's *Ovid's Epistles, Translated by Several Hands* (1680). (Black, p.1) Knowles has alternatively suggested a possible connection between Thomas Boteler and one Charlotte Boteler, an actress hired by the Duke's company in the early 1670s. The fact that she was the daughter of a 'decayed knight' (See H.P.Highfill *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers and Other Stage Personnel in London: 1660-1800* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973), pp. 448-49) would account for the honorific 'Esq.' in Tate's dedication. If such a connection could be proved, Charlotte would represent a direct link between Tate and the company.

[10]Q3 (1655) is a reprint of Q2 (1619) and presents no significant divergencies from Q2; Q3 is therefore never considered as a separate edition.

Part I: Quarto Variants in the First Four Acts of *The History*[11]

The considerable presence of Quarto variants in Act 1 shows Tate's initial preference for his Quarto source (see Table 1.1). The original passages retained in Act 1 contain thirty-six Quarto variants and only twenty-three Folio variants. From C1r l.29 to the end of Act 1, Folio variants begin to outnumber Quarto variants. This simple observation disproves Black's attempt to account for Tate's choice to abandon his Quarto source at the end of Act 1. Black noticed that the speech with which Tate had chosen to end Act 1 and the opening speech in Act 2 are in prose in the Quartos: he therefore concluded that 'seeing that the lines which he wanted were in densely-printed prose in the Quarto, [Tate] simply stayed with the Folio's verse, and thereafter used the Folio as his main source'.[12] Although the evidence analysed in the next few paragraphs will prove that a Quarto source *was* used beyond Act 1, the distribution of Quarto and Folio variants in Act 1 shows how Tate had started relying more consistently on his Folio source well before the end of Act 1.

The most significant variants in Act 1 occur within Lear's first speech. Tate preferred the shorter version of the Quarto,[13] except for a single variant 'conferring' at B2r l.18, most probably derived from the Folio. The four Quarto variants between B2r l.25 and B2r l.32 are particularly interesting because of their position: their occurring immediately after Lear's first speech shows how Tate's use of the Quarto exceeds the context of recognisable dramatic units. This cluster of variants suggests that Tate was consistently relying on his Quarto source and that he was evidently comfortable with a text whose shabby layout, according to Black, created 'unnecessary trouble' and was eventually abandoned in favour of the tidier Folio.[14] Similarly, the omission of seventeen Folio lines, which, among other factors persuaded Black of the prevalent influence of the Quarto in Act 1, is also worth noticing, because similar omissions in the remaining three acts will reveal the undeniable presence of a Quarto source.

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[11] Although it is still possible to detect Tate's tendency to rely on his Folio source more consistently than on his Quarto source in Act 5, the number of original variants Tate actually retained from his originals is insignificant and makes a detailed analysis of Act 5 irrelevant to the purpose of the present analysis.

[12] Black, p. 99.

[13] For a more detailed analysis of the aesthetic and dramatic significance of Quarto and Folio variants in *King Lear*, see *The Division*.

[14] Black, p. 99.

Only three of the Quarto variants contained in Act 1 are included in Black's Appendix (marked by * in Table 1.1). Black's analysis is therefore undiscriminatingly selective, in that it fails to show the actual extent to which the Quarto was used in Act 1, and most of all misleading, because it ignores some distinguishable patterns in Tate's "editing" of his sources, whose regular recurrence later on in the play contributes to reinforce the hypothesis of a more extended use of a Quarto source.

The role of a Quarto source beyond Act 1 is quantitatively and qualitatively less consistent than in Act 1, but, by no means unremarkable. The strongest evidence of a Quarto source in Act 2 (see Table 1.2) is provided by D1r l.2-3. Gloucester's lines, 'His fault is much, and the good King his maister/ Will check him for't,' (Q 1029-30) do not appear in the Folio. Equally significant, if less immediately evident, is D2r l.19. Tate reads, 'the dear Father/ Wou'd with his Daughter speak, commands her Service.', reproducing a corrected Quarto reading.[15] A Quarto copy with variant outer forme E in a corrected state is the only possible source of this line: had Tate been working with either a Quarto copy where uncorrected outer forme E preserves 'come and tends service,' (Q 1168), or exclusively with a Folio copy, where the same line reads 'commands, tends, service,' (F 1378), he could not independently have produced the same reading preserved in the corrected Quarto.[16]

Minor variants confirm the influence of a Quarto source in Act 2. At D2v ll.39-40 Tate's Lear, following the Quarto, remarks: 'Thus will you wish on me/ When the rash mood -', as opposed to his counterpart in the Folio, ' So will you wish on me, when the rash moode is on.' (F 1453) Tate's tendency to abridge the original might account for this variant. On this occasion, however, the abridgement is so inconsiderable as to suggest a mere reproduction of the source-copy rather than a conscious intervention. Another Quarto variant occurs at D2r l.7, 'They have travell'd *hard to* Night -'. If it is possible that Tate was merely reproducing a line which he had already used at D1r l.12, 'travell'd hard', independently of the Quarto, because rhetorically more powerful than the Folio's 'travail'd all the night', the perfectly identical line-division and abbreviations rule out this hypothesis. If 'travell'd hard' might have been at the back of Tate's mind, the purely accidental character of both layout and spelling

[15]See Part II for the terminology concerning the two states of the Quarto.
[16]For a more detailed discussion of this variant, see p.234 below.

makes the hypothesis of a Quarto source more credible.[17] Last but not least, C4v l.28 and D2v l.13: if 'Fetch' (F 1203) and 'Bring' (Q 1012), and 'scant' (F 1418) and 'slacke' (Q 1204) are synonyms, possibly accountable for as a compositorial eyeskip in Q, or minor revision in F, the assumption that Tate never raised his eyes from his Folio source and inadvertently happened to replace the Folio reading with a Quarto reading *without* taking a quick glance at his Quarto copy is simply untenable.

Act 3 in *The History* contains forty-seven original readings from the Folio and fourteen from the Quarto (see Table 1.3). Eight of the fourteen Quarto variants in Act 3 provide particularly strong evidence to prove that, despite his preference for the Folio's treatment of madness, Tate did not stop using his Quarto copy as a source. These eight readings are concentrated around the middle of Act 3 between E3v l.1 and E4r l.5, where they are only slightly outnumbered by Folio variants.

In Act 4, forty-nine of the variant passages retained from the original are from a Folio source and only seventeen from a Quarto, but these variants are far more significant than those contained in Act 2 and 3.

Most of the Quarto variants occurring in Act 4 are accidentals (see Table 1.4) and therefore provide strong evidence in favour of the hypothesis of a Quarto source behind Act 4. Act 4, however, also contains substantive variants whose Quarto origin cannot be questioned. F4v l.25 'my Fool usurps my Bed -', like D2r l.19 'commands her service', could not be the result of Tate's independent amendment of the Folio. The Folio's 'My Foole usurpes my body.' (F 2297) is most probably an awkward attempt to improve on the rather unusual version contained in the uncorrected version of the Quarto 'My foote usurps my body.' (Q 2025). The origin of this line and the intrinsic value of its variant alternatives are not clear; what can be positively assumed is that Tate could not have spontaneously thought of the alternative 'bed' unless guided by the corrected version of the Quarto, an uncommon reading in itself ('A foole usurps my bed.' Q 2025). At G4r l.25 Lear's remonstrance 'No, no, they cannot touch me for *Coyning,*' is based on the Quarto. (the Folio reads 'No, they cannot touch me for *crying*'; F 2530) At G4v l.29 the Quarto and the Folio diverge only slightly, but the

[17]Q: 'Denie to speake with mee, th'are sicke, th'are weary,/ They traveled hard to night, meare Iustice,' (1157-8); F: Deny to speake with me?/ They are sicke, they are waery,/ They have travail'd all the night? meere fetches' (F1361-2); *The History*: 'Deny to speak with me? th'are sick, th'are weary,/ They have travell'd hard to Night - meer fetches' D2r ll.6-7. The discrepancy between Q's 'Iustice' and Tate's 'fetches' does not weaken the arguments employed here to establish the influence of Q on this passage. Because 'Iustice' is obviously wrong, Tate had to go back to his F source and replace it with 'fetches'.

variant punctuation and the omission of 'to' in the Folio affect the verbal text profoundly: in the Quarto this line reads 'Give mee an Ounce of Civet, good Apothocarie, to sweeten my imagination,' (Q 2344-5); in the Folio the same line reads 'Give me an Ounce of Civet; good Apothecary sweeten my immagination:' (F 2571-2) Again, Tate chose to follow his Quarto source. At H1r ll.20-1 Tate once more opted for the "better" reading preserved by the Quarto, 'through tatter'd Robes *small* Vices do appear'; the Folio, by substituting 'small' with 'great' impairs the original meaning of Lear's reflection, i.e. the poor are punished for little crimes, whereas the rich, who can afford to 'Place [their] sinnes with Gold' (F 2608), get away even with greater crimes. Another interesting variant occurs at H2r l.32, where the line is attributed to 'Phys.', presumably a physician, or, as in the Quarto, a Doctor. In the Folio, the scene of Cordelia's reunion with her father was highly revised; among other changes, the doctor was replaced by a gentleman. Tate could not have used this character without being inspired by the Quarto. Two more Quarto variants follow - H2r l.36 and H2v l.1 - to reinforce the hypothesis of Tate's use of a Quarto source on this particular occasion. As in Act 1, four Folio lines - G1r l.26 - and a shorter Folio passage - H2v l.30 - are ignored.

In Act 5 only two variants out of eleven are from a Quarto edition (see Table 1.5). Act 5, however, cannot be considered representative of Tate's use of his sources, for the new material in this Act largely outweighs the number of original passages. Even if the predominance of Folio-derived variants cannot be denied, Tate's limited reliance on his source-texts in the last Act prevents us from concluding that the Quarto edition was consciously discarded as a source.

Part II - Identification of the Quarto and Folio Source-Texts Behind *The History*: Methods and Conclusions.

The peculiar process through which Q1 was proofread and printed by Nicholas Okes in 1608 accounts for the presence of internal variants in the Quarto. As Peter Blayney has established,[18] Q1 was proofread twice: once before the actual printing

[18]Blayney, *passim*.

started, to correct evident mistakes, such as capsized types and bizarre spelling, and subsequently at the press, this time against the copy-text, to emend the compositor's occasional failure to reproduce the original. In order to save time, Nicholas Okes adopted the following method of press-correction. Q was set by formes, and before starting to print copies from the first forme, a single copy was printed off the second one for the proof-reader to correct against his copy-text. By the time the proof-reader had finished with the second forme, the printing of the first forme was already halfway through. At this point the first forme was replaced by the corrected second forme, and while all the necessary copies were printed off the second forme, the first forme was corrected, reset and finally put on the press to complete the printing.

As a consequence, with the exception of sheet K, which presents variants in both formes,[19] either the outer or the inner forme on most of the sheets in Q1 can be found in two different states, uncorrected (Qa) and corrected (Qb). Q1 was printed on ten sheets (B-L4; apart from the title on A2r, half sheet A is blank).[20] Sheets B, I and L of the extant copies are invariant; as a whole, the variant formes in Q1 are therefore seven (or eight, including both formes of sheet K). No copy of Q1 preserves its variant formes in the same state; Qa and Qb are theoretical abstractions used to indicate the state of a forme rather than specific entirely corrected or entirely uncorrected copies of Q1. Each extant copy of Q1 is distinguished from all the others by its peculiar sequence of corrected and uncorrected formes; even if the random distribution of formes might have produced two identical copies, none of the twelve listed by Greg is.[21] Q2 also preserves variant formes in both states. The variant formes in Q2 reflect the peculiar sequence of the copy of Q1 from which Q2 was set. Because this sequence is peculiar to Q2, one can safely conclude that the specific copy of Q1 used as copy-text for Q2 is not among the twelve extant copies of Q1 scrutinised and classified by Greg. Q3 being a reprint of Q2, obviously preserves the same sequence of corrected and uncorrected formes. The attempt to identify the specific Quarto source-copy behind *The History*, can be therefore restricted, at least for the moment, to Q1 and Q2.

The History contains both corrected and uncorrected Quarto readings, which can be traced back to either Qa or Qb. A collation of the Q readings retained in *The History*

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[19]See W.W.Greg, *The Variants in the First Quarto of 'King Lear': A Bibliographical and Critical Inquiry, Supplement to the Bibliographical Society's Transactions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 8.

[20]For a full bibliographical description of Q1, see *The Variants in the First Quarto*, p. 8.

[21]*The Variants in the First Quarto*, pp. 9-10.

and Qa and Qb has revealed the state of the variant formes in Tate's Q copy-text, and, consequently, the peculiar sequence of corrected and uncorrected variant formes this copy preserved. A comparison between the sequence of corrected and uncorrected formes behind *The History* and the peculiar sequences underlying Q2 and the extant copies of Q1 will consequently reveal which Q edition Tate was working with. There are broadly two possibilities: the sequence will either be that of Q2 or another, not necessarily that of the extant Q1 copies but certainly that of a Q1 copy.

Of the seven variant formes in Q1 only six apply to Tate's text, because the only two variants in C(i) were omitted. The remaining six formes correspond to Tate's text as follows:

D(o): End of Act 1.
E(o): Act 2.
F(i):
G(o): Act 3.
H(i):
H(i): Act 4.
K(i/o):
K(i/o): Beginning of Act 5.

An interesting Qb variant, already mentioned above, occurs in *The History* at D2r l.19. Tate reads with Qb: 'the deare Father/ Wou'd with his Daughter speak, commands her Service.'; Qa's reading, 'the deare fate,/ Would with the daughter speake, come and tends service,' (Q 1168-9) is clearly a compositorial corruption (the aphetic form of 'attend' is very unusual; besides, Shakespeare never used this verb in connection with the substantive 'service' elsewhere); F offers yet another alternative, 'The deere Father/ Would with his Daughter speake, commands, tends, service,' (F 1377-8). The emendation of 'come and tends' into 'commands her' is not an obvious one; the corrector could not have altered Qa, which is not in itself devoid of meaning, so as to produce a radically different reading, unless alerted by a discrepancy with his copy. The compositor, more subject to eyeskips than the corrector, is more likely to have been misled by the word 'service' and to have read 'come and tends', where the

original read 'commands her'.[22] This theory is supported by Blayney's conclusions about the process through which Q1 was composed, set and printed. Blayney disproved the common belief that the printing of Q1 was well below contemporary standards: 'the only difference between the *Lear* variants and those in most of the other Quartos', he points out, 'is [in fact] the frequency with which the *Lear* copy *does* appear to have been consulted'. With regard to outer E in particular, Blayney proved that this forme 'was corrected at press and reference was made to the copy.'[23] If internal and external evidence combine to prove that the Q1 corrector emended this line by making reference to his copy, how could Tate have independently produced the same reading reintroduced by the corrector into Qb, while working with F and a copy of Q where outer E was in the uncorrected state? The only possible way to account for the presence of this variant in *The History* is to assume that outer forme E in Tate's Quarto source was in the corrected state and contained Qb.

Another Qb variant occurs at H4v l.25 in *The History*, when Edmund explains to Albany why they should dispose of the old king and his daughter so promptly. Qa is again visibly corrupt: 'Whose age has charmes in it, whose title more/ To pluck the coren bossom of his side,' (Q 2708-9). Qb and F agree in emending Qa's 'coren bossom' into 'common bo[s]some' (F2992), but the two texts provide a slightly different version because F introduces the variant tense 'had' in the first line (F 2991). Tate was clearly following either Qb or F on this occasion: his revision of the next line, 'To draw the Commons once more to his Side,' (H4v l.26) rules out Qa as a possible source, Qa being the only text which does not contain the word 'common'. Tate might have used either Qb or F to replace 'common bossom' with 'commons', a much more topical term for a Restoration audience than the original; but the present tense at H4v l.25 'Whose Age has Charms in it, his Title more,' makes Qb a more likely source for this passage than F. In F, Edmund is reflecting on past events, i.e. when the cruelty inflicted on Lear by his daughters caused a destabilising disaffection among the population (Off. 'At last day's publick Festival ... Old Gloster ... Proclaims your Cruelty, and their Oppression,/ With the King's Injuries; which so enrag'd 'em,/ That now that Mutiny which long had crept/ Takes Wing, and threatens your Best Pow'rs', *The History* G1r ll.10-7). In Qb, Edmund is drawing a parallel between what happened in the past and the present: at this stage in their military campaign, Lear's old age and

[22]For more details about this variant, see J.Bate and S.Massai.
[23]Blayney, p. 219.

the people's sympathy for their old king still represent a threat. Tate followed Qb in retaining 'has' and reinforced this sense of incumbent danger suggested by Qb's present tense by adding 'once more':in the next line, 'To draw the Commons *once more* to his Side.'

The strongest piece of evidence to establish the state of the formes in Tate's Quarto source-text is provided by a controversial line in H(i) which reads 'My foote usurps my body.' in Qa, 'A foole usurps my bed.' in Qb (Q 2025), and 'My Foole usurpes my body.' in F (F 2297). Both Qa and Qb are consistent: Qa plays on the popular Renaissance analogy between the power of the ruler over his country and the power of the mind over the body, whereas a catachresis in Qb by-passes the metaphor and expresses directly its implied meaning - an inept fool usurps her power. Even if Qa and Qb are both satisfactory readings, one must be a "corruption", in that a single copy underlies Q1: either Qa is a compositorial misreading or Qb is a miscorrection. Both possibilities are equally probable.

F cannot be taken to preserve the original reading either: apart from the typographical and bibliographical evidence Greg brought forward against it,[24] F is "rhetorically" inferior to both Qa and Qb. F disrupts the original difference between Qa and Qb by merging the level of figurative and literal language: it preserves Qb's 'foole' but goes back to the figurative language of Qa by retaining 'body'. By reading 'My Foole usurpes my body.' F conveys a mere sense of sexual abuse and weakens the connection between power and sexuality implied by both Qa and Qb, one which is not only relevant in this context, but crucial to the general understanding of the play. F is therefore much more likely to represent a compositorial conflation of Qa and Qb than an authorial reading.

The authority of these variant lines in Shakespeare remains, however, uncertain. What matters within the context of the present analysis is that Tate reproduced Qb almost *verbatim*: 'A foole usurps my bed.' in Qb versus Tate's 'my Fool usurps my Bed -' (F4v l.25). Tate is unlikely to have spontaneously emended either Qa or F's 'body' to read 'bed' without consulting a Quarto copy where H(i) was in the corrected state. Further evidence to support this theory is provided by Q2's 'My foote usurps my head'. According to Greg, Q2 derives from the compositor's attempt to make sense of this rather obscure line in his copy-text: 'The reading of the second Quarto ... may be

[24] *The Variants in the First Quarto*, pp. 171-2.

relegated to limbo. It can have no authority, and is merely a desperate attempt to make sense of Qa, which here served as copy.'[25] Q2 shows what a spontaneous emendation of Qa was likely to produce. Hence the flawed logic behind the possible counterargument, according to which Tate, by pure coincidence, produced a reading, which, while absent from both his Quarto and Folio source, was preserved by a Quarto copy with H(i) in the corrected state, which Tate never consulted.

These three variants provide enough evidence to establish the state of three out of the seven variant formes of the Quarto copy Tate must have used as a source for *The History.* The presence of these three Qb readings in Tate indicates that E(o), H(i) and K(o) in Tate's Quarto source-text were in the corrected state. As mentioned above, C(i) does not apply to the present analysis, in that Tate omitted the variant passages contained in this forme. D(o), F(i) and G(o) present no definitive evidence to establish their state, because whenever Tate retained Qb, Qb coincides with F, and in most cases, the higher frequency with which Tate was resorting to F suggests that Tate was consulting F rather than Qb. The following table sums up the conclusions reached so far to establish the sequence of corrected and uncorrected formes in the Quarto source behind *The History:*

Sheet	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L
Forme		(i)	(o)	(o)	(i)	(o)	(i)		(o)	
State	n/a	n/a	*	B	*	*	B	I	B	I

Legend:

i	inner forme
o	outer forme
I	invariant forme
A	uncorrected state
B	corrected state
*	uncertain state

By applying the same method to Q2, it was possible to reconstruct the sequence of corrected and uncorrected formes underlying the copy of Q1 that was used by Q2's

[25]Greg, p. 171.

compositor as copy-text. The following table shows the sequence shared by both Q2 and Q3:[26]

Sheet	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	I
Forme		(i)	(o)	(o)	(i)	(o)	(i)		(o)	
State	I	*	A	B	*	A	A	I	B	I

A comparison of these two tables shows why Q2 cannot be assumed to have served as the Quarto source for *The History*. Whereas E(o) and K(o) appear to have been set from a corrected forme, the H(i) contained in Q2 is in the uncorrected state. Tate's borrowing of the line "My fool usurps my bed" from corrected H(i) therefore undermines Black's hypothesis that the Quarto copy used by Tate was Q2.[27]

Establishing which edition of F served as source-text for *The History* is a more difficult task because of the sparse evidence available. F, unlike Q, varies little *inter se*. The few substantial F variants retained in *The History* would seem to indicate F3 as a possible source. One of Kent's first speeches in F1 reads, 'As my great Patron thought on in my praiers.' (F 151) F2 and F3 omit 'great'. Tate's version of the same passage reads, 'And as my Patron thought on in my Pray'rs -' (B3r l.29) This omission suggests that Tate was working with either F2 or F3 and did not have F1 before him. Another interesting analogy occurs in Edgar's speech at E4v l.17. Both Q and F read, 'and hurts the poor Creature of earth' (Q 1631, F 1898-9), except for F3, which adds 'and hurts the poor Creature of *the* earth'. Tate's version coincides with F3. These analogies favour F3 but are far from conclusive. The extra 'the' at E4v l.17 is perfectly colloquial, and could have been added by Tate without making direct reference to F3. As regards the omission of 'great', Professor Knowles has advanced an alternative hypothesis: 'Tate instinctively added an 'And' in order to avoid an epergesis, and then to smoothe meter dropped a word ("great")'.[28] The fact that the same emendation can be found in the Smock Alley

[26]The results shown in this table have been confirmed *a posteriori* by J.L.Halio in *The First Quarto of King Lear: New Cambridge Shakespeare, The early Quartos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.21: 'The copy of the Quarto used for Jaggard's reprint had sheets D, F, G and H in the uncorrected state and sheets E and K (outer forme only) in the corrected state'.

[27]At least one of the twelve extant copies listed by Greg (*The Variants in the First Quarto*, p.9-11), the so-called Gorhambury copy, in the possession of the Earl Verulam, now on loan at the Bodleian library, presents the same sequence of corrected and uncorrected formes underlying Tate's *The History*.

[28]Personal communication.

prompt-book could however suggest either a direct reference to Tate,[29] or, which is more probable, given the hasty character of the annotations, an instinctive addition. There is a slight chance, then, that, instead of deriving this line from F1 and adding 'And' after deciding to omit 'great', as Professor Knowles suggests, Tate was in fact using F3 and simply added 'and', because, like the Smock Alley annotator, he detected a metrical anomaly.

Substantive variants therefore provide little evidence to question Black's identification of Tate's F source with F1. The evidence provided by the F accidentals contained in Tate is also contradictory: if, on the one hand, it confirms Black's hypothesis that 'the Folio which he used so extensively was probably F1'[30], on the other, it shows the practical impossibility of reaching any definitive conclusion. Table 2.1 contains the F accidentals Tate reproduced in *The History.* The Folio accidentals Tate might have reproduced from F1 amount to twenty-four, ten might have been derived from F2, and twenty-two from F3. If F1 is the most likely source, F3 cannot be easily ruled out. One might object that numerical evidence is misleading in that most F3 accidentals represent the natural evolution of spelling undergone by the English language between 1623-1632 and 1664. It is therefore hard to say whether the accidentals contained in Tate derive from F3 or from Tate's independent modernisation of the spelling he found in his source. Christopher Spencer however provides some interesting external evidence that justifies positing at least a secondary use of F3 as a source for *The History.* In his critical biography of Nahum Tate, Spencer reminds us that Tate used a copy of F3 for his third Shakespearean adaptation, *The Ingratitude of a Commonwealth, or the Fall of Caius Martius Coriolanus* (1681). He also argues that 'since Tate seems to have used the Third Folio for his adaptation of *Coriolanus*, and perhaps for *King Lear* and *Richard II*, it seems likely that he borrowed the name of Brutus [for his 1678 *Brutus of Alba*] from *Locrine*, a play that he would suppose to be Shakespearean'.[31] *The Tragedy of Locrine* was published in F3, along with other pseudo-Shakespearean plays. All the evidence mentioned by Spencer seems to suggest

[29]A comparison of the prompt-book, itself a copy of F3, rather hastily annotated and adapted to reflect the action on stage, with Tate's adaptation has led Professor G. Blakemore Evans to suggest that the Smock Alley production must have had an alternative finale, most probably a happy ending, following the prodigious success of Tate's adaptation. Contrary to the traditional dating of this prompt-book around 1670, Blakemore Evans is consequently more inclined to believe that it in fact dates some time after 1681. For more details, see the forthcoming volume of G.Blakemore Evans, *Shakespearean Prompt-Books of the Seventeenth Century* (Charlottesville: Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia, 1960 -).

[30]Black, p. 100.

[31]Spencer, *Nahum Tate*, p. 56.

that if Tate referred to F3 regularly between 1678-81, he most probably owned a copy of F3 himself.

The conclusions reached here, as Jowett has noticed, run against the 'usual practice in the period of basing a new edition on a recent predecessor [*textus receptus*] rather than the earlier texts'.[32] The fact that Tate seems to have owned a copy of F3 makes it all the more intriguing that he should have taken the trouble of consulting F1 and Q1 as well. Apart from undermining the traditional assumption that Restoration adapters simply used the most recent pre-war Quartos as their control texts, my analysis redresses another commonly accepted view, namely the Restoration adapters' negligent and rapacious ransack of the Shakespearean original. Tate's use of his sources has in fact highlighted that constantly alert awareness of the significance of internal variants which we tend to associate with editors.

Part III: Adapters as Editors.

Adapters are still regarded as corrupters of a text's original integrity, because they modify their "source" to readjust it to different stage conventions and meet the expectations of an ever-changing audience. The original text, however, is never completely effaced by an adapter's intervention on it, and when an adapter decides to retain a variant passage from the original, his task is substantially similar to that of an editor's. Editions and adaptations are consequently closely intertwined: while "adapting" a play text involves a good deal of practical "editing", "editing" perpetually aims at "adapting" previous editions to a different critical and ideological background. The most common objection to this argument is that editors and adapters pursue radically divergent aims: while the former aim at "reconstructing" a text, the latter aim at "rewriting" it. Recent studies have however shown how difficult it is to draw the line between the "reconstruction" of a text and its actual "rewriting".[33] Besides, the

[32]Personal communication.

[33]See Margreta de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authority and the 1790 Apparatus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) and Jonathan Bate, *Shakespearean Constitutions*. Both books are concerned with the way in which different ages "appropriated" and "constituted" Shakespeare, 'in the name of conflicting political and aesthetic ideologies' (*Shakespearean Constitutions*, p. 2). The common underlying idea is that Shakespeare's works, far from being autonomous entities, which remain fundamentally unaltered throughout the centuries, are in fact perpetually rewritten and translated according to the different exigencies of editors, critics and audiences. As a consequence, neither scholarly editions nor theatrical adaptations represent neutral reproductions, but rather, ideologically tendentious appropriations of a text; by investigating 'the history of reception' (*Shakespearean Constitutions*, p. 5) of Shakespeare's works, both these studies contribute to stress the "unnatural" character of the "apparatus" through which the original plays are made available to their audiences.

distinction between editors and adapters was even more hazy in the 18th century, when the lack of an established text forced both editors and adapters to go back to the original(s).

Because of the rigid distinction between editors and adapters the long editorial tradition of a conflated, single-text *King Lear* is generally assumed to have started either in the first or in the second half of the 18th century. Gary Taylor and Stanley Wells, for example, perhaps endorsing Capell's allegation that Nicholas Rowe had gone 'no further than the edition nearest to him' to establish the copy-texts for his 1709 collection,[34] point out that Rowe's edition represents little more than a mere reprint of the 1685 Folio:

> Textually, the 1709 edition was a reprint of the 1685 Folio, transferred to a more manageable multi-volume Quarto format. Rowe made almost no use of the 1623 Folio, or of the early substantive Quartos, though he was aware of the existence of at least some of them.[35]

Taylor and Wells therefore fix a later date for the beginning of the editorial tradition of the conflation of Q and F *King Lear.* They believe that, among early eighteenth century editors, Alexander Pope in *The Works*[36] was the first to '[make] a more extensive use of the early Quartos', but that only Edward Capell's 1768 *Mr. William Shakespeare: his Comedies, his Histories, and Tragedies*[37] can be regarded as 'the first collated edition ever published based upon the earliest authoritative documents'.[38]

The quality of Rowe's edition is far from a settled question. Thomas Berger, for example, has recently demonstrated that 'Rowe consulted Q2 *Othello* (or one of five descendants) as he was preparing his edition of the play, using F4 as his control text'.[39] Similarly, while admitting that 'Rowe made little or no use of the Folios that predate F4' and that 'his text [of *Hamlet*] is based primarily on F', Barbara Mowat proved that Rowe's *Hamlet* is a 'genuine conflation' of the 1676 Q and F4.[40] If Rowe's edition is finally being regarded as an "orthodox" critical edition, already informed by those

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[34]*The Works of Mr. William Shakespeare: in Six Volumes, Revis'd and Corrected, with an Account of the Life and Writings fo the Author by Nicholas Rowe* (London: J.Tonson, 1709).
[35]*A Textual Companion*, p. 54.
[36]*The Works of Shakespeare in Six Volumes, Collated and Corrected by the Former Editions by Mr. Pope* (London: J.Tonson, 1723-5).
[37](London: J. and R.Tonson, 1767-8).
[38]*A Textual Companion*, pp. 54-5.
[39] 'The Second Quarto of *Othello* and the Question of Textual Authority', in *Analytical and Enumerative Bibliography*, 2 (1988), p. 153.
[40]'The Forms of *Hamlet*'s Fortunes', in *Renaissance Drama*, 19 (1988), p. 100.

editorial principles that the great majority of critics attribute to later editors like Pope or Capell, *The History*, belonging to the inferior "rank" of adaptations, has been denied a similar acknowledgement. However, because of the accurate critical editing Tate carried out while adapting *King Lear,* we should place him, alongside Rowe and Capell, among the forerunners of the great editorial tradition of Shakespeare of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century.

The significance of the fact that Tate used both a Quarto and a Folio edition as control texts cannot be easily overestimated. Not only was he among the forerunners of the editorial practice of conflation but he also realised, three centuries before the theory of revision became orthodox, that Q and F are both worth an editor's attention. Tate clearly failed to notice the extreme consequences of the divergence between Q and F, and conflated his copy-texts; but, as opposed to later conflationists, he did not believe that Q was worth consulting only when F was visibly corrupt. Being an "adapter" and working at the adaptation of *King Lear* well before "the tyranny of the First Folio"[41] was established gave Tate a much more clear-sighted attitude toward his copy-texts than any of his successors. Tate's editorial choices also reveal a sensibility extremely alert to matters of both dramatic and textual concern. Some of his emendations even coincide with those of later editors,[42] and there is no reason why modern editors should not use *The History*, alongside other early editions of *King Lear,* as a legitimate source of information and inspiration.

Gary Taylor, despite being among the most fervent promoters of the new ideas ushered in by the theory of revision, has worked out a definition of 'script' which very conservatively denies any authority to later theatrical documents, or, as he calls them, 'post-scripts':

> We have regarded as authoritative virtually everything which happens to the text of a play in its evolution from initial idea to first performance: whether the author's enthusiasm endorsed it or his indifference acquiesced in it, the result has been treated as part of a natural social

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[41] *A Textual Companion*, p. 55.

[42] Some of the coincidences between Tate and later editors are particularly remarkable: 1. '*And* as my Patron thought on in my Pray'rs -' (*The History*, B3r l.29), as opposed to the original 'As my *great* patron thought on in my prayers, -' (*The Parallel*, Q 133); the same emendation appears in Rowe, Pope, Theobald, Warburton, Collier and Hanmer. 2. '*Have* his Daughters brought him to this pass?' (*The History*, E3v l.17); originally '*What*, his daughters brought him to this passe,' (*The Parallel*, Q 1585), and '*Ha's* his Daughters brought him to this passe?' (*The Parallel*, F 1844); Tate's editing of this line coincides with F4, Rowe, Pope and Knight. 3. 'squints the Eye, and makes the *Hair-lip*' (*The History*, E4v l.16). Different variant spelling in F and Q editions; same spelling in F4, Rowe, Pope, Theobald, Warburton, Johnson and Jennens.

> process, culminating in collaborative public performance. The script of that performance is, for us, the first complete text of the play.[43]

The attempt to draw a line between 'Shakespeare's commitment to collaborative performance' and 'theatrical corruption' necessarily leads to the recovery of an old-fashioned concept of authorship, according to which only what was carried out by Shakespeare himself, or under the supervision of his company, is worth an editor's attention. As a consequence, all the changes undergone by a text after the first performance, which Taylor significantly refers to as 'adaptations', lose any editorial significance, in that the link between the text and the 'primary agent', the author, is missing:

> The difference between the revision of *King Lear* and the adaptation of *Measure for Measure* is thus not a difference in place (the theatre) or in action (textual revision); it is not even a difference of quality (for it is possible to regard the changes to *King Lear* as unfortunate, and the changes to *Measure for Measure* as inspired); the difference is a difference in agent. Shakespeare seems to us to have been the author of the changes in *King Lear*, but not the changes in *Measure for Measure*. In both cases, in all such cases, editorial practice must be based upon an attribution, and editors cannot avoid making an attribution one way or another.[44]

The New Bibliographers' ideal copy-text used to be the author's holograph, or what Taylor calls 'pre-script'. Taylor's definition of 'script' certainly shifts the attention from Shakespeare the author to Shakespeare the dramatist, and authorship is consequently perceived as a collaborative effort; his attempt to define and fix a particular moment in the existence of a play text as the ideal copy-text is, however, clearly affected by the necessity of finding a criterion through which textual authority can be stabilised again.

What Taylor defines as a 'script' is definitively the most significant stage of existence of a play text; its appropriateness, however, should not be regarded as "absolute" authority. One of the most important theoretical advancements brought forward by the theory of revision is the redefinition of the very idea of textual authority. Even if *The History* is not an "orthodox" edition of *King Lear* but an adaptation, carried out by someone other than Shakespeare, it nonetheless enjoys a peculiar kind of

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[43]G.Taylor, 'Post-Script', in *Shakespeare Reshaped 1606 - 1623*, by G.Taylor and J.Jowett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 237-38.
[44]'Post-Script', p. 238.

"authority" which certainly conforms better to the new ideas of the author as a "reviser" and of a play text as a "script" than an author-centred concept of textual authority.

As Thomas Berger noticed in pointing out the importance of 1630 Q2 *Othello* - an early theatrical document that, in Berger's own words, 'represents the first "conflated" text of *Othello*, probably the first consistently conflated text of any Shakespearean play'[45] - the lack of any direct relation to an independent authorial manuscript is obviated by the fact that the text of Q2 reflects a definitive stage in the "theatrical existence" of *Othello*. Moreover the editorial choices made by Q2's collator, whose competence as an editor is amply demonstrated by Berger's analysis of some of the emendations newly introduced in Q2, are of a very special interest to modern editors. As Berger explains, 'The quality of his [Q2 collator] choices is an aesthetic question, open to debate. But the proximity of that editor in 1630 to Shakespeare's language is neither aesthetically questionable nor debatable.'[46] Even if *The History* is an adaptation, it shares a very similar kind of authority with Q2 *Othello*: both texts represent an important stage in the theatrical history of the original, and Tate's editorial choices, like those of Q2 *Othello* collator's, stem from a sense of the language and theatre much closer to Shakespeare's than ours.

The strictures imposed by the related theories of the author's final intentions and the stability of textual authority prevented editors from taking notice, let alone endorsing, the choices made by early "editors" like *Othello* Q2 collator and Tate. The unexpected relevance of Tate's experience as an editor and the radical changes brought forward by the advancement of the theory of revision in the early 1980s call for not only a shift from one kind of textual authority to another, but also a radical revision of the concept of textual authority, and consequently for a more flexible distinction between "editors" and "adapters" and a reintegration of early theatrical documents like Q2 *Othello* and *The History* within the mainstream of Shakespeare's editorial tradition.

[45]Berger, p. 145.
[46]Berger, p. 146.

TABLE 1.1

SHAKESPEAREAN READINGS IN TATE - ACT 1	PROVENANCE	ALTERNATIVE READINGS
B1r 1.11 - Well then, legitimate Edgar	Ff	Q 313 - well the legitimate Edgar
B2r 1.12 - my Lords	Qq	F 39 - the Lords
B2r 1.14 - my Liege	Qq	F 40 - my Lord
B2r 1.15 - Give me the Mapp	Ff	Q 35 - The map
B2r 1.17 - state	Qq	F 44 - Age
B2r 1.18 - conferring	Ff	Q 41 - Confirming
B2r 1.18 - years	Qq	F 45 - strengths
B2r 1.18-9	Qq	F 46-50 - 5 extra-lines
B2r 1.21-2	Qq	F 54-5 - 2 extra-lines
B2r 1.24 - Goneril	Qq	F 59 -
B2r 1.25 - I do love you	Qq	F 60 - I love you
B2r 1.25 - words	Qq	F 60 - word
B2r 1.31 - shady	Qq	F 69 - shadowie
B2r 1.31 -	Qq	F 69-70 - 1 extra line
B2r 1.32 - issue	Qq	F 71 - issues
B2v 1.10 - not least	Qq	F 89 - and least
B2v 1.10 - our last	Ff	Q 75 - the last
B2v 1.10 - in our dear Love	Qq	F 89 - to whose young love + 1 extra-line
B2v 1.12 - to win	Ff	F 91 - to draw
B2v 1.13 -	Qq	F 92 - extra "speak"
B2v 1. 15-6 -	Qq	F 94-5 - 2 extra-lines
B2v 1. 16 - can	Qq	F 96 - will
B2v 1. 32 - To love my father all *	Qq	F 110 -
B2v 1. 33 - goes thy heart with this?	Ff	Q 94 - goes this with thy heart?
B3r 1. 4 - night	Ff	Q 100 - might
B3r 1.17 - with	Ff	Q 120 - in
B3r 1.32 - mad	Ff	Q 137 - man
B3r 1.37 -	Qq	F 176 - Alb. Cor. Deare Sir forbeare.
B3v 1.1 - do *	Qq	F 177 -
B3v 1.6 - since	Qq	F 182 - that
B3v 1.6 - vow	Qq	F 182 - vows
B3v 1.13 - why	Qq	F 194 -
B3v 1.15 - protect	Qq	F 196 - shelter; Q rephrase of protection
B3v 1.15 - the	Qq	F 196 - thee
B3v 1.16 - has most justly said	Qq	F 197 - has most rightly said
B3v 1.18 - friendship	Qq	F 195 - freedome
C1r 1.1 -	Qq	F 382 - and reverence
C1r 1.15 - discord	Ff	Q 395 - discords
C1r 1.16 -	Qq	F 438 - and

C1r l.16-7 -	Qq	F 439-44 - 6 extra-lines
C1r l.29 -	Qq	F 537 - so it may come
C1r l.29 - thee	Ff	Q 484 - the
C1r l.29 - labours	Ff	Q 484 - labour
C1v l.15 - SD Exit	Ff	Q 515 -
C2r l.10 - Come, Sir *	Qq	F 731 -
C2r l.11 - your	Ff	Q 650 - that
C2r l.12 - transforms	Qq	F 733 - transport
C2r l.14 - why	Qq	F 739 -
C2r l.17 - come, Sir	Qq	F 746 -
C2r l.24 - then	Ff	Q 672 - thou
C2v l.4 - cause	Qq	F 807 - more of it
C2v l.6 - upon thee	Ff	Q 712 - upon the
C2v l.7 - untented	Ff	Qa 712 - untender
C2v l.8 - pierce	Ff	Qa 712 peruse
C2v l.8 - thee	Ff	Q 713 - the
C2v l.10 - ye	Ff	Q 714 -
C2v l.10 - lose	Ff	Q 714 - make
C2v l.13 -	Ff	Q 719 - Thou shalt, I warrant thee
C2v l.33 - Well, you may bear too far	Ff	Q 729 -

TABLE 1.2

SHAKESPEAREAN READINGS IN TATE - ACT 2	PROVENANCE	ALTERNATIVE READINGS
C3v l.7 - morrow	Ff	Q 900 - even
C3v l.20 - superserviceable	Ff	Q 912 - supercinicall
C3v l.25 -	Ff	Q 921 - agoe
C3v l.26 -	Ff	Q 921 - I beat thee
C3v l.30 - come with	Ff	Q 926 - bring
C4v l.15 - some	Ff	Q 983 - a
C4v l.28 - bring	Qq	F 1203 - fetch
C4v l.29 - Sir	Ff	Q 1015 -
C4v l.32 - respect	Qq	F 1209 - respects
C4v l.34 - stocking	Ff	Q 1019 - stopping
D1r l.2-3 - his fault is much, and ... for't	Qq	F 1221 -
D1r l.3 - needs	Ff	Q 1033 -
D1r l.7 -	Ff	Q 1038 - 1 extra line
D1v l.1 - bare	Qq	F 1266 -
D1v l.8 - messenger	Qq	F 1274 - messengers
D1v l.10 - How	Qq	F 1280 - Ha
D1v l.14 -	Ff	Q 1102-3 - 2 extra lines
D1v l.16 - By Juno I swear	Ff	Q 1101 -
D1v l.18 - They cou'd not	Ff	Q 1103 - They wou'd not
D1v l.21 - impose	Ff	Q 1106 - purpose
D1v l.37 - the	Ff	Q 1126 - this

D2r l.7 - have travell'd	Ff	Q 1158 - traveled
D2r l.7 - hard to	Qq	F 1363 - all the
D2r l.7 - meer fetches	Ff	Q 1158 - meare Iustice
D2r l.12 - Fiery	Ff	Q 1163 - What fiery
D2r ll.14-6 - I have inform'd them	Ff	Q 1165-6 -
D2r l.19 - commands her Service.	Qq	F 1378 - commands, tends, service,
D2r l.20 - Are they informed of this?	Ff	Q 1168-9 -
D2r l.21 - Fiery!	Ff	Q 1169 - The fiery Duke
D2r l.30 - Go	Ff	Q 1179 -
D2v l.11 - you	Ff	Q 1202 -
D2v l.13 - slack	Qq	F 1418 - scant
D2v ll.14-9 - Ha! How's that? ...	Ff	Q 1204-5 -
D2v l.33 - never	Ff	Q 1219 - no
D2v l.40 - rash mood --	Qq	F 1453 - rash mood is on.
D3r l.2 - thy ... thee	Ff	Q 1233 - the ... the
D3r l.22 - stockt	Ff	Q 1251 - struck
D3v l.14 - now	Qq	F 1512 -
D3v l.26 - now	Qq	F 1532 -
D4r l.17 - man	Ff	Q 1345 - fellow

TABLE 1.3

SHAKESPEAREAN READINGS IN TATE - ACT 3	PROVENANCE	ALTERNATIVE READINGS
D4v l.1 - winds	Ff	Q 1433 - wind
D4v l.12 - tax	Ff	Q 1448 - taske
D4v l.18 - have	Qq	F 1677 - will
D4v l.19 - battle	Qq	F 1678 - battailes
D4v l.27 - wanderers	Ff	Q 1470 wanderer
E1r l.3 - pudder	Ff	Q 1478 - powther
E1r l.10 - than	Ff	Q 1487 - their
E1r l.12 - my wit begins	Qq	F 1722 - my wits begin
E1r l.16 - and	Ff	Q 1497 - that
E1r l.18 - sorry	Ff	Q 1500 - sorrowes
E2v l.13 - scarse	Ff	Q 1373 - not
E2v l.35.1 SD - storm still	Ff	Q 1530 -
E3r l.4 - enter	Qq	F 1782 - enter heere
E3r l.7 - contentious	Ff	Q 1536 - crulentious/ tempestious
E3r l.12 - beats there	Ff	Q 1544 - beares their
E3r l.14 - home	Ff	Q 1546 - sure
E3r l.15-6 - in such a night	Ff	Q 1547 -
E3r l.18 - gave all	Ff	Q 1549 - gave you all
E3r l.24 - I'll pray and then I'll sleep	Ff	Q 1554-5 -
E3r l.26 - storm	Ff	Q 1556 - night

E3r 1.35 - Five fathom and a half ...	Ff	Q 1563-4 -
E3v 1.1 - blows ... wind	Qq	F 1828 - blow windes
E3v 1.1 - cold	Qq	F 1828 -
E3v 1.1 - mum	Ff	Q 1571 -
E3v 1.1 - thy bed	Ff	Q 1571 - thy cold bed
E3v 1.6 - thy daughters	Ff	Q 1573 - thy two daughters)
E3v 1.8 - flame	Ff	Q 1576 - foord
E3v 1.12 -	Qq	F 1839 - O, do de, do de ...
E3v 1.15 - agen.	Qq	F 1843 - againe, and there.
E3v 1.16 - have	Ff	Q1585 - what
E3v 1.17 - didst thou give	Qq	F 1845 - would'st thou give
E3v 1.27 - justly	Qq	F 1861 - justice
E3v 1.35 - woman	Ff	Q 1612 - women
E3v 1.36 - brothels	Ff	Q 1613 - brothel
E3v 1.36 - plackets	Ff	Q 1613 - placket
E3v 1.37 - books	Ff	Q 1613 - booke
E4r 1.1 - Sesey	Ff	Q 1615 - cease
E4r 1.3 - thy	Qq	F 1881 - a
E4r 1.5 - and yet	Qq	F 1883 -
E4r 1.7 - ha!	Ff	Q 1619 -
E4r 1.14 - wall-nut	Ff	Q 1639 - wall-wort
E4r 1.23 - smulkin	Ff	Q 1648 - snulbug
E4r 1.29 - and	Ff	Q 1721 -
E4r 1.32 -	Ff	Q 1726 - mock trial
E4r 1.34 - they	Ff	Q 1760 - Theile
E4v 1. 6 - `em	Qq	F 2028 - him
E4v 1.11 - you	Qq	F 2035 -
E4v 1.13 - Persian	Ff	Q 1774 - Persian attire
E4v 1.14 - foul	Ff	Q 1628 - foul fiend
E4v 1.15 - at	Ff	Q 1629 - till the
E4v 1.16 - squints	Ff	Q 1630 - queues
E4v 1.21 - alight	Ff	Q 1632 - O Light
E4v 1.22 - arroynt the witch arroynt her	Ff	Q 1633 - arint thee
E4v 1.30-1 - fire and food	Ff	Q 1659 - food and fire
E4v 1.32 - Good my Lord	Ff	Q 1662 - My good Lord
F1r 1.3 - same	Ff	Q 1663 - most
F1r 1.11 - Tow'r came	Ff	Q 1689 - town come
F1r 1.20 - hard Hearts	Ff	Q 1771 - hardnes
F3r 1.1 - his house	Ff	Q 1692 - the house
F3v 1.29 - enkindle	Ff	Q 1894 - unbridle
F3v 1.31 - treacherous	Ff	Q 1895 -

TABLE 1.4

SHAKESPEAREAN READINGS IN TATE - ACT 4	PROVENANCE	ALTERNATIVE READINGS
F4v 1.25 - my Fool usurps my Bed -	Qq	F 2297 - My Foole usurpes my body

G1r 1.26 - to Better -	Qq	F 2184-7 - 4 extra ll
G1r 1.26 - Who comes here	Ff	Q 1922 - Who's here
G1v 1.2 - years	Ff	Q 1926 -
G1v 1.25 - Get thee away	Ff	Q 1958 - Then prethee get thee gon
G1v 1.26 - hence	Ff	Q 1959 - here
G1v 1.37 - And yet I must	Ff	Q 1972 -
G2r 1.2 - man's son	Ff	Q 1976 - man
G2r 1.2-3 -	Ff	Q 1977-81 - 5 extra ll
G2r 1.6 - undo	Ff	Q 1988 - under
G2r 1.19 - vext	Ff	Q 2152 - vent
G2v 1.33 - Edmund	Ff	Q 2190 -
G3r 1.20 - we	Qq	F 2431 - I
G3r 1.29 - In better phrase	Ff	Q 2231 - With better phrase
G3v 1.5 - walk	Qq	F 2452 - walk'd
G3v 1.9 - so high	Ff	Q 2246 - its so hie
G3v 1.27 - him	Ff	Q 2267 -
G3v 1.30 - may	Ff	Q 2269 - my
G3v 1.33 - friend	Ff	Q 2272 -
G4r 1.2 - white hairs	Qq	F 2544 - the white hayres
G4r 1.3 - summet	Ff	Q 2283 - sommons
G4r 1.10 - how is't?	Ff	Q 2292 - how feel
G4r 1.18 - make them	Ff	Q 2302 - made their
G4r 1.25 - Coyning	Qq	F 2530 - crying
G4r 1.33 - hewgh	Ff	Q 2317 - hagh
G4r 1.34 - Marjorum	Ff	Q 2319 - Margerum
G4v 1.1 - with a white beard	Ff	Q 2322 - ha Regan
G4v 1.3 - every thing that I said	Ff	Q 2324 - every thing I saide
G4v 1.13 - Die. Die for Adultery	Ff	Q 2333 - die for adulterie
G4v 1.29 - Civet, good Apothecary, to sweeten	Qq	F 2571-2 - Civet; good Apothecary sweeten
G4v 1.32 - Let me wipe	Ff	Q 2347 - Here wipe
G4v 1.35 - mark but the penning	Ff	Q 2352 - mark the penning
G4v 1.37 - all the letters	Qq	F 2583 - all thy Letters
H1r 1.7 - this world	Ff	Q 2360 - the world
H1r 1.14 - obey'd in office	Ff	Q 2366 - so bade in office
H1r 1.16 - thou hotly lust'st	Ff	Q 2368 - thy bloud hotly lusts
H1r 1.21 - small Vices	Qq	F 2607 - great Vices
H1r 22-3 - Place sins with Gold)	Ff	Q 2371-2 -
H1r 1.29 - my Fortunes	Ff	Q 2375 - my fortune
H1r 1.33 - Mark	Ff	Q 2378 - marke me
H1r 1.37 - lay hand upon him, Sir	Ff	Q 2354 - lay hands upon him, Sirs
H1r 1.36.1 - Enter two or three Gentlemen	Qq	F 2630 - Enter a Gentleman
H1v 1.1 - your dearest Daughter	Ff	Q 2384 - your most deere
H1v 1.4 - surgeons	Ff	Q 2387 - churgion
H1v 1.7 - a smug bridegroom	Ff	Q 2393 - a bridegroom

H1v 1.8 - my Masters	Qq	F 2642 - Masters
H1v 1.10-1 - to Shoe a troop of Horse with Felt	Ff	Q 2382 - to shoot a troupe of horse with fell
H1v 1.11 - I'll put in proof	Ff	Q 2382 -
H1v 1.15 - tame to Fortune	Ff	Q 2416 - lame by Fortune
H1v 1.23 - old unhappy Traytor	Ff	Q 2423 - most
H1v 1.29 - `vurther Casion	Ff	Q 2430 - * cagion
H1v 1.31 - and let poor	Ff	Q 2432 - * let poor
H1v 1.33 - as 'tis	Ff	Q 2434 -
H1v 1.34 - Ballow	Ff	Q 2435-6 - Battero
H2r 1.1 - vor	Ff	Q 2438 - for
H2r 1.14 - our	Ff	Q 2453 - your
H2r 1.32 - Phys.	Qq	F 2745 - Gentleman; Q 2476.1 - Doctor
H2r 1.36 - Had challeng'd	Qq	F 2782 - Did challenge
H2v 1.1 - expos'd	Qq	F 2783 - oppos'd
H2v 1.1 - jarring	Ff	Q 2509 - warring
H2v 1.1-2 - Winds? / My	Ff	Q 2510-3 - To stand .. mine, 4 ll.omitted
H2v 1.2 - My enemy's Dog	Ff	Q 2513 - mine iniurious dogge
H2v 1.26 - hands	Qq	F 2811 - hand
H2v 1.26 - nay	Qq	F 2812 -
H2v 1.28 - mock me	Ff	Q 2537 -
H2v 1.30 -	Qq	F 2816 - Not an hour more

TABLE 1.5

SHAKESPEAREAN READINGS IN TATE - ACT 5	PROVENANCE	ALTERNATIVE READINGS
H3v 1.17 - stung	Ff	Q 2830 - sting
H4r 1.13 - tree	Ff	Q 2643 - bush
H4v 1.12 - And that's true too	Ff	Q 2656 -
H4v 1.25 - has	Qq	Q 2708 - had
I1r 1.6 - Addition	Ff	Q 2728 - advancement
I2r 1.14 - within the Lists of the Army	Ff	Q 2770-1 - In the hoast of the Army
I2r 1.17 - Agen, Agen	Ff	Q 2775 - Bast. Sound. Againe.
I2v 1.35 - This was practice	Ff	Q 2811 - This is meere practice
I2v 1.39 - Shut	Ff	Q 2814 - Stop
I2v 1.40 - hold, Sir	Ff	Q 2815 -
I3r 1.1 - any Name	Ff	Q 2815 - any thing
I3r 1.3 - shall	Qq	F 3117 - can
I3r 1.6 - Bast.	Ff	Q 2819 - Gon.

TABLE 2.1

FOLIO ACCIDENTALS IN *The History*	PROVENANCE	ALTERNATIVE READINGS
B3r 1.3 - thy truth	F1	F2, F3 - the truth
C1r 1.22 - confer of this design	F1	F2, F3 - confer this design
C1r 1.31 - What art thou?	F1, F3	F2 - What are thou?
C2r 1.15 - Do's Lear walk thus?	F1, F3	F2 - Dos Lear walk thus?
C2r 1.29 - Darkness and Devils!	F3	F1, F2 - Darkness and Divels
C2v 1.10 - that ye lose	F3	F1, F2 - that you loose
C2v 1.15 - Hear Nature	F3	F1, F2 - Heare, Nature
C2v 1.16 - Dear Goddess	F3	F1, F2 - deere goddess
C3v 1.10 - I'th' mire	F1	F2, F3 - I th' mire
C3v 1.11 - prethee	F2	F1, F3 - Prythee
D1r 1.12 - travell'd	F3	F1, F2 - travail'd
D1v 1.4 - sometimes	F3	F1, F2 - sometime
D1v 1.26 - salutations	F1	F2, F3 - salutation
D2r 1.7 - travell'd	F3	F2, F3 - travail'd
D2v 1.8 - thy sister's	F3	F1, F2 - thy sisters
D3r 1.11 - know't, my	F1	F2, F3 - know't my
D4v 1.1 - winds	F3	F1, F2 - windes
D4v 1.3 - Hurricanos	F2, F3	F1 - Hyrricano's
E3r 1.12 - there. Filial	F3	F1, F2 - there, filial
E3r 1.13 - this hand	F1, F2	F3 - his hand
E3v 1.12 - inch'd	F1	F2, F3 - archt/arch'd
E3v 1.38-9 - hawthorn	F3	F1, F2 - hauthorne
E4v 1.19 - nine-fold	F1	F2, F3 - ninefold
E4v 1.22 - the witch	F3	F1, F2 - thee witch
F1r 1.6 - let me	F1, F2	F3 - us
G2r 1.1 - scar'd	F3	F1, F2 - scarr'd
G2r 1.6 - undo	F3	F1, F2 - undoe
G2r 1.14 - leading	F1, F2	F3 - lending
G3v 1.29 - gone, sir	F1	F2, F3 - good sir
G3v 1.31 - treasury	F1	F2, F3 - treasure
G3v 1.33 - hear	F1	F2, F3 - here
G4r 1.3 - summet	F2, F3	F1 - somnet
G4r 1.3 - bourn	F3	F1, F2 - bourne
G4r 1.12 - o'th' cliff	F1	F2, F3 - oth' cliff
G4r 1.28 - Nature's	F1	F2, F3 - Natures
G4r 1.32 - i'th'	F1	F2, F3 - ith'
G4v 1.5 - winds	F1	F2, F3 - wind
H1r 1.12 - I, sir	F1, F2	F3 - sir
H1v 1.25 - to't	F3	F1, F2 - too't
H1v 1.27 - darst	F2, F3	F1 - dar'st
H1v 1.31 - volk	F3	F1, F2 - volke
H1v 1.32 - zwagger'd	F1	F2, F3 - zwagged
H1v 1.32 - not ha'	F1	F2, F3 - ha'

H2v l.21 - ev'n	F1, F2	F3 - e'en
I2r l.6 - virtue	F1, F2	F3 - virtues

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary and secondary material are listed separately. This bibliography contains all the books and articles cited in my footnotes, along with some additional secondary material I have read while researching for this project, which is directly relevant to the topics discussed in this thesis. No abbreviations have been used.

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