THE RENAISSANCE HERMETIC TRADITION IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

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SYNOPSIS

The plays of Shakespeare included in this thesis are:- As You Like It, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night, The Merchant of Venice, Hamlet, King Lear, Timon of Athens, Pericles, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest. Some receive a much greater share of attention than others do. This is due to their relevance to the areas of the Renaissance Hermetic Tradition which are covered here. Renaissance interpretations which come through the work of Agrippa, Bruno, Ficino, Pico and John Dee are included.

The areas covered here are Numerology, with its Pythagorean and cabalistic roots and its renaissance interpretations. Orphic Music which is also derived in part from Pythagoras' influence. The New Eden with its utopian links and the renaissance hankering for a return to the original golden age. I discuss Saturnian Melancholia, both mundane and inspired, and the insight this gives us to Hamlet and his supposed madness. Also included is Alchemy and its relevance to an understanding of Timon of Athens.

The first chapter, which is Numerology lays a foundation on which the subsequent chapters rest, and leads up to the concept of the magus who was considered the master and manipulator of such esoteric powers.

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Introduction

In Hamlet, Shakespeare, through Hamlet, informs Polonius and the audience of the role of the actor in society:

> Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear? Let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time. After your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.
>
> (2.2.520-24)

Whilst issuing instructions about the interpolation he wishes the players to add to the play they will perform, Hamlet again touches upon the procedures and purposes of acting:

> Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, than you o'erstep not the modesty of nature. For anything so o'erdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own features, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure.
>
> (3.2.17-24)

As both playwright and actor himself, Shakespeare must necessarily have had some conception of the role of the actor in society. Although it is a dangerous business to suggest that Shakespeare's own beliefs are mouthed by his characters it is perhaps equally dangerous to discount what Hamlet says on this subject. Particularly when we bear in mind that such a conception, with its associated constraints and aims, is still of paramount importance to many playwrights and actors today. This is not to say that all such attempts to reflect the universe and the peoples who inhabit it are based in realism. Many such attempts to understand the universe are modern-day parables and allegories verging on speculative fiction. Such literature, particularly drama, cannot reflect the entire universe in which they are set, but rather depict fragments of it and the inter-relationship of elements making up those fragments.

Thus, we would not expect the universe reflected by Shakespeare's plays to be altogether complete, realistic, or different from the universe depicted by his contemporaries. Although his method of treatment, mode of perception, and degree of craftsmanship, might present us with an entirely different and perhaps more complex series of images to assimilate and understand, we would expect to see some degree of common-ground, at least in the basic philosophy of the time. I suggest that such an area of common-ground resides in the renaissance hermetic philosophy.

In her numerous books and articles Frances Yates has striven to recreate, establish and unify the seeming disparate threads of the philosophy of the renaissance. She has concentrated in that area of the philosophy relating to the hermetic tradition, as have Alan Debus, Fritz Saxl, C. H. Josten and her fellow labourers at the Warburg Institute, contributors to its journal, and the contributors to Ambix.

The understanding and application of this philosophy in the literary field has led to new insights into the works of Chapman, Spenser, Marlowe, Milton, Jonson and in some cases Shakespeare himself. This approach is reflected in the work of Yates herself and in the work of Fowler, Hankins, Hieatt and Nicholl. In the visual arts it has led to a revaluation of Durer, Leonardo, and Rembrandt. This knowledge of contemporary occult philosophy, illustrated in the works of the above artists and writers; the fact that John Dee, renaissance magus and philosopher, was adviser to Elizabeth I; that Giordano Bruno met with the Oxford 'pedants' and lectured at Wittenberg University; that Sir Walter Raleigh is known to have carried out 'experiments' in the Tower, together with James I's book Daemonologie, illustrate the wide area of its influence.

Not all who knew of or wrote about occult philosophy were experts in the area or among its supporters. Nor was the knowledge that such a philosophy existed and was practised limited to courtly and artistic circles. A mob, inflamed by reports that John Dee was a necromancer and involved with the occult, destroyed a large part of his library and house at Mortlake. An in-depth knowledge of occult philosophy may not have been prevalent among the 'mob', but they did understand that it existed, and that it called upon and utilized supernatural powers.

If Shakespeare chose to dramatise such a philosophy it does not mean that he either practised or adhered to such a school of thought, merely that such a school of thought was prevalent at the time. His handling of such subjects and the qualities with which he endows his heroes might lead us to make judgements as to his own degree of knowledge, belief, and commitment, but before doing so it is necessary to isolate the tangled threads within his plays.

To understand best the implications that can be drawn from any such threads a familiarity with the philosophy itself is essential. Such an understanding will further illuminate the literature and art of the time, and in its turn the literature and art will illuminate the time itself.

There is not room here for a deep and complicated exposition of renaissance hermetic/occult philoscphy, but a simplified foundation is essential and I will attempt to establish such for the following chapters to rest upon.

England, more northerly than the mainland of Europe, and separated from it by the Channel, was, and still is, in certain respects separated from the mainstream of European thought by this same divide. Consequently the hermetic tradition took longer to

become integrated into a philosophy in England than in the rest of Europe. By the time the philosophy reached England it had become tinged with Protestantism and Reformation. Thus, while being purged by the Roman Catholic church and abandoned or driven underground in Southern Europe, it was finding more fertile and tolerant ground in Northern Europe and England.

The occult tradition stems from two forms of gnosticism, the Jewish (mainly Spanish) Cabala and the gnostic writings of the supposed Hermes Trismegistus. Both traditions of gnosticism were Christianized by Pico, who felt that they could be shown to prove Jesus as the Son of God and the Messiah. He felt that he could convert Jews and Moslems to this truth by using his perception and understanding of the Cabala, an idea echoed by several of his learned successors, not least Reuchlin who also strove to understand Pythagorean numerology and mathematics.

This synthesis of Jewish and Greek/Egyptian gnosticism into one philosophy with a Christian outlook also incorporated several elements of medieval philosophy. In essence then the renaissance hermetic tradition was the unification of Christian religious philosophy and neoplatonic and cabalistic tradition into a united whole. This united whole is the foundation of occult philosophy today.

The renaissance occult philosophy was one of order. Not the order of hierarchies espoused by Ulysses in Troilus and Cressida, but striving to place man in the universe in an ordered manner, not as a random creation of mutating atoms. At its most basic and exalted levels it dealt with man and the universe, and the interrelation between the two. This need to place man securely within the universe led to a revaluation of man as the microcosm, and the

universe as the macrocosm. Man was the universe written small, a complete whole representing the larger whole, but being simultaneously only a small piece or fragment of it.

Between the microcosm that was man, and the macrocosm that was God or the Universe, there were thought to be spheres. These spheres of increased knowledge and contact with the divine were known as the emanations of the sephiroth or the angelic hierarchies. Such a concept provided a philosophical ladder that led from man, the microcosm, to the Divine, the macrocosm. Through learning, skill, aptitude, and a holy life it was thought possible for certain people to gain access to this ladder that led to the stars. The hermetic/cabalistic tradition provided the essential rungs of knowledge to aid in an ascent of the ladder of the angelic hierarchies. The aim of such an ascent was to gain power through the supernatural realms, and to aspire to the Divine. In the correct context this was not a challenge to God, but man fulfilling his ultimate potential by regaining lost powers, as it was understood in gnostic philosophy. There were men, or at least characters in literature, who aspired to the Divine as a direct challenge to God. Milton's Paradise Lost depicts the fallen angels who would challenge God and His power rather than share such power with Him.

The prevalent fear in relation to occult philosophy was that in aspiring to climb the ladder of the angelic hierarchies, man became exposed to supernatural forces, good and bad. Without adequate protection by 'good', 'white' powers, it was possible to fall under the influence of 'bad' or 'black' sources of power. Marlowe's Faustus finds himself caught up in a tug-of-war between these two superior and opposing forces of 'good' and 'bad'.

The renaissance hermetic philosophy provided instruction to the novice on how to set about an ascent of the ladder of the angelic hierarchies, and how best to protect himself from 'evil' or demonic forces. In 'Melencolia 1' Durer's seated melancholic figure has a form of protection in the 'Square of Jupiter', which would provide the beneficent power of Jupiter. This square of Jupiter is of specially arranged and calculated numbers which evoke the power of Jupiter. Other forms of protection were available through ritual incantation or talismanic images. These forms of protection were of great importance to the practitioner of the occult.

Numbers were of immense importance in the hermetic tradition. Pythagoras thought so, and their relationship with the Hebrew alphabet, and with certain numerological and mathematical manipulations which were thought to reveal divine truths, added to this belief.

Number symbolism and number manipulation are a foundation stone of occult philosophy. From this foundation comes music, which is highly mathematical in concept and, it was thought, could speak to the souls of man, animals and plants, and even minerals in the case of Orpheus. There was also thought to be a harmony of the spheres that the inspired could hear; Pythagoras was said to be one of these inspired people, and is said to have trained his disciples with music as they slept. Pericles, upon regaining his sanity, tells Marina that he hears the music of the spheres. The stronger a man's relationship or response to music, the more in tune with the harmony of the spheres he is; and thus more in tune with an abstract, universal and Divine language and harmony.

When characters such as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern speak of their inability with or insensitivity to music, we should be alert

to what such a deficiency implies. They are not to be considered as spiritually orientated people, and are not amongst the ranks of the 'inspired'; indeed a negative response to music may well be judged to represent the reverse of such an 'inspiration'. In The Merchant of Venice, Lorenzo voices renaissance doubts about such people. In The Tempest Prospero/Ariel's chief weapon is music, and it is interesting that this music is used in a way that is reminiscent of Pythagoras's training of his disciples.

The renaissance neoplatonic philosophy was based essentially upon a rediscovered Greek text which was believed to come from a past Golden Age of learning and life. That age was thought to be closer to the Kingdom of God because it related to man's gnostic knowledge and its loss, which resulted from his fall and led to his exile from Eden. It was hoped that with a renewal of such knowledge and an elevated spiritual outlook, a new kingdom that was a united empire, untroubled by petty squabbles and devastating wars, could be established. Man had already fallen from favour and Christ had died on the cross so any suggestion that it would be possible to return to the old Eden was ruled out. However it was believed possible to create a brotherhood among men which would revive and regenerate the old standards and beliefs, and such a revival would produce, by its unifying elements, a New Eden; a new Golden Age that man could anticipate and strive for. Such a kingdom would be born from the unification of warring countries or peoples under the rule of a divinely elected monarch. This monarch would be the personification of the ideal philosopher king.

Ideal Utopian states and Commonwealths, where men lived in harmony, side by side, without fear, avarice or need were prevalent in the writing and philosophy of the time. Augustine's City of God,

Campanella's City of the Sun, More's Utopia, Bacon's New Atlantis and Montaigne's essays are examples of threads of this thought. In The Tempest, Gonzalo talks of a commonwealth and in Richard II John of Gaunt refers to England as Eden. In France 'The Family of Love' was a secret society working toward such an ideal, whilst in later years, in Germany, the Rosicrucian Brotherhood, with similar aims and ideals, mysteriously arose.

The macrocosm/microcosm philosophy, if held to be true, implied a series of other parallels. If many men made up a kingdom, and if each man was a small unit reflecting the macrocosm, then many men, a kingdom, was a larger reflection of the macrocosm than was the single man. Equally, if God were the supreme power in the macrocosm, in this microcosm the King was the representative of God in the temporal sphere, whilst in Catholic countries (which predominated at the time), the Pope fulfilled the role of 'God on earth', and was seen to rule the spiritual kingdom. For one man to represent God in the microcosm a king was required who was also a religious or philosophical leader, and held power in the temporal sphere with the blessing of the Pope. Just as all the levels between the individual and the macrocosm of the universe could be said equally to be larger microcosms than man, so all levels below man, animals, plants, and minerals could be seen as a part of the larger microcosm of the natural world.

As it was possible for man to perfect himself and climb the ladder of the angelic hierarchies so it was possible for all things in the natural world to become 'perfected', or redeemed from their basic flaws. In the mineral world, gold and silver were considered as the most perfected of the metals. It was felt that base metals could be improved, perfected, redeemed, transmuted to a more elevated

substance, by the philosopher who understood the path up the ladder of perfection. Such a man, by virtue of his understanding and knowledge, and practical ability to apply this knowledge, could evoke an elevation and purification in substances that were base or flawed. Such a practice leads directly to alchemy, which is the perfection of base metals to the more divine.

The man who sought only to elevate base metals to gold in the mineral world, and did not seek to elevate himself or his fellow man spiritually, was not fulfilling the requirement of elevation for spiritual reasons, but was doing so only to gain wealth and power in the temporal world. This is at odds with basic occult philosophy which exists primarily for man's spiritual growth and advancement, and the progress of his soul up the ladder of the angelic hierarchies. Thus two kinds of alchemist existed; one who used the chemical methods of the alchemist but who cared nothing for spiritual elevation, and another who sought spiritual elevation and for whom the by-products of gold were unsought, if not unwelcome. Ben Jonson dramatises the former type in The Alchemist, and I hope to show that Shakespeare has dramatised the latter in Timon of Athens.

In renaissance occult theory it was accepted that man could aspire to, and find a place in the angelic hierarchies. That this is often depicted as a ladder suggests different levels of attainment between the apprentice, novice or initiate, and the magus. Access to this ladder was through knowledge and skill. Certain men would, by virtue of their ability with numbers or sciences, or even a religious outlook, find that they were better equipped intellectually to find a place on this ladder. Amongst the better equipped were those who fell under the influence of Saturn, and became Saturnian Melancholics. They could find themselves

'inspired' melancholics without the effort required of the other initiates or novices and as their 'inspiration' developed they discovered a natural ability in occult matters. That this natural ability was perhaps unsought and left them without angelic or spiritual protection was a worry for those predisposed to the melancholic humour. This 'inspiration' made 'natural magi', not able to control much of their 'inspired' vision because they lacked the required level of knowledge, learning, discipline or protection. However it was possible for such a 'natural' magus to use his inspiration wisely, and through practice and familiarity learn some degree of control. Milton writes of this inspired melancholia in 'Il Penseroso' and I would suggest that Shakespeare also dramatises this condition in Hamlet.

In the following chapters I hope to demonstrate and illustrate how Shakespeare has taken some of these major occult themes and has incorporated them as an integral part in some of his dramas.

Popular drama may seem an unlikely vehicle for such ideas and philosophy, but referring to the works of Shakespeare's contemporaries, such as Jonson and Marlowe, it is seen that Shakespeare was not the only renaissance playwright to incorporate or dramatise such themes in his plays. It is almost a renaissance tradition, as can be demonstrated by the renaissance propensity for a multi-layered approach to literature, be it the Faerie Queene, Paradise Lost, or the popular drama of the day. Indeed, the renaissance delight in hidden parables and allegories led to the production of handbooks on numerology and emblems, which attempted to provide an insight into such codes. That such handbooks found a market suggests that such 'hidden truths' were not always readily understood by or accessible to the general public, but that the use of such hidden

references was probably quite widespread. Shakespeare's inclusion of such subject matter would not render him a curiosity, but would rather reinforce the idea that he was a man of his time.

A simple illustration of this hidden reference can be found in Spenser's Fairie Queene. In Book One there is Una, and in Book Two, Duessa. The names Una and Duessa relate to the numbers one and two; one is the symbol of goodness in that it relates to God, and two is the opposite, manifesting in the form of evil and the demonic. Shakespeare too employs such a device in The Tempest, the name Trinculo indicated three colours (Trin-culo). This reinforces the number three theme of the play, and this 'hidden meaning' alerts us to others that might exist as fragments of an underlying, hidden theme. It also suggests that all is not quite what it seems, if Trinculo is a jester, then he is a jester with a difference, wearing three colours and not the two normally associated with the jester's motley.

This is not the first work attempting to reinterpret Shakespeare's plays in this way. The most notable of those who have already taken steps in this direction are Frances Yates, John Hankins and Charles Nicholl, but even so only a handful of plays have been dealt with, and not all those in depth. Other renaissance writers have received more attention in this area. Particularly Spenser, who has been dealt with in the work of Hieatt and Fowler.

The apparent lack of attention to Shakespeare in this area might be explained in several ways. It could be that poetry lends itself more readily to numerological clues in line and book references than drama. Drama, written to be performed rather than published, would not easily adapt to such an approach. Thus other ways of conveying clues must be found, these may be carried in a

name, a character, a number of actions, the action of the play, the interaction between groups of characters, or the insistence on a particular number or theme. Clearly a different approach is required. This is particularly necessary in the case of Shakespeare's plays because of his lack of interest in printing and publication, and the consequent various errors thought to be in most texts. Revisions by subsequent editors, who in the name of comprehension and clarity have, perhaps inadvertently, edited out essential clues, may compound this problem.

These elements have the effect of further masking that which is already hidden, and can lead one to follow a fruitless path of research. It is therefore essential, but not always simple, to remove all traces of wishful thinking, relying solely upon textual clues. Even so, such clues are not always initially obvious or conclusive. Sometimes it is necessary to follow hints residing in the corruption of names that appear to relate to some branch of the occult, or to attempt to understand a speech, image, or emblem, that seems inadequately explained by our present comprehension of it. Equally there are times when a wider perspective of the patterning of the play suggests ideas and movements which may be obscured by over-attention to minute detail. Thus the 'blackness' of the second half of Timon of Athens, and Timon's strange disappearance from the drama alerts suspicions. When the images of gold, stones and philosophers are projected onto this backdrop an inkling of a theme that hints at alchemy begins to take shape. Equally suspicious is Hamlet's melancholia, his talk of a cherub, and pre-cognition of plots against his life. The addition of Wittenberg, and the names Rosencrantz and Guildenstern which link with Rosenkrautz (the rosicrucian movement) and Gold-star

(jews and the cabala) give a position, even if tenuous, from which to move forward, and hint at something of substance beneath the surface of the play. Even though Rosencrantz and Guildenstern alert one to hidden complexities in the play, their role is still not resolved in an occult sense and remains full of enigma and mystery that has resisted my attempts to make them yield up their secrets. Although the Bad Quarto spelling of "Gilderstone" may suggest alchemy.

Some plays lend themselves more readily to this approach than others. The Tempest, having at its centre a practitioner of the 'art', is one such play, but others of Shakespeare's plays carry such themes. For this reason I have included in the following chapters other plays, amongst them Timon of Athens, and Hamlet, but have found the lure of the multiplicity of these themes in The Tempest impossible to resist.

The areas that I discuss in the following chapters are: numerology, orphic music, the new Eden, alchemy, Saturnian melancholia and the magus. They do not represent the tradition in its entirety. Conspicuous by their absence are areas of interest such as astrology, necromancy, witchcraft, and satanic figures. This is not because these areas are either more or less difficult to discuss, but simply because there is not room here to discuss all areas. A selective approach was required, and I have preferred to discuss areas that together suggest a comprehensive, if incomplete, reflection of the philosophy itself.

The following chapters represent a sequence which is itself a microcosm. Numerology with its strong Greek influence is the essential foundation stone and starting point for the tradition, and consequently an ideal position from which to proceed. The subsequent chapters represent the rungs up the ladder which leads

to the ultimate position of magus.

My intention in the following chapters is not to replace readings that are already proven and accepted, but rather to add another dimension to perception and understanding of both the plays and their author.

CHAPTER 1 NUMEROLOGY

The importance of numbers cannot be over-stated in relation to the renaissance hermetic tradition. It is the foundation upon which the tradition is built. The importance attached to numbers does not proceed from any one direct source, but represents a variety of diverse philosophies which come together to make a unified and esoteric whole. The medieval number system, derived in part from that of Pythagoras and his disciples which is the best known system, and which:

> fixed the relationship of the numbers to one another and, accordingly, the places of the astrological aggregates in the cosmic order.[1]

The Christianized version of the cabalistic manipulation of number also contributes something of its own, whilst the Vitruvian ideals of proportion and ratio have a part to play. This was because, as Hopper points out in his Medieval Number Symbolism:

> The recognised value of figurative utterance lies in its ability to clarify or intensify ideas or emotions through appeal to sense experience. By symbolism the abstract may be brought into the realm of the concrete, where it is immediately recognizable and meaningful. (vii)[2]

John Dee, often referred to as England's renaissance magus, was descended, (philosophically), from a long line of philosopher-magicians; Ficino, Pico, Agrippa, and Bruno. For all these men, as well as Dee's immediate successor Robert Fludd, mathematics was the essential foundation of the occult/hermetic tradition. It was not just philosophically elevated, it was an essential part of the sub-structure. Much of what was occult and hermetic required not only mathematical calculation, but due to the cabalistic influence, also required a considerable skill in number manipulation. Dee's

interest in numbers can be illustrated by reference to his widely admired 'Mathematical Preface' to the English Euclide of 1570. He also wrote his own mathematical masterpiece, the 'Monas Hieroglyphica'. As a renaissance magus Dee:

> was deeply interested in utilitarian mathematics, geography, navigation, mechanics and the fine arts - especially music, architecture, painting and drama. Even greater, though, was his interest in mathesis or mathematical magis, and theurgy, the influence of supernatural powers. Dee considered the various studies inseparable.[3]

Dee's occult activities led to his being branded a conjuror by his less learned contemporaries, but erudite scholars at home and abroad respected him. He enjoyed a considerable degree of popularity at Elizabeth's court and was numbered amongst the Queen's advisers, not despite his mathematical/occult activities but because of them.

> In England Dee was known primarily as a mathematician (which in the opinion of Dee and his colleagues, was synonymous with philosopher). Mathematics was still suspected of being one of the black arts,...and to ordinary people it was a frightfully dangerous study.[4]

Edward Worsop writes that Dee was accounted 'ye prince of Mathematicians of this age'[5]. Dee was not so universally accepted outside the court of Elizabeth, and he spent a period of time in prison accused of calculating to enchant the Queen (Mary). He died in comparative poverty during the reign of James I, after numerous attempts to clear his name from the narrow-minded slurs of the period had failed.

Thus we see in the renaissance, or in the case of John Dee at least, mathematics, occult philosophy, and witchcraft were seen to be synonymous, and indeed they were synonymous. John Dee was both a recognised and respected mathematician and an accepted magus because of his mathematical skill.

Since mathematics was of such import to occult study it is fitting that John Dee was not the only magus or philosopher to show an interest and aptitude in this area. Cornelius Agrippa and Giordano Bruno, both forerunners of Dee, also displayed skill and interest in mathematics and numerology. Indeed Bruno's interest in numerology led him to alter some of Agrippa's numerological material in book III of De Occulta Philosophia, and converting the three's that Agrippa had strived to preserve, and converting to four the guides of religion: 'Love, Art, Mathesis, and Magic'[6]. This 'mathesis' is not mathematics, as we learn from Bruno's 'Thirty Seals' but rather by it 'we learn how to abstract from matter, motion, and time to reach intellectual contemplation of the intelligible species'[7]. Mathesis then implies an aid to meditation leading to revelation.

> This word 'mathesis' is also used in the dialogue (by Bruno) so strangely called 'Idiota Triumphans' ... The theme of the 'Idiota Triumphans' is that Mordente has spoken from 'inspired ignorance' ... Later on it is said quite clearly that by 'mathesis' Mordente's figure is to be mystically interpreted, after the manner of the Pythagoreans and Cabalists. In short, Mordente's compass has become what Kepler calls Hermetics, or mathematical figures used, not mathematically, but with 'Pythagorean intentions'.[8]

The Pythagorean and numerological approach to the diagram was traditional in the Middle Ages. This was a tradition which the renaissance occultism not only sanctioned, but enlarged and elaborated upon with hermetics and cabalism.

Thus the degree of importance that was attached to numbers in occult philosophy begins to emerge. An important element that contributes further to this is the Hebrew alphabet, which was used in cabalistic letter/number manipulations. Letters in this alphabet equate with numbers. Divine and esoteric truths were thought to be revealed by letter, and consequently number,

manipulation. In this context numbers, like letters, become abstract symbols of hidden truth and knowledge. Thus each number, like each planet, was endowed with a specific meaning, a nature of its own. The date of one's birth, the numerological value of one's name, the date of the day, and one's age, would all contribute to a picture. Similar in concept to a map of the heavens, with abstract images that could be read as a series of astrological configurations, or separate notes on a musical scale that make up a harmony or disharmony, in tune or out of tune with the harmony of the spheres and the Universe. In essence this method amounted to a number symbolism. There were other methods that employed more complex mathematical calculations, but the results of these calculations were also to be interpreted symbolically or mystically.

Spenser is known to have used both kinds of symbolism in his works. In his book Short Time's Endless Monument, Professor Kent Hieatt has shown the intricate number symbolism in the 'Epithalamion', by which it is metrically and structurally ordered. He has shown that 365 long lines represent the day in hours and the year in days, whilst other lines represent the movement of the planets. In Spenser and the Numbers of Time Alastair Fowler has argued that in The Faerie Queene there is to be found a symbolic meaning attached to each book, as well as the numerological symbolism implicit in the names Una and Duessa.

These arguments pertain to poetry, because the structure, constraints and requirements of drama are so removed from those of poetry, we would not expect the method of representing numbers to be the same, although similarities may exist. In his recent book Numerology, Professor John MacQueen suggests the ways in which authors may have utilized numerology:

> In a poem, the number of lines or stanzas is usually involved; in a prose work the number of chapters or books: in either, the groups of characters who appear, the names which they are given, the number of incidents which take place, the length of time occupied by single episodes and the entire action, may help to establish the mould. On the whole, a wider, more complex and more delicate range of effects is open to the poet than the prose writer. (p.4)

Thus we may expect to find number symbolism represented in character names; there may be numerological clues in the language, in the dramatic structure, in the interaction between certain numbers or characters, or in the reiteration of a number at a certain stage of a drama or perhaps even throughout the entire length of the play.

Although there is no work that deals exclusively with a numerological approach to the entire Shakespeare canon, there have been notable attempts in certain areas. Alastair Fowler and I. C. Butler have attempted a numerological analysis of 'Venus and Adonis'[9], and Daniel Banes argues for a connection between the Cabala, cabalistic numbers and The Merchant of Venice[10]. John E. Hankins, in his book Backgrounds of Shakespeare's Thought has discussed the relevance of 7 and 9 in relation to the ages of man, and the ages of Shakespeare's characters. He has also spent considerable space dealing with 'The Square of Sense', and applying it to Shakespeare's work. Despite such attempts remarkably little research has been undertaken in this area. This may be because word and line counting is difficult in drama, particularly so in the case of Shakespeare, where there is no evidence that he supervised any of the printing, indeed the evidence rather suggests the opposite. It is thought that he was more concerned with the printing of the long poems than the plays. Another problem arising when applying number-theory to Shakespeare's plays is our ignorance

of where he intended the act and scene divisions to fall. For this reason we cannot apply the same sort of book-number theory that Fowler has applied to the Faerie Queene.

Although and because there is vast scope for research in this area I shall limit myself to simpler number symbolism. That is, those numbers which relate to character names, are reiterated in a variety of ways throughout the play, or relate to the number of characters on the stage or involved in a phase of the action. Just as Hankins has limited himself to 7 and 9, I shall limit myself to 3 and 4. This is not an arbitrary choice, and should add to an understanding of Bruno's preference for 4 and Agrippa's for 3, while providing a foundation for the subsequent chapters.

3, which corresponds to the graces and the trinity, is the Christian power number. It is the number that Agrippa so determinedly preserved in his De Occulta Philosophia. 4 is the number that Bruno chose to elevate in importance and to which he converted Agrippa's 3. 4 is a Hebrew and pre-Christian power number. Thus we can see that both 3 and 4 can be thought of as religiously orientated power numbers. As well as relating to the Trinity and Christianity, 3 being the first odd number is also the first male number. In renaissance philosophy odd numbers were thought of as masculine, and even numbers as feminine. 1, representing the 'Monas' and unity, God and the mens, is not considered a number at all. 2, being even, represents the first female number, and was thought to relate to evil, being the opposition to one. We can see the use Spenser made of this symbolism in the characters of Una (1) and Duessa (2) in Books 1 and 2 of The Faerie Queene. Thus 3 relates to the first male number, a representation of the Trinity and Christianity, the

first female number and the symbol of God combined. We should not be surprised if where the number 3 dominates a play or person, that play or person focuses our attention upon man/God, microcosm/ macrocosm themes, or is in some way connected to Christ or Christian ideas. When Bruno converted the 3's in Agrippa's philosophy to 4's, he was plainly representing his philosophy as de-Christianized in a way that reflected the Egyptian Genesis, and thought that preceeded Christianity. Thus a movement between 3 and 4, or in a reverse order, would not be out of place in plays containing similar elements or relating to a Hebrew source. Bruno was not representative, indeed he was rather a man alone. Other renaissance magi emphasise their links with Christianity, although borrowing heavily from Bruno's version of occult philosophy.

The number 3 was more than a representation of Christian philosophy, it was also seen in the following way:

> The generative union of sundered opposites in the triad was the first of the so called marriage numbers. In the Orphic cosmogony, for example, the marriage of Heaven and Earth is mediated by a third principle Eros.[11]

Whilst 3 is the first of the marriage numbers 4 is the number of friendship and concord. To Pythagoras is attributed 'friendship is equality, equality friendship'. This 'cryptic phrase ... embodies an ancient conception of 4 as a cosmic number of (harmony) and concord ... (relating) to the creation of world order out of the elements.'[12]

Held in a stable bond because:

> each one of the elements appears to embrace the two elements bordering on each side of it by single qualities; water binds earth to itself by coldness and air by moisture; air is allied to water by its moisture, and to fire by warmth.[13]

As Fowler points out, the elements are locked together by the very

qualities that differentiate them. Plato's conception of this cosmic concord was that 'it became indissoluble by any agent other than Him who had bound it together'. In this reference to opposing elements brought together to form a union of harmony and concord, we can see the underlying idea of the union of opposites emerge, which reiterates, on a larger scale, a quality of 3 which is the union of sundered opposites. That there is an implication that comes from Plato that none but 'Him' can break this union, implies, symbolically, a union not unlike marriage. In marriage the opposites of male and female are brought together in harmony, and this union is considered binding. If other opposites such as love and hate, can also be brought to a harmonious union with peace and friendship, the result will be a harmony that mimics the cosmic harmony of the four elements. Even modern-day numerologists still retain this understanding of the number 4. Bosman states the meaning of number 4 is as follows:

> Thus out of a disharmony and disunity a harmony and unity can be wrought by the successful manipulation of numbers or elements by a chain that links correctly the opposing and complementing elements.[14]

The complexity of the meaning attached to the number 4 increases when we consider that:

> The Pythagoreans also referred to the Tetrad as being of the nature of AEolus, the wind. This obviously applies to the nature of the prepared Substance, which is capable of changing, and, like the wind, 'bloweth where it liseth', beling alike plastic and changeful ... Four is the number of foundation ... It is, moreover, the number of co-relation, ... The word used by the Egyptians for Four, AFT, means, according to its letters, 'Power (A) going forth (F) to a definite end (T) ... The sound of the Greek term 'TETRAD', also conveys the idea of a definite (T) rolling forth (R) towards diversity (D), ... the word four in Hebrew is ARBO, or ARBANG, and contains the sign of 'Potentiality', the directive sign of 'inner development'; ... the word is the emblem of multiplication, of a material becoming.[15]

This added dimension implies that not only is 4 the symbol of unification of opposites that creates a harmony in a bond that is 'unbreakable by man', but it is also a foundation from which 'multiplication, material becoming', and 'inner development', or change can result. Whilst Daniel Banes adds a further dimension when considering 4 in relation to the Cabala when he asserts:

> of the 'Ten Kabbalistic Sefirot (Emanations) four equates with 'Hesed and Gedulah' which translated into English means Loving kindness and Greatness ... and in this way it is also to be seen as the base and the foundation ... 'According to Kabbalah, Loving kindness is the right arm of Adam Kadmon, the original form of the Universe or the Macrocosmos. The first impulse toward creation came with the manifestation of Loving kindness.'[16]

In Spenser and the Numbers of Time, Fowler's words indicate a similarity between the Pythagorean 3 and the cabalistic 4, he says:

> early cosmogonies in the Pythagorean tradition commonly distinguished three stages of creation: (1) undifferentiated unity; (2) the separation out of two opposite powers to form the world order; and (3) the reunion of the opposites to generate life ... In Orphic cosmogony ... the marriage of Heaven and Earth is mediated by a third principle, Eros.[17]

From this we know that 4 was also considered the union of opposites or opposing forces of the four elements, which generates a harmony, or a base, from which new life or a new order can proceed. Since each new stage of progression between 1-9 contains that which has gone before, plus something more, we can say that 4 contains 3 plus more, and the mediating principle of Eros is as much present in the number 4 as the orphic cosmogoners believed it to be in 3.

With this seemingly cryptic statement about Eros I turn to Northrop Frye's A Natural Perspective. Whilst viewing Shakespeare's comedies from a well distanced perspective and with a different starting point to the one attempted here, Frye underlines the

theme of identity, and the need of many of the characters in the comedies to come to know themselves through inner discovery and inner development. This inner discovery and inner development connects these characters to the Hebrew meaning of number 4, a discovery generally made after much confusion over roles and sexual identity. Frye notes that:

> the centre of the comic drive toward identity is an erotic drive, and the spirit of comedy is often represented by an Eros figure who brings about the comic conclusion but is in himself sexually self-contained, being in a sense both male and female, and no expression of love beyond himself. The fair youth of the sonnets is such an Eros-Narcissus figure ... In Shakespeare the characters Puck and Ariel are Eros figures of a similar kind: they are technically males, like Eros himself, but from the human point of view the ordinary categories of sex hardly apply to them. In the background of Puck is the Indian boy who, ... changes from a female to a male environment. ... In other comedies the heroine disguised as a boy fills the same bisexual Eros role. For it is usually the activity of the heroine, or, in some cases, her passivity, that brings about the birth of a new society and the reconciliation of the older one with it ... Shakespeare, ... very seldom emphasizes the defeat of one society by another. His main emphasis falls on reconciliation, and this in turn involves bringing the happy young couples into continuity with the society of their elders.[18]

Here then Frye refers to and identifies the Eros figure in Shakespeare's comedies, whilst stating that sometimes the heroine doubles for Eros, but whatever, the plays proceed to a reconciliation of opposing parts. Frye has in his own way isolated the basic numerological patterns to be found in the comedies. These, he suggests, move to a harmony and reconciliation that the number 4 represents, whilst containing within that 4 the Eros principle. Seen from this viewpoint it seems far from accidental in the comedies. Although the plays contain elements related to the number 4 and are resolved in a harmonious way (as is the requirement if they were connected with the number 4), this does not in itself indicate that Shakespeare had any intention of using or dramatising the number 4 or any number.

Considering only some of the comedies and not all, as Frye as done, we will note that there are other points that help to establish Shakespeare's intention with relation to the number 4. If we refer to As You Like It, Twelfth Night, and A Midsummer Night's Dream, we will see that at the centre of each of these comedies there is a central core of four people whose love-relationships are built upon one another. There may be more than four people, two couples, involved in these plays, but the relationships outside the central four are not essential to the resolution of the relationships of the central four, whereas the central four may well be essential for the reconciliation, resolution and establishment of harmony of the remaining character and consequently for the resolution of the play.

In As You Like It our attention is focused upon Rosalind and Celia, their friendship, the adventures and consequent resolution of problems that this friendship brings. So great are the ties of this friendship that Celia is prepared to, and does, renounce her position in the material world to accompany Rosalind to the Forest of Arden. Once in the Forest the centre of our interest still resides with Rosalind. In this instance it is in relation to her relationship with Orlando. Here she plays her own Eros figure or cupid. Disguised as Ganymede, unable to express herself in truly female terms, she keeps Orlando's interest in herself as something fresh and maturing, he is continually reminded of Rosalind by Rosalind as Ganymede. Thus, in a triangle that relates to love, on one side of Rosalind stands Celia and on the other is Orlando. In the context of the play, and number symbolism, the one missing element is one that would oppose Orlando and Celia but would also bind them more firmly together. Opposing Orlando is Oliver the brother who hates, whilst it could be said that Oliver also

represents an opposite to Celia. He is the opposite sex and he represents hate in kinship whilst Celia represents love.

If we look at Orlando's position we see on one side of him Ganymede/Rosalind signifying love and on the other side Oliver his brother, who should feel brotherly love, but instead feels and manifests hate. This brotherly-hate is an echo of that manifested on a higher level in the hate of Duke Frederick for his deposed brother. These men that hate stand alone, they are not united by their unnatural but common emotion. Indeed Frederick openly criticizes Oliver for hating his younger brother and threatens his life if he cannot deliver Orlando to him. This theme of hate and love is emphasised throughout the play. Rosalind loving Orlando and discovering that her father has loved his father. Duke Frederick is unable to be friendly with Orlando because his father (Orlando's) had disagreed with Frederick. Emotions are perpetuated in the family by a movement from father to child. Celia is not prepared to accept these prescribed standards of love and hate. She loves Rosalind despite her father; will not concur with his dislike of Orlando and finally marries Oliver the other son of the father, whom her father hates. Celia more than any other character in the play refuses to accept the standards prescribed for her.

The happy and successful resolution of the play requires more than the marriage of Rosalind and Orlando, and more than a perpetuation of love and hate to another generation: hate must be overcome. If the future for Rosalind and Orlando is to hold any promise, one of them must regain their position in society, and having no power other means are essential; love is their only weapon. If the potential and requirement of the number 4 is to be realised in the play, they should be in a position from which the

foundation of a newly reconciled and harmonious society can grow. A new society that grows out of the old organically, rather than as a challenge to it. The number 4 represents the union of opposing development and outward movement in harmony and concord can proceed. For this abstract concept to be brought down to earth, the men who stand on either side of Celia must change. Her father, who has usurped rulership, must repent and relinquish his office. Oliver, who falls in love with her, must manifest a greater degree of love for his brother than he has until now. The hate he feels must be replaced by brotherly-love, a love borne out of an inner growth or borne out of the love that Oliver feels for Celia. These changes must be as a result of inner growth and not an external or military challenge. It is not the love Oliver feels for Celia that alters his attitude to Orlando. It is Oliver's realisation of the perversity of his own feelings and his adjustment from hate to love that makes it possible for him to give and receive love from Celia.

Oliver's change of heart is more of an internal change than anything else. Orlando's courage and brotherly concern stimulate this change, but it is Oliver's new perception that permits him to see this love and his own hate with a new vision. In Oliver's case, brotherly-love replacing brotherly-hate leads to his union with Celia, who is the symbolic personification of friendship. The resulting conviviality replaces the former unfounded emnity and hate. Thus through inner change and growth, opposing elements are brought together in a union of concord and harmony that will be the basis and foundation of the material becoming of a new society. In this the full potential of Rosalind, Celia, Oliver, Orlando, and the number 4 is fully realized.

Celia who loves where her father hates is as important to the resolution of As You Like It as is Rosalind. Without Celia's loyalty to Rosalind there would have been no exodus to the Forest of Arden, no search by Duke Frederick, no threat to Oliver, and in all probability no Touchstone, and no chance encounters with Orlando. Celia then who seems to play a supporting dramatic role, plays a major structural one. The men on either side of Rosalind, the deposed Duke her father, and Orlando her lover, require that the men on either side of Celia, her father and her lover, temper their attitudes with the loving-kindness and genuine friendship that Celia manifests for Rosalind.

It is whilst searching for Celia that Duke Frederick is converted and it is as a result of Celia's love that Oliver decides to abdicate his position in favour of Orlando. Celia then is essential to the resolution of the play, but she is only one element in the four person chain of the four courtly lovers.

Looking at Twelfth Night it becomes apparent that the maneuverings of the central four characters and a disguised heroine fulfilling an Eros-role, is not a peculiarity manifested only in As You Like It. At the centre of Twelfth Night is Viola disguised as Cesario, employed by Duke Orsino to do his wooing for him. Indeed, she fulfils to the ultimate an Eros role. The closely entwined relationships of the central four characters rely one upon the other for a happy resolution. Enmity as manifested in As You Like It is not one of the concerns of Twelfth Night. Instead there is Olivia's refusal to entertain any thoughts of men or marriage. It is only Viola in the guise of the Eros figure who overcomes this determination of Olivia's.

The arrival of Viola introduces a third person into the stagnant relationship between Orsino and Olivia. We know that a third principle, the Eros, mediating principle was thought to be present by the orphic cosmogoners in the marriage of Heaven and Earth. As Cesario, Viola fulfills this principle ideally. In the context of the play Viola cannot put to rights all the problems that exist. No matter how enchanting she may appear to Olivia as Cesario, she is not male and consequently cannot fulfill Olivia's wishes, neither is it possible for Cesário to convince Olivia to love Orsino. It is only with the arrival of Sebastian, who is both Viola's opposite-half as her brother, and Olivia's opposite-half as male, that the essential ingredients for a resolution are represented.

Without the arrival of Sebastian no happy resolution would be possible. The Orsino, Olivia, Viola triangle would continue until the situation became increasingly complex. Orsino, obsessed with his passion for Olivia, rather than with Olivia herself, would in all probability continue in his relentless pursuit of her until either death or marriage made her unavailable, and left the way clear for Viola. For a happy resolution in tune with the symbolism of the number 4, a fourth person in the shape of Sebastian is essential to the play, and before this fourth element is introduced we are aware that neither 2 or 3 elements are adequate for any such resolution. Sebastian's speedy marriage to Olivia is only possible because of the mediating Eros-role played by Viola. The resolution of the play and the reconciliation of the opposites in a stable bond is not possible until the fourth and final element has been introduced. In Twelfth Night it is almost as if Shakespeare is playing with the concepts of 3 and 4, and further research may show

that Olivia, Viola, Orsino, and Sebastian relate to the elements earth, air, fire and water (not necessarily in that order). If this were the case the renaissance audience, who might identify these links more readily than we, may have anticipated Sebastian's arrival, based on their own numerological knowledge.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a different situation. It has yet again at its core four young lovers who love and hate simultaneously in a confused way. The friendship of Hermia and Helena is tested as are the love entanglements of all four. Old friendships and alliances are ruptured and dissipated by the confusions and trials that Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia and Helena undergo. Love and friendship fall foul of Puck's Eros-like manoeuverings, but as with As You Like It the set-backs are temporary. Further manoeuverings by Puck bring about a successful resolution, but this resolution could equally be brought about by an inner growth, that is in its turn brought about by the manoeuverings of Puck and Oberon.

The focal point of the play is the four young lovers, but their story is told within the framework of two other male/female relationships. Occupying an important position in the structure of the play is the feud between Titania and Oberon, a feud only resolved when Titania accepts that she too is prone to enchantment that makes her laughable, whether an enchantment of an emotional or supernatural nature. In this context Titania too changes because of an inner growth. The newly conquered Hippolyta focuses attention upon a male-dominated society which neither the Queen of the Fairies nor the Queen of the Amazons have power enough to overcome. The four young lovers who occupy more closely the middle strata of society find themselves in a position that suggests a greater degree of sexual equality.

The confusion in A Midsummer Night's Dream has resulted from both Hermia and Helena's refusal to accept a male determination of the future direction of their lives. One of the deeper meanings attached to the number 4 as Pythagoras is said to have expressed it is, "friendship is equality, equality friendship". The women of the middle strata of the society in A Midsummer Night's Dream achieve a greater degree of equality in their relationships than Titania or Hippolyta, and this suggests, if we follow Pythagoras, that their relationships are based in friendship and love, this basis being an echo of the symbols attached to number 4. By the firmness of their resolve, together with help from Puck, the Eros figure of the play, a balance, peace and harmony is achieved in their realm. Once again, until all four are in agreement no harmony can be achieved. Their 'new order' does not challenge the old order of the male-dominated societies of the court and the fairy world, despite having grown out of a situation that has seemed to challenge the masculine figures of authority in the play in the shape of Theseus and Egeus.

It is important at this stage to identify the difference in the relationships of the young lovers to those of Titania/Oberon and Hippolyta/Theseus. Titania is Queen of the fairies, a rank she holds independently of Oberon, just as Hippolyta is the Queen of the Amazons independently of Theseus. Their relationships reflect a more political situation. Both Theseus and Oberon need to feel they have won a victory and Titania and Hippolyta must be seen to have bent to their will and power in a representation of an old order of subservient women and arranged marriage.

The Merchant of Venice presents us with a different situation although Shakespeare does again appear to be playing with the concepts

of 3 and 4 but in yet another way. Again we have what appears to be the central relationship of Portia and Bassanio, upon the success of which Gratiano and Nerissa are dependent for the success of their own relationship. Antonio's signing to Shylock's bond and his subsequent involvement with Shylock, is all done in the name of friendship and love so that Bassanio may aspire to be the husband of Portia. The subsequent success achieved by Bassanio in the casket ordeal makes the marriage of Gratiano and Nerissa possible. It does nothing to bring about the marriage of Lorenzo and Jessica, although Portia's involvement in the court does aid them in the long term prospect.

Portia, Nerissa and Jessica all spend some time in the play disguised as boys. Jessica's disguise is instrumental in her escape from Venice, but it holds no surprise for Lorenzo. The disguises of Portia and Nerissa do not bring about their own relationships although the ring trial tests Bassanio and Gratiano and finds them wanting. Portia's disguise does save Antonio from the sure death resulting from his relationship with Bassanio. For Gratiano and Nerissa, Bassanio's success in the casket ordeal fulfils an Eros function in their relationship, whilst Antonio fulfils that role for Portia and Bassanio. In this way we see that the fate of Gratiano and Nerissa is tied up with the fate of Portia and Bassanio, and, strangely, the fate of Antonio is tied up with the effectiveness of the disguised Portia.

Thus, if we merely consider the numbers of the central characters and couples of The Merchant of Venice, a deviation from the familiar pattern is apparent. The emphasis which at one stage seems to fall on financial opportunism and friendship begins to focus on something else, and that something else is not the equality and

friendship we have seen in As You Like It, nor is it the same searching for self identity and knowledge that proceeds from strong and surviving love and friendship in A Midsummer Night's Dream, and although we have three women disguised as men we do not have a bisexual Eros figure as in A Midsummer Night's Dream, As You Like It or Twelfth Night.

At this point I part company with Northrop Frye, who thinks that Portia can be seen to fulfil this role. To me it seems that something else is plainly happening in The Merchant of Venice. It is the lead casket chosen by Bassanio which contains Portia's portrait. Lead is related to both Saturn and to Alchemy, being the 'base metal' from which gold may be made by the correct treatment and handling by an alchemist. The melancholic humour is derived from its relationship with Saturn. In The Provocative Merchant of Venice Daniel Banes suggests this humour is strongly focused upon in this play, he suggests that both Antonio and Shylock are melancholics. As Frances Yates points out in The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age (p.23) Saturn is also related to the Jews.

Not only are there three caskets to be chosen from in The Merchant of Venice, there are three thousand ducats for three months, three couples and six would-be lovers. The number symbolism of The Merchant of Venice is not altogether stable. As I have noted there are references to 3's but there is also an attempt by Shylock to both emphasise this bias toward 3's, and change the 3 to 4 where possible. This act of conversion in itself is reminiscent of the same attempt in the writings of Giordano Bruno, who was seen to de-Christianize his philosophy by such a move. Shylock is already of the camp that Bruno was seen to join, in that he is a jew.

This point is best illustrated by the conversation between Shylock, Antonio and Bassanio about the proposed loan (1.3). The scene begins with Shylock repeating "three thousand ducats" and the stipulated length of time for the loan, "three months". He further emphasises the supposed benefit of being the third possessor of the loan when he tells Antonio and Bassanio the tale of Jacob and his uncle Laban's sheep.

> This Jacob from our holy Abram was
> (As his mother wrought in his behalf)
> The third possessor: ay, he was the third
> (1.3.67-69)

He goes on to illustrate how Jacob benefitted from being the third possessor.

That Bassanio has asked for the loan either on his own behalf or Antonio's, with Antonio standing surety, suggests that there is a link between Jacob and the final possessor of the three thousand ducats. Bassanio would similarly be the possessor of the ducats were this a loan that only involved Shylock, Antonio and Bassanio. If Bassanio were the third possessor the chain of 3's would be an even more powerful symbol. We could add this latest 3 to the three caskets, three thousand ducats, three months, three couples, three disguised women, and three suitors who risk so much in choosing to abide by the rules of suit for Portia, but Shylock has already made a point that Bassanio will not be the third possessor but the fourth for he has already said:

> I am debating of my present store,
> And by the near guess of my memory
> I cannot instantly raise up the gross
> Of full three thousand ducats: what of that?
> Tubal (a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe)
> Will furnish me: (1.3.48-53)

This of course makes Bassanio the fourth possessor of part of the sum of ducats and not the third. Even when Salerio and Solanio

discuss Shylock's outrage at the loss of Jessica, his jewels, and his money, they also emphasise 4:

> A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
> Of double ducats, stol'n from me by my daughter!
> (2.8.18-19)

By a trick of multiplication they have quadrupled the original 'sealed bag', and in Act III sc.i. Tubal's information about Jessica's behaviour in Genoa includes the sum of 'fourscore ducats'. We can see then that the 4's and often a repetition of 2's pertain to Shylock, whilst 3's pertain to the Christian camp. Even the various multiplications of the original three thousand ducats that are offered to Shylock add up to a multiple of 3 and sometimes of 4 also.

Portia makes various offers to pay Antonio's debt, the first is "six thousand ... doubled and then trebled", the result being 36 thousand and the sum of 3 and 6 adds to 9 of which 3 is the square root, also 36 divided by 3 results in 12 which itself adds to 3 but which can also be calculated to be 3^2 multiplied by 4 (3 x 3 x 4). Her next offer is to pay the debt twenty times over, this results in 60 thousand, 6 is also divisible by 3 and that result (20,000) is divisible by 4. In the court scene Shylock refuses this thirty-six thousand ducats, but he arrives at the sum by a different method:

> If every ducat in six thousand ducats
> Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,
> I would not draw them, (4.1.85-87)

Here Shylock seems to change the emphasis to 6, of which Banes has much to say in The Provocative Merchant of Venice.

This movement between 3 and 4 links with Neville Coghill's argument for a movement between the Old and the New Testament of The Bible. The 4 relating to Shylock and non-Christian philosophy is the Hebrew power number, and indicates the Old Testament whereas

3 which relates to the Christians is the Christian power number and indicates a new testament philosophy. Both philosophies being further emphasised by Shylock's call for justice and Portia's for mercy.

The number symbolism of The Merchant of Venice also involves the number 6. There are three couples, six people whose lives are entwined, this 6 is of course 2 x 3, and it can be seen to represent the trinity of the spiritual world and a trinity in the world of matter. The world of matter is of great importance in The Merchant of Venice. Indeed Bassanio's first words about Portia, and his attitude seem to suggest that he is no more than a fortune hunter. His worldly ambition is not subservient to his emotional life. Bassanio is not prepared to love and live in poverty, he wants success in the world of matter; he wants a rich wife. The number 6 also represents the outcome of legal matters related to marriage, whilst the number 5 relates to those legal matters such as dowries.[19] Daniel Banes has devoted some considerable time and space to the movements and interactions of characters in the play. By his method the number 6 is important, relating, he thinks, to Portia and her role in the drama. Banes links his interpretation directly to the Cabala, and to Cabalistic number symbolism.

As stated, the movement between 3 and 4 in The Merchant of Venice goes some way in confirming the arguments of Neville Coghill. In saying so I do not contradict the findings of Daniel Banes, who has indicated that 6 (in Cabalistic terms) equates with 'loving-kindness'. There can be little doubt that loving-kindness is the reason Antonio finds himself involved with Shylock. It similarly motivates Portia's willing involvement in the court procedure. Equally in Pythagorean number symbolism 6 relates to legal matters

related to marriage, this again focuses our attention on Antonio's bond and Portia's defence of him. As previously noted it can be seen to represent the trinity in the world of matter, and the material is never far away in The Merchant of Venice.

The number manipulation of The Merchant of Venice illustrates Shakespeare's symbolic use of three numbers in one play. Whilst in Twelfth Night he has used both 3 and 4. In The Tempest he uses 3 again in a way that suggests his previous attempts have been almost experimental and were leading to a zenith in this play. Here Shakespeare uses and illustrates the Christian and trinitarian aspects of 3. To be able to follow his use of symbols relating to Christianity or God; the microcosm and macrocosm, it is necessary to make another excursion into the realms of number symbolism and philosophy.

The number 3 relates to the trinitarian aspect of God and the Universe. It represents the three in one God, it is the first odd number and relates to the male, and as the sum of 1, (not a number but the symbol of the monad and God), and 2, (the symbol of the manifestation in the material world plus the added meanings of female). Ficino and Agrippa sought to preserve the 3's in their teachings and writings, only Bruno sought to negate the 3 and elevate the 4. This act branded him as defiantly non-Christian. The elevation of the number 3 can be seen in Agrippa's approach to the Universe, which was in itself a symbol of the Monad, God, who is three people in one. For Agrippa like many predecessors and successors, the universe was divided into three worlds, the intellectual world, the celestial world and the material world. This related to the microcosm that was man and to the specific areas of the mind (intellect), spirit (celestial) and body (material).

At the centre of The Tempest we find Prospero. A magus controlling the minds of his visitors with his mind through his commands to a celestial character in the shape of Ariel. In that the mind can be said to control the body, Prospero is able to exert certain control over the bodies of those visitors, by this celestial presence. Prospero's bodily needs are catered for by the third person of his trinity, Caliban. Other 3's that manifest in the play are the three guilty men, Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian; three menial characters, Trinculo, Stephano and Caliban. The name Trinculo breaks down to Trin-culo (3 colour) and would indicate the three primary colours red, yellow and blue; three seasons, a decision is made to ignore winter, the season of barrenness, and in this way Shakespeare reverses what Bruno has done, he pointedly converts a 4 which exists in reality to a 3 which represents the ideal. There are three supposed goddesses representing these three seasons, Iris, Ceres, and Juno. The period that the shipwrecked characters spend on the island as Alonso points out is three hours (5.1.136) and Ariel reminds Prospero that he has promised that 'On the sixth hour ... You said our work should cease.' (5.1.4-5) suggesting that it commenced on the third hour. The castaways are divided into three groups or sections, the first is Ferdinand, the second Stephano and Trinculo and the third groups includes the three guilty men, Gonzalo and the remainder of the court characters. Three times Miranda tries to intercede on behalf of Ferdinand with Prospero (1.2), and three times in the same scene Prospero tells Miranda to pay attention to what he has to say. Prospero and Miranda have spent twelve years on the island and 1 + 2 = 3. This appearance and continuing reappearance of the number 3 suggests that it is more than commonly important to an understanding of the play.

As I have said Agrippa's vision of the universe or macrocosm was a three-fold vision. Agrippa was not revolutionary in this but followed conventional thinking on the matter. It is perhaps his specific writing on the subject that is less conventional. Looking at Agrippa and his works in the realm of the occult, the first consideration is surely his De Occulta Philosophia. This consists of three books in which Agrippa imitates the macrocosm by the material included in each specific volume. To simplify, the books could represent the magic that a learned magus could wield and manipulate on three separate levels. In Book I, the worldly: those substances found in nature. In Book II, the celestial, which involved the drawing down of celestial, and planetary influences by incantations and talismanic images, and finally in Book III Agrippa deals with the abstract and elevated form of manipulation by which the magus alone (because none but he could work on, or reach this level), could deal directly with God and his immediate agents, Angels and related powers. Here the celestial hierarchy was approachable and a movement up through the sephiroth was thought to become a concrete possibility.

Before we learn anything of Prospero's personal ambitions or his history, we learn from Miranda that he is a practitioner of the 'art'. The fleeting vision of chaos and apparent anarchy presented to us in the opening scene, with an almost stark realism, is suddenly undercut by Miranda's words to Prospero:

> If by your art, my dearest father, you have
> Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
> (1.2.1-2)

We are forced to glimpse behind the scene we have just witnessed and see a man who has the power to influence the sea and weather, a realm of power available only to gods. This forces us to question

the border between the 'real' and the fantastic. We are encouraged to see what we have previously seen as realism as enchantment, and we are further encouraged to view the fantastic concept of a magician as a reality.

Prospero possesses the power to allay the storm he has conjured. In these two lines we are invited to understand that this man standing before us is the complete magus. His ability to effect a storm does not alone suggest this, it is rather his ability to allay the storm should he so wish, that confirms this point. There are those who can and do invoke powers that once invoked are beyond the practitioner's control. This is the situation with Sycorax, who is able to confine Ariel to the inners of a tree, but is unable to end his confinement. It falls to Prospero to effect this cure. This is yet another indication of his immense power; not only is he able to undo his own spells, he is able to untie the spells that have been cast by others. To this power Ariel owes his freedom and Prospero Ariel's help. Thus Prospero is able to function to some extent without the help of Ariel, but Ariel is unable to function without Prospero. Ariel, despite his staggering catalogue of tricks, abilities and disguises, has been unable to free himself. Prospero then is the guiding force, or the intellect behind Ariel's freedom, and as the play progresses we learn that it is Prospero still, who controls Ariel. Ariel and Prospero have an arrangement that will bring Ariel his ultimate freedom and Prospero the fulfillment of his plan. Ariel's services to Prospero are not altogether freely given. We learn that freedom for Ariel is not his for the taking. It must be won from and granted by Prospero. As we understand more clearly the relationship which exists between Prospero and Ariel we learn the extent of Prospero's power. Ariel is not merely a

pet that Prospero keeps around to perform tricks and flatter his ego. He too has powers, some of which we are given to understand Prospero has granted him. The phantoms that deliver the feast to the three guilty men are examples of this, they are the 'rabble' over whom Ariel is given authority and control. If we consider the enchantments, the invisibility, the multitude of disguises, and the various abilities manifested by Ariel whilst under Prospero's control, and compare this multitude of talents or characteristics with the role that Ariel hopes to fulfil once his freedom is granted, we notice a gulf. Under Prospero's control he is a supernatural being, left to his own devices he moves closer to the fairy world. His song of freedom illustrates this point:

> Where the bee sucks, there suck I,
> In a cowslip's bell I lie;
> There I couch when owls do cry.
> On a bat's back I do fly
> After summer merrily.
> Merrily, merrily shall I live now,
> Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.
> (5.1.88-94)

This song speaks of an idyllic fairy life-style, not unlike that enjoyed by the fairies in A Midsummer Night's Dream, and a far cry from manipulating phantoms. This fairy world is of another sphere to the one Ariel inhabits on Prospero's island. It hardly seems possible that an Ariel who indicts the guilty three and says 'I and my fellows Are ministers of Fate.' (3.3.61-2) can be the Ariel who sees himself as a fairy.

Ariel has powers that relate to the celestial world, and these powers are most obvious in relation to Prospero. Either Ariel has no desire to use them for himself, or without the presence of Prospero he is unable to. Prospero's control liberates in Ariel a greater potentiality, one which Ariel cannot or does not attain

without the guiding intellect of Prospero. Ariel, a celestial being, lacks intellectual input on his own account. He is, as it were, a collection of potentialities on the celestial level, but with a void at his intellectual core which requires the intellect of Prospero to fill it and motivate him.

Without Ariel, Prospero and his plan would exist, but this plan would be sadly impractical, because Prospero cannot control all the elements he has set in motion without Ariel's help. Prospero with his complex plan is rather like a juggler keeping many balls in the air simultaneously. The real problem Prospero faces is that despite all his mysterious and exalted power, he is unable to be in all places at once. The ship-wrecked visitors to his island are in three groups, and two of these groups are at one time plotting murder. Prospero is so involved with Ferdinand and Miranda and with testing Ferdinand that he cannot personally supervise the other two groups. This task falls to Ariel as Prospero's agent. Prospero then needs Ariel as surely as Ariel has needed Prospero to free him from the tree. Prospero is the controlling spark in the relationship, but there is no-one or nothing else on this island that will fulfil Ariel's role for Prospero. A degree of inter-dependence exists between these two, with Prospero as motivator and Ariel as executor.

The relationship between Caliban and Prospero is in some ways repetitive of the relationship between Ariel and Prospero. Again Prospero holds the reigns of power, but his rule over Caliban is far less complete than that over Ariel. Prospero is no less powerful in relation to Caliban than to Ariel, but Caliban attempts to rebel much more. Indeed Caliban goes so far as to enlist the aid of Stephano and Trinculo in an attempt to bring about the overthrow of Prospero, and in this Caliban becomes a member of a different trinity.

Control over Caliban is not purely a matter for Prospero, who delegates responsibility to Ariel whenever possible. The attempted mutiny by Caliban and his fellow mutineers is monitored by Ariel and Prospero, and although Prospero has forgotten the 'foul conspiracy Of the beast Caliban and his confederates' (4.1.139-140), Ariel has remembered, notes and acts 'I left them I'th'filthy mantled pool beyond your cell' (4.1.181-2).

Earlier in the play when Caliban feels he must curse despite the likelihood that he may pay dearly for such a luxury, he says 'His spirits hear me', (2.2.3) his next line suggests that these spirits do not act without Prospero's bidding:

> But they'll nor pinch,
> Fright me with urchin-shows, pitch me i'th'mire,
> Nor lead me, like a firebrand, in the dark
> Out of my way, unless he bid 'em. (2.2.4-7)

But this is exactly what Ariel does, and without Prospero's direct instruction as the interchange between them in Act 4 shows. This apparent mistake in Caliban's calculations could be seen as the result of a lapse of memory on Shakespeare's part. It could however, be an intentional clue or indicator to the audience that Ariel is not merely one of Prospero's spirits but is more directly linked to Prospero. We know that Prospero has given Ariel control over the lesser spirits, and there are further clues in the play which suggest a stronger link between Prospero and Ariel than that of master and servant. There is a certain comaraderie between them, a co-conspiracy, a warmth and a degree of trust which does not exist even between Prospero and Miranda. When Ariel returns to Prospero with good news about the progress of his plan, the jubilant Prospero refers to Ariel in possessive terms. Starting with 'my Ariel' (1.2.188); moving to 'My brave spirit!' (1.2.206) and then 'that's my spirit!'

(1.2.215). Within seven lines Ariel is possessively named by Prospero three times with the prefix 'my', and 27 is 3^3 all of which reiterates the number 3. Whilst it is possible to see that Prospero refers to, and in all probability is supposed to seem to regard, Ariel as some kind of extension of himself, it is equally obvious that Ariel is also to be seen as a separate entity and being from Prospero.

The relationship which exists between Prospero and Caliban although less frequently underlined and stated is equally ambiguous. Caliban, like Ariel, has come with the island. If we are to judge by the relative ease with which Prospero was previously overthrown by Antonio, Prospero's power on this island has achieved a degree of perfection that was previously absent in Milan. Whilst resident in Milan Prospero's major failing was isolation from the world. Days spent in the removed world of his library. Obsessed with the intellect at the expense of everything else. Negating the physical and delegating responsibility for the day to day running of his realm. Prospero has changed since his arrival on the island. It has been possible to delegate the menial tasks, but the control of these menial tasks has been Prospero's responsibility. The island offers no cloistered area that coccoons or offers escape from physical needs. It has no liveried servants whose tasks are strictly delineated, and whose responsibility it is to care for the mundane, day to day needs of the Duke. There is no library, the reduced kingdom of the island offers no opportunity for a strictly contemplative life, the daily need for survival being too urgent. Prospero has had to learn to rule and function in the day to day physical world, delegating these areas to Caliban, but assuming the responsibility himself.

The menial duties of the island are fulfilled by Caliban, who is directly answerable to Prospero and becomes Prospero's most direct link with the physical world. Prospero's attitude to Caliban admits this physical dependence. When Miranda objects to visiting Caliban Prospero acknowledges Caliban for what he is:

> But, as 'tis,
> We cannot miss him. He does make our fire,
> Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices
> That profit us. What, ho! Slave! Caliban!
> Thou earth, (1.2.310-14)

Just as Ariel's name identifies him as a spirit, something that belongs to the celestial world, so Prospero's delineation of Caliban's role on the island and his reference to him as 'earth' identifies Caliban as relating to the earthly, the physical world. In his introduction to the Arden edition of The Tempest Frank Kermode has identified the nature/nurture debate in The Tempest as of central importance to an understanding of the play. In this debate Frank Kermode has identified Caliban with nature, the natural world, or to use Prospero's own word 'earth'. Caliban is the natural earthly elements of life, and even his sexual advances to Miranda can be seen in this way. His advances are not so much a lust for the sexual act, but rather a lust to people this island with his off-spring: as nature wishing to regenerate itself. Despite this earthly role Caliban shows an ability to perceive visions and be sensitive enough to become enchanted with beautiful music. He is also seen to have a better developed sense of priorities than Stephano or Trinculo, knowing Prospero's bait of fine trappings to be mere superficialities and 'trash'. Caliban is not an entirely bestial creation, he has finer qualities that go some way to redeem him and link him with higher man whilst Ariel shows certain links with the human, when he admits that had he emotions the sufferings of Gonzalo would evoke sympathy in him.

Caliban's forced employment can be seen as a mark of the tyranny of Prospero, but if we accept this vision we are in danger of allowing ourselves to be swayed by the arguments of, and sympathy for, Caliban as the underdog. Arguments made by Caliban himself in moments of poetic and sympathy-evoking expression. Caliban's indictment against Prospero is that, out of love, he has shown to Prospero the island and all the wonders on it, and that Prospero has taken advantage of this free expression of love, capitalising upon the knowledge and enslaving Caliban. But Caliban freely volunteers the same service to Stephano and Trinculo, who give him little reason for a display of love. Furthermore Caliban seems to require a god-figure, he wants to worship Stephano, identifying him as some deity just because he seems worldly-wide, and will perhaps free him from Prospero's control. In hoping that Stephano will secure his release from Prospero, Caliban confuses liberty with enslavement to a new master, Stephano. Stephano's appeal as a deity may perhaps reside in the fact that he is no representation of the intellect that will enslave the physical. It seems to be in Caliban's nature to serve, his desire seems to be directed to and ordered by someone with a more powerful intellect than himself, and at the end of the play he acknowledges the mistake of putting Stephano in this role. For Caliban, Prospero fulfils the essential role of the intellect, controlling and guiding his 'natural' or earthly impulses, directing them to a constructive rather than a destructive end. At the close of the play, in almost grudging tones, Prospero acknowledges his responsibility for Caliban. Before the reborn and reconciled characters, forced by Prospero to come to terms with themselves, Prospero comes to terms with himself saying of Caliban: 'This

misshapen knave, ... This thing of darkness I Acknowledge mine.' (5.1.268-276). Even the structure of the lines adds to this interpretation, with 'this thing of darkness I' running on together in the same line.

Essentially Prospero's power stems from his intellect. It is his intellect that has shaped his 'plan'. It is the power of his mind that has revealed esoteric secrets to him. Secrets that make it possible to manipulate and command the elements, Ariel and Caliban. The island has given to Prospero something he has not previously possessed. In having to attend to the education of Miranda, the control of Caliban, and the supervision of the direct means of survival; food, shelter, water and warmth, Prospero, possibly for the first time in his life, is forced to acknowledge the physical requirements of survival and consequently is forced into a position that requires he should take a positive role in procuring those requirements. Consequently the reduced kingdom of the island has forced an integration upon Prospero. An integration of the intellectual and the physical with the celestial. This integration of the microcosm suggests a more complete Prospero at the end of the play than the Duke overthrown 12 years earlier.

By the end of the play we are impressed by Prospero's immense power, but we are also aware that without Ariel operating in the celestial world his plans could not have succeeded, and without Caliban's functions on the physical and earthly level there would have been no survival to permit the formulation of a plan. We are thus confronted with a surprising but effective trinity, Ariel spirit, Caliban earth, and Prospero intellect. That these three areas correspond directly with Agrippa's view of the three worlds that make up the universe can hardly be a coincidence but rather a

highly developed and schematically complex device.

The macrocosm/microcosm theory so widely held as true in the Renaissance, relied upon the premise that the macrocosm, the universe, was reflected in the microcosm, man. Agrippa's view of the macrocosm maintained a belief in a three world theory, intellectual, celestial, earthly, tying neatly, numerologically with the trinitarian principle. This would imply that each microcosm had a three world system that made up the whole man. Bosman puts this idea succinctly in The Meaning and Philosophy of Numbers:

> When referred to as the Trinity, the number three represents ... the three aspects of manifested Deity in all religions, as well as the three reflected aspects in the microcosm, Man.[20]

When we see the three worlds reflected in three characters in The Tempest we are being confronted by the same mystery. It seems that these three characters, Prospero, Ariel and Caliban, equal one microcosm, in that they can be seen as characterisations of the intellectual, celestial and earthly realms, and since man is a microcosm we can see them as one whole. To use a numerological point of reference as a monad; an essential quality of which was its trinitarian aspect; a mystery that had been contemplated by Christian occultists for years. The three in one theory does not deny the single identity of the separate parts any more than it denies there is a God The Father, and a God The Son, and a God The Holy Ghost, and yet there are not three Gods, but only one. In using the number 3 so cleverly and powerfully in The Tempest, Shakespeare has dramatised one of the most profound of Christian mysteries. The numerous references to three throughout the play act as clues and signposts to the mystery that is being dramatised before us, and Shakespeare has succeeded in producing a mystery that is every bit

as enigmatic as is the original esoteric concept of three.

Perhaps the single most startling aspect of Shakespeare's use of number in his plays, is his versatile handling, which allows his dramas to proceed and sparkle as dramas without any understanding of the numerological symbolism being necessary. This demonstrates not only his immense skill as a playwright, but his easy familiarity with numerology itself.

Thus it seems that Shakespeare's use and understanding of number can be traced in his 'Venus and Adonis', and in such differing plays as As You Like It, Twelfth Night, The Merchant of Venice and The Tempest, each one of these plays using number in a different way.

From the research undertaken by Hankins in The Backgrounds of Shakespeare's Thought we see further manipulations of numerological symbolism utilized for dramatic purposes.

As noted in the Introduction and early in this chapter, numbers are important not only as a symbolic form of expression but as the foundation of the renaissance occult philosophy. Directly from this foundation springs music. Robert Fludd, a successor of John Dee, is known to have written at length on the subject of mathematics, music and magic.

In this context numbers are important not only in the way that Shakespeare has chosen to utilize their esoteric and symbolic meanings, but as a first step into the renaissance occult tradition. It enables us to 'tune-in', in a specific way to this tradition, which will hopefully emerge as tantamount to a second language as our understanding builds, and pieces of the jig-saw fall into place.

Footnotes to Chapter 1 Numerology

1. V. F. Hopper, Medieval Number Symbolism. Preface p.x.
2. V. F. Hopper, Medieval Number Symbolism. Preface p.vii
3. Peter French, John Dee: The World of an Elizabethan Magus. p.2
4. Peter French, John Dee: The World of an Elizabethan Magus. p.5
5. Worsop, A Discoverie of Sundrie Errours and Faults Daily Committed by Landmeaters (Sig G3v)
6. Yates, Giordano Bruno. p.272
7. Yates, Giordano Bruno. p.272
8. Yates, Giordano Bruno. pp.296-7
9. Butler & Fowler, 'Time Beguiling Sport' Shakespeare 1564-1964. ed. E. A. Bloom. pp.124-133
10. Banes, The Provocative Merchant of Venice.
11. Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time. p.18
12. Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time. p.24
13. Stahl, Macrobius: In Somnium Scipionis. pp.104-106
14. L. Bosman, The Meaning and Philosophy of Numbers. p.101
15. L. Bosman, The Meaning and Philosophy of Numbers. pp.101-103
16. Banes, The Provocative Merchant of Venice. p.103
17. Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time. p.19
18. Northrop Frye, A Natural Perspective. pp.82-87
19. Fowler, 'The Tetrad' Spenser and the Numbers of Time.
20. Bosman, The Meaning and Philosophy of Numbers. pp.90-91

CHAPTER 2 ORPHIC MUSIC

As noted in the previous chapter, one of the most influential strands of number philosophy is derived from Pythagoras. Little, if anything, is certain about Pythagoras. It has become traditionally accepted that he travelled in Babylon and Egypt, and founded a secret brotherhood, the members of which were united for life by an oath. The philosophy of this brotherhood was based on a numerical explanation of the universe, and it is thought that Pythagoras spiritually trained and cleansed these disciples with a special kind of music. Walker, in looking at the similarities to be found in Pythagoras and Orpheus as an influence on Ficino, writes:

> Pythagoras is there presented very like Orpheus, and as having in fact derived his religious ideas and practices from Orpheus' disciples. Like Orpheus he has studied in Egypt, founded a religious sect, and produced musical effects, even on animals. He was another musical 'priscus theologus'. In the training of his disciples music took a prime place. It was used to cure evil and troublesome passions and bring the soul into a state of virtuous harmony. The disciples were sent to sleep and awoken with special songs.

Both Zeller and Scoon have attempted reconstructions of Pythagorean philosophy, but the work of Aristotle probably represents the most closely contemporary and the most extant survey, although Aristotle is not altogether sympathetic to Pythagoras' approach. Of this band of disciples and pythagoreanism, Aristotle says that they were, 'the first to take up mathematics', and that they

> thought its principles were the principles of all things. Since of these principles numbers are by nature the first, and in number they seemed to see many resemblances to the things that exist and come into being -- more than in fire and earth and water (such and such a modification of number soul and reason, another being opportunity -- and similarly almost all things being numerically expressible); since, again they see that the modifications and ratios of the musical scales were expressible in numbers; -- since, then all other things seemed in their

> whole nature to be modelled on numbers, and numbers seemed to be the first things in the whole of nature they supposed the elements of number to be the elements of all things, and the whole heavens to be a musical scale and a number.'[1]

Music then represents not only the same link with the macrocosm as does number, it also represents a way for the macrocosm to make itself felt by the individual. It appeals directly to the heart/soul/brain of man through his senses. Number requires an intellectual investment from the recipient for its full effects to be realized but music, with its direct appeal through the senses, requires only to be heard to evoke an emotional response. Thus it should be theoretically possible for the musical equivalent of a number symbol and all attached to that symbol, to make itself felt both physically and spiritually, and not just intellectually perceived and understood. Any number should have a musical equivalent. A particular symbol and number could be projected at, or into, a person or situation by way of music, and in the cases of those who are receptive to such a form of suggestion this could bring about a change. In such a way a practitioner of the occult could use this special language with its powers to his own advantage. He could interject certain powers into a situation by the playing of a particular piece of music. It should be possible to create a harmony or a disharmony in a situation or person by this device.

D. P. Walker in Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella, attempts to delineate the attitudes of various scholars of the Hermetic. He begins with Ficino, who laid a considerable foundation in this field, and from whom subsequent scholars have borrowed heavily. Ficino himself also did a considerable amount of borrowing, Plato and St. Augustine not least amongst his sources. From Opera Omnia (p.651) Walker translates and quotes the following:

> Nor is this surprising; for, since song and sound arise from the cogitation of the mind, the impetus of the phantasy, and the feeling of the heart, and, together with the air they have broken up and tempered, strike the aerial spirit of the hearer, which is the junction of the soul and body, they easily move the phantasy, affect the heart and penetrate into the deep recesses of the mind.

This idea is further explained and elaborated upon by Ficino (p.1453):

> Musical consonance occurs in the element which is the mean of all (i.e. air), and reaches the ears through motion, spherical motion: so that it is not surprising that it should be fitting to the soul, which is both the mean of things, and origin of circular motion. In addition, musical sound more than anything else perceived by the senses, conveys, as if animated, the emotions and thoughts of the singer's or player's soul to listeners' souls; thus it preeminently corresponds with the soul. Moreover, as regards sight, although visual impressions are in a way pure, yet they lack the effectiveness of motion, and are usually perceived only as an image, without reality; normally therefore, they move the soul only slightly. Smell, taste and touch are entirely material, and rather titillate the sense-organs than penetrate the depths of the soul. But musical sound by the movement of the air moves the body: by purified air it excites the aerial spirit which is the bond of the body and soul: by emotion it affects the senses and at the same time the soul: by meaning it works on the mind: finally, by the very movement of the subtle air it penetrates strongly: by its contemperation it flows smoothly: by the conformity of its quality it floods us with a wonderful pleasure: by its nature, both spiritual and material, it at once seizes, and claims as its own, man in entirety.
> (Walker, p.9)[2]

In 'De Vita coelitus comparanda', Ficino further talks of the power of music:

> Remember that song is the most powerful imitator of all things. For it imitates the intentions and affections of the soul, and speech, and also reproduces bodily gestures, human movement and moral characters, and imitates and acts everything so powerfully that it immediately provokes both the signer and the hearer to imitate and perform the same things.[3]

From the above it is easy to see that the forefathers of the renaissance hermetic tradition believed music to be a most powerful source of control of man, body and soul. It could bring about a predetermined state in the hearers' mind, it could govern his

innermost responses, powerful not only for the moment, but depending upon the concept conveyed to the soul of the individual, it might affect their thinking for life. It could affect externally and internally, physically and spiritually. Due to its area of operation, the affect of music upon the individual could be both obvious and dramatic, or slow and subtle.

This magic-making-music, is more correctly called Orphic Music, being derived from Orpheus. The most unfortunate aspect of orphic music is that it was never written down, and consequently no-one can be sure if they are or are not playing or hearing such orphic music, it is possible to judge only by results.

For such a concept to be employed in drama poses many difficulties. Among these is how to direct the audience to differentiate between mundane music and orphic music. All music in some way must, by the very nature of the premise of the argument, be associated with the macrocosm. In this context then, all music may be seen as a reflection of either microcosm or macrocosm. Not all theatrical sound effects encapsulate some magic that will effect change, although it may be said, with a considerable degree of confidence, that all musical or theatrical sound in Shakespeare's plays either do bring about such a change in character or represent some link with the macrocosm of the play itself. A playwright then, would have to provide clues to enable his audience to distinguish between these two concepts. A different approach would be required in portraying Ariel's 'sea-change' song and Stephano's drunken piece of bawdy.

Since we have no written examples of orphic music or examples of the music to be played in Shakespeare's plays, this act of differentiation is not altogether simple, but we are not without

clues and authorial assistance. Major clues exist in relation to the placing, and timing of the placing of any such music; the character from whom the music proceeds, and the end-result of the scene in which music is included. The commentary from characters in the plays themselves furnish us with even greater information about authorial intention in relation to music. Indeed this act of differentiation becomes much simplified when we take these elements into account, and consider the net result in relation to occult philosophy and what it purports such music can achieve.

The last plays in the Shakespeare canon, although exhibiting many examples of music as a source of power, are not alone in including it for more than its entertainment value. King Lear features music as a source of healing and revival, as does Pericles. In The Merchant of Venice we hear it will sooth the savage beast. Hamlet will not be a pipe to play Fortune's tune. The harmony of the spheres permeates many of the plays. Antony's doom is foreshadowed by music, which is heard when his god deserts him. The supposed statue of Hermione is brought to life by music, as is Thaisa in Pericles. This animation or re-animation mimicking an hermetic practice that derives from Egypt. Shakespeare uses music to fulfil more than one purpose. Its presence in the plays is undeniable and its power and provenance is seemingly indefinable and unlimited.

On reading The Tempest it is apparent that the 'music o'the isle', and Ariel's music are in some way integral to the happenings on the island. They are not merely light relief. In this play music has as specific a role to play as the characters.

Ariel is the most closely connected with music. He is a pied piper, a relative of Puck, and is the purveyor of a musical sleeping

draught. He uses music to both mystify and clarify. By isolating the music in The Tempest and other plays, I hope to show that there is a pattern to be found and understood in these happenings involving music.

In King Lear, Pericles and The Winter's Tale, we see that Shakespeare has used music, and that this use has a pattern that is familiar and repeats itself in different ways, with a similar undercurrent of effect upon the spirit or the soul of the characters involved. Music is used to revive the dead, seeming dead, or comatosed; it is a medical treatment that re-establishes the connections and interconnections in the brain, and restores stability to the unsound mind.

In King Lear the doctor calls for the music that has mysteriously started to play, to be played more loudly (IV.vii.25). From his words we see that he considers this music an important element in the treatment of Lear. Our previous encounter with Lear showed him to be mad, the only treatment we know he receives at the doctor's order is sleep accompanied by music. He wakes a coherent and rational man, his brain unscrambled. This treatment of Lear suggests a parallel to the unscrambling of the brains of Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian in The Tempest. His coherent and positive state of mind on awaking presents a parallel to the awaking of Alonso after his short sleep. Lear's rediscovered sanity gives him the ability to articulate the confusion that has resulted from his discovery of the truth about his daughters, and enables him to rediscover his lost daughter. This theme of a mentally unstable parent rediscovering a lost child after the mists of insanity have been dissolved by music, reappears in Pericles. Pericles rediscovers Marina after she has sung to him, and in some way

stimulated a response in him. A response, that permits at last, some communication with the world outside of himself.

Cerimon, the doctor in Pericles, is more magician than doctor. There are definable links between certain practices in medicine and magic, these links come about by way of the hermetic tradition and homeopathic medicine which is itself derived from Paracelsus. Cerimon's words about his approach to, and his practice of medicine, present a figure not dissimilar to Prospero or Faustus:

> I held it ever
> Virtue and cunning were endowments greater
> Than nobleness and riches: careless heirs
> May the two latter darken and expand,
> But immortality attends the former,
> Making a man a god. 'Tis known, I ever
> Have studied physic, through which secret art,
> By turning o'er authorities, I have
> Together with my practice, made familiar
> To me and to my aid the blest infusions
> That dwells in vegatives, in metals, stones;
> And I can speak of the disturbances
> That nature works, and of her cures, which gives me
> A more content in course of true delight
> Than to be thirsty after tottering honour,
> Or tie my treasure up in silken bags,
> To please the Fool and Death. (III.ii.26-42)

Cerimon's treatment which acts upon Thaisa as a restorative is based, as he tells us, in the Egyptian tradition: this tradition is itself the basis of the renaissance hermetic tradition. The chief elements of Cerimon's cure appear to be 'fire' and 'cloth' and 'still and woeful music', rather than his homeopathic remedies.

> For look how fresh she looks! They were too rough
> That threw her in the sea. Make a fire within. ... (I have read
> Of some Egyptians who after four hours' death
> Have raised impoverished bodies, like to this,
> Unto their former health.) ...
> The fire and cloths
> The still and woeful music that we have
> Cause it to sound, beseech you.
> The viol once more! ...
> The music there! (Music) I pray you, give her air,
> Gentlemen,
> The queen will live: nature awakes; a warmth
> Breathes out of her. (III.ii.79-95)

The scene ends with a reference to the Greek god of medicine Aesculapius, (3.2.112). Thus Cerimon refers to both Greek and Egyptian medical/magical practice, this combination in itself is a suggestion that Shakespeare had a certain knowledge of these matters, for this is the supposed pedigree of Hermes Trismegistus. Cerimon uses music as a part of his cure, and like the doctor in King Lear uses it to reach some part of the patient other than the physical body, with the expectation that it will effect the physical body. Thaisa is revived; Lear, like Antonio, Alonso and Sebastian, and Pericles, regains his sanity. Music in Pericles can be seen to operate on a similar level to the music of The Tempest and King Lear. The text of Pericles ties this practice with music to the Greek/Egyptian tradition of Hermes Trismegistus and thus indirectly to Orphic music.

That the authorship of passages of Pericles is debated, does not much weaken this argument. If Shakespeare is responsible for this part of the play, it helps us to see a coherent and escalating use of music through the later plays. If Shakespeare is not responsible for this section, we can begin to see such knowledge, and use of this knowledge, as more widespread amongst renaissance playwrights.

In Ficino music and sleep are linked, as used by Pythagoras, and here in King Lear and Pericles this same link can be found. Shakespeare has also used it to point out areas of special interest, either with reference to characters or movement in the action of the play.

In Hamlet Shakespeare uses music to reveal the flaws in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern who are later revealed by the action of the play to be corrupt social and political climbers.

Their admitted lack of harmony, and inability with the recorders, shows them to embody much that is considered undesirable in renaissance man. Lorenzo's speech on the subject of music in The Merchant of Venice makes this point for us:

> The man that hath no music in himself,
> Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
> Is fit for treasons, strategems, and spoils,
> The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
> And his affections dark as Erebus:
> Let no such man be trusted: (5.1.83-88)

Lorenzo's comments are extremely accurate in relation to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. They are men who should not be trusted, just as the corrupt king they serve should not be trusted. The play reveals them to be fit only for 'treasons, strategems, and spoils'. In the case of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, their inability to make music is of specific importance. Shakespeare has utilized it as a vital indicator to the nature of these characters who might be seen as foolish but not dangerous.

In Hamlet then, music is used as a yard stick by which we can measure the worth of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, whilst in King Lear and Pericles music is linked with sleep as a healing device, which can be seen to bring about a change in fortune. There are other plays in the Shakespeare canon in which an implicit link between music and fortune can be traced. The short musical scenes in Timon of Athens and Antony and Cleopatra both precede changes in fortune for the heroes. The music in Timon of Athens precedes the revelation of the true state of Timon's finances, and consequently precedes his social downfall and his movement from philanthropist to misanthrope, and the loss of one of his few real friends Alcibiades. The music in Antony and Cleopatra marks Antony's change in fortune when Hercules deserts him. This episode is also

marked by the loss of his only close friend, Enobarbus. In these instances the inclusion of music can be seen to bring about changes as well as providing a device by which certain characters are revealed to the audience before the action of the play makes the same revelation.

The Winter's Tale, set in Bohemia and Sicilia, is rooted in Athenian tradition; its gods and oracles, and even Delphos hark back to Athens and its religious direction, again and again we are reminded of Apollo by Paulina and her insistance that Leontes obeys and believes in Apollo's oracle at Delphos. Shakespeare goes to great pains to convince his audience that Hermione is dead. He even provides us with a dream or vision that seems to confirm this point. Antigonus not knowing of Hermione's 'death' comes to know of it through this vision.

> Come poor babe:
> I have heard, but not believ'd, the spirits o' th'dead
> May walk again: if such thing be, thy mother
> Appeared to me last night; for ne'er was dream
> So like waking. To me comes a creature,...
> Did this break from her: "Good Antigonus,
> Since fate, against thy better disposition,
> Hath made thy person for the thrower-out
> Of my poor babe, according to thy oath,
> Places remote enough are Bohemia:
> There weep, and leave it crying; and for the babe
> Is counted lost for ever, Perdita
> I prithee call't. For this ungentle business,
> Put on thee by my lord, thou ne'er shalt see
> Thy wife Paulina more ... I do believe
> Hermione hath suffer'd death; (III.iii.15-42)

Our proof of Hermione's death does not reside wholly with our direct knowledge or Antigonus's vision, although the convention of such dreams or visions conveying the truth should not be ignored. Antigonus's untimely, but almost immediate death after this passage, is an immediate confirmation for the audience that the vision was a true one. Consequently we have no choice but to

believe Hermione to be dead. All the evidence suggests so at this stage, and it is not until the closing scenes that anything else is suggested. Even then, the suggestion of what is happening is ambiguous and does not contradict what we already believe because of Shakespeare's insistance. The consequence of this 'death' of Hermione, is for us to perceive Hermione roused from death, or changing from an inanimate statue to a breathing and living person. A miracle masterminded by Paulina who through her actions is linked with Apollo, and brought about by music:

> Music, awake her; strike! (Music)
> 'Tis time; descend; be stone no more; approach;
> Strike all that look upon with marvel. Come!
> I'll fill your grave up; stir, nay, come away:
> Bequeath to death your numbness; for from him
> Dear life redeems you. (V.iii.98-103)

This episode seems to be full of contradictions; we have been led to believe that Hermione is dead. Paulina says this is a statue, we are even given the name of the sculptor:

> Julio Romano, who, had he himself eternity and could put breath into his work, would beguile Nature of her custom, so perfectly he is her ape: he so near to Hermione hath done Hermione, that they say one would speak to her and stand in hope of answer. (V.ii.96-101)

Paulina sets the scene, and states the basic requirements for the miracle to proceed:

> Quit presently the chapel, or resolve you
> For more amazement. If you can behold it,
> I'll make the statue move indeed; descend,
> And take you by the hand: but then you'll think
> (Which I protest against) I am assisted
> By wicked powers ...
> it is required
> You do awake your faith. Then all stand still:
> Or those that think it is unlawful business
> I am about, let them depart. (V.iii.86-97)

Paulina clearly states that a requirement of what is to follow is an awakening of faith. The magic remedy in Hermione's case then is faith and music: for Thaisa it was music, herbs, fire and

Cerimon's magic. Cerimon was in a different position to Paulina, he had performed the same task before, a call for faith then would not have been required, his onlookers would have expected him to resusitate Thaisa. The constant element in both cases of resurrection is music. As Cerimon has informed us this idea is Egyptian in origin. Resurrecting the dead is only one part of this Egyptian practice and tradition, infusing life into statues is another facet of the same thing. To revive the dead with music it is presumed that the music, which can reach the soul, does reach the soul as it is fleeing from the body, and by its powers over the soul can entice it back into the body. In relation to a statue it is thought that the music can attract a particular soul to inhabit a specially prepared piece of clay. There being a similarity between the clay of the statue and the original clay that the human body supposedly derives from and eventually returns to. Walker in discussing the sources for Ficino writes:

> Of the sources for his magic to which Ficino himself refers the most important are the "Ascelepius" and, of course, Plotinus. The "Ascelepius", like the "Orphica", had great authority for Ficino because it was a work of Hermes Trismegistus, a 'priscus theologus' even more ancient that Orpheus, indeed contemporary with Moses; Plotinus was merely a late interpreter of this antique Egyptian wisdom. There is a particular passage in the Asclepius with which we shall be more concerned:-
>
> "(Hermes:) What has already been said about man, although marvellous, is less so than this: that man has been able to discover the divine nature and produced it, is admirable beyond all other marvels. Our first ancestors, then, when they were in grave error concerning the gods, being incredulous and paying no attention to worship and religion, invented the art of making gods. Having done so, they added a virtue appropriate to it, taken from the world's nature, and mixed these; since they could not make souls, they evoked the souls of demons or angels, and put them into images with holy and divine rites, so that through these souls the idols might have the power of doing good and evil ... (Asclepius) ... of what kind is the quality of these terrestial gods?

> (Hermes) It consists, O Asclepius, of herbs, stones and aromas which have in them a natural divine power. And it is for the following reason that people delight them with frequent sacrifices, with hymns and praises and sweet sounds concerted like the harmony of the heavens: that this heavenly thing, which has been attracted into the idol by repeated heavenly rites, may bear joyously with men and stay with them long."
>
> This is undoubtedly a capital source for Ficino's general theory of magically influencing the spirit so that it may become receptive to celestial influences ... This chapter of Plotinus, as Ficino interprets it, states that one can attract into, and retain in, a material object "Something vital from the soul of the world and the souls of the spheres and stars." that is, celestial spirit, if the object is of a material and form which reflects the celestial source of spirit in question.[4]

Thus we can see that, were the statue of Hermione made of an appropriate material, the soul of Hermione could be enticed into it. This accomplished, the statue would take on the human characteristics that the soul of Hermione would be able to endow it with.

Since Ficino was in a way the forefather of the renaissance hermetic tradition, being the source from which following hermeticists borrowed heavily and by which they were inspired, we see the foundation of the idea of idols being infused with life. Agrippa takes this idea, as he did many from Ficino and also quotes directly from Hermes.

The Hermione we are asked to accept at the end of the play may well be supposed to be a statue. It might be less fantastic to believe that this is a statue with the spirit of Hermione infused into it by the power of music, than to believe that Antigonus's dream, the talk of the sculptor, and Paulina's reference to this being a statue, are included merely to mislead the audience and dramatise the final scene. The idea would have the same basis as Thaisa's cure and come from the same hermetic tradition that required the playing of the correct music to attract beneficial

influences. Orphic music could bring such a miracle about. Paulina's words, even in the closing scene, suggest that the Hermione before us is both the 'true' Hermione and the statue Hermione. This could only be the case if Hermione's spirit is drawn to inhabit the clay of the statue:

> I'll make the statue move indeed; ...
> 'Tis time; descend; be stone no more; approach;
> Strike all that look upon with Marvel. Come!
> I'll fill your grave up; stir, nay come away:
> Bequeath to death your numbness; for from him
> Dear life redeems you. (V.iii.88-103)

The resolution of the play does not depend on our being able to decide whether the Hermione we see brought to life is a statue or the original Hermione. The dramatic outcome is the same if this is a true Hermione, a statue of Hermione, or a Hermione miraculously raised from the dead. By the inclusion of ritualistic music 'a' Hermione is reborn. Through her rebirth Leontes can know joy and contentment in his old age; the family shattered by disbelief, jealousy, and lack of faith, is restored to harmony by harmony and faith. The prophecy of the Oracle is fulfilled, and a new empire of Sicilia and Bohemia as a united kingdom can be anticipated for the future. The cost of this new empire, born from faith, discovery and harmony has been the blood of the son of the king Mamillius. Mamillius has been sacrificed, he is not resurrected, he is replaced by Florizel, but the replacement itself emphasises rather than numbs the loss. A new empire is established through the blood of the son. The end of The Tempest also encourages us to anticipate the establishment of a new kingdom through the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand. The elements of tragedy in The Tempest have not been incorporated within the play, but they are not abolished. Alonso is led to believe that Ferdinand has died, and

that his death has been the result of the storm at sea and one way of understanding Ariel's song is to understand that Alonso too has perished. Alonso then is led to believe what Leontes knows to be true, that his son has perished through his fault, through his own crimes. Harmony is only restored at the end of each play in the promise of unity for the future.

Looking at Pericles and The Winter's Tale we are presented with two seemingly similar cases of resurrection brought about by the power of music, in the shapes of Thaisa and Hermione. Both women have seemed to be dead. Both women have gone through some burial ritual. Both are the wives of kings, and both are returned to the world of the living by the introduction of music and some other element.

As noted, the ritual performed by Cerimon can be traced to Egyptian practices, and from there to the renaissance hermetic tradition, and involves the use of Orphic music.

Cerimon is no novice, he has restored others to health. This is not the case with Paulina. She puts herself in the position of restoring Hermione to health with no known previous experience. Cerimon in his speech has linked himself with the role of the magus. The magus is able to affect the miracles that he does by contact with higher supernatural forces, either with gods or God. With the help of spiritual go-betweens and by other methods he hopes to draw down from the heavens beneficial influence or deities. Paulina makes no such claim for herself, nor does anyone else in the play suggest anything similar, her only link with the supernatural is her implicit link with Apollo. It has been suggested that the sculptor responsible for Hermione's statue is a master craftsman and that one could almost believe his statues breathed.

But it is not suggested that they do breathe, or that he can make them breathe. Paulina's success is due to her continued close connection with the Oracle of Apollo. Of all the people at Leontes' court Paulina is the one that does the work of the oracle. She is the only one to insist that Apollo's oracle still be honoured even after sixteen years.

Paulina is Hermione's friend throughout the play, in both life and supposed death. She will not be silenced. She will not pander to the ego of Leontes or permit him to believe he is right. Initially at the court there are many that follow her course, but as time moves onwards, and it seems that all is lost and nothing is to be gained by reminding Leontes of his loss, and mirroring his faults, attitudes begin to change. His advisers seek to fill the gap in his life with a new queen and the hope of a new heir. Their advice is in total contradiction to the message from the oracle. Paulina opposes their advice, she will not follow this diplomatic course of action. She reminds Leontes again and again, in both his sorrow and his frenzy, of his responsibility for the situation; his role in the life and death of others; the heirless condition of his state, and his haunted and lonely old age. Paulina keeps the agony fresh, the wound exposed, it is never allowed to heal or become part of the past. It is always, so far as she is concerned, a living thing in Leontes' present. Time may be the universal healer, but for Leontes with Paulina's continual goading, its magic is never allowed to work. Any slight indication that Leontes is marginally less torn by pain, any fresh interest he might chance to show, as in the case of Perdita, is undercut by a biting remark from Paulina which pulls him back to the happiness that he has lost, the crime that he has committed and the misery

he lives with. Paulina is no ordinary mortal: she is the only woman left at Leontes' court, she does not fear his wrath. Hers is the determination that ensures the prophecy of the oracle is fulfilled by ensuring that Leontes obeys its demands. She is the authority enforcing the demands of the god and in so doing Paulina serves supernatural and not mortal or temporal lords.

When Leontes' advisers, Cleomenes and Dion (the messengers sent to Delphos to consult Apollo's oracle) advise him to forgive himself his past wrongs because heaven has, they usurp the position of the oracle, whom they once served as messengers. It is left to Paulina to remind them of its prophecy, riddle, and demands:

> the gods
> Will have fulfill'd their secret purpose;
> For has not the divine Apollo said,
> Is't not the tenor of his Oracle,
> That King Leontes shall not have an heir,
> Till his last child be found? which, that it shall,
> Is all as monstrous to our human reason
> As my Antigonus to break his grave
> And come again to me; who, on my life,
> Did perish with the infant. 'Tis your counsel
> My lord should to the heavens be contrary,
> Opposes against their wills. Care not for issue;
> The crown will find an heir. Great Alexander
> Left his to th'worthiest; so his successor
> Was like to be the best. (V.i.35-49)

Later in the same scene Paulina evokes a promise from Leontes that he will honour the words of the oracle:

> Will you swear
> Never to marry, but by my free leave? ...
> Unless another,
> As like Hermione as is her picture,
> Affront his eye ...
> Yet, if my lord will marry, - if you will, sir;
> No remedy but you will, - give me the office
> To choose you a queen: she will not be so young
> As was your former, but she shall be such
> As, walk'd your first queen's ghost, it should take joy
> To see her in your arms. ...
> That
> Shall be when your first queen's again in breath:
> Never till then. (V.i.69-84)

Paulina obtains the required promise from Leontes. As soon as he swears to honour the oracle, the oracle honours its word, returning to him first his daughter and then his wife. Paulina's 'then' becomes a 'now' as Perdita enters Leontes court. Apollo acts through Paulina, and Paulina has enforced the demands of the oracle. We can see the resurrection of Hermione as an act of Apollo, not Paulina, who is only the agent through whom Apollo is acting. This clarification of Paulina's role is important in that we need to know from whence her power proceeds. That she serves Apollo clears her of any accusations that she serves demonic forces and is apposite for the role she is playing. The hermeticists, in their rituals including the use of aromatic herbs, fire, wine and music hoped to entice the influence of Apollo to their aid, so that they might infuse the spirit of a chosen deity, or person, into a statue, or back into their original body. Apollo was the god throught to be most powerful in this operation. As a deity he relates to the sun, and through this link has power over words and music; man too relates to the sun and was believed to be primarily solarian in nature. Walker writes:

> Since all music pertains primarily to Apollo, ... music of any kind tends to capture the sun's influence and render the musicians solarian; which is eminently desirable. ... In his commentary on Plotinus he (Ficino) tells us that people once worshipped the planets because of the benefits obtainable by exposing one's soul and spirit to their influence; but he says, most of the Platonic philosophers worshipped only the sun: ... One may take it then as highly probable that Ficino's astrological music (later called Orphic music) was most often addressed to the sun.[5]

It is apposite then that for the Sun-god Apollo to bring harmony and unity to Leontes court the blood of the son, Mamillius, had to be shed. Florizel is also linked with Apollo in his disguise at the sheep-shearing festival and can be seen as both a parallel

to Apollo and a substitute for Mamillius. What is required of Leontes is faith, and although everything promised may defy reason, Leontes must have that faith. Paulina's call for faith at the close of the play is a similar demand to that of the oracle, and because of the introduction of music and the ritual that is enacted, it is once again faith in Apollo that is the most required ingredient, and not faith in Paulina or her demands. She is just the agent for the god.

There are then two kinds of son to be seen in The Winter's Tale, there is Leontes' dead son Mamillius, who must be sacrificed so that a united kingdom of Bohemia and Sicilia can take shape, and hold promise for the future; and there is the sun which is ever present in the shape of Apollo, and in whom faith must be felt and demonstrated before that kingdom can be founded with happiness. A new kingdom, founded on the blood of the son, and out of faith of the sun, suddenly seems to offer a very Christian perspective to a play that is set in a time and place that has no direct link with Christian beliefs.

The Winter's Tale is not alone in its reference to Apollo, these references are explicit in this play but are implicit in Pericles. Thaisa is revived by Cerimon in a ritual that contains both music and fire, and here Apollo is represented by the inclusion of such elements.

Walker, in trying to set the scene of Ficino's astrological music writes:

> If, ... we try to picture Ficino nourishing his spirit and making it more celestial, ... The picture is something like this;
>
> He is playing a 'lira da bracaio' or a lute, decorated with a picture of Orpheus charming animals, trees and rocks; he is signing ... the Orphic Hymn of the Sun; he is burning frankincense, and at times he

> drinks wine; perhaps he contemplates a talisman; in day-time he is singing in sunlight, and at night he "represents the sun by fire".[6]

Cerimon's call for the fire then serves a two-fold purpose, it is not merely to warm Thaisa, it serves as a part in the ritual that will revive her with aid from Apollo. In case any doubt should remain in the elements that will revive Thaisa, it is worth noting that Cerimon refers to the viol, he calls for it specifically; Orpheus is associated with a treble viol or violin[7].

In King Lear and Pericles music has been used as a method of curing illness, sometimes illness perilously close to death, or perhaps death itself. In Pericles and The Winter's Tale music has been used to resurrect the dead, or infuse life and spirit into the inanimate.

In The Tempest we do not encounter this isolated and specific use of music again. Instead it pervades the entire play. Shakespeare uses it to influence our perception of characters, as an indicator to the inner worth of characters, as well as employing it in a way that mimics Pythagoras' training of his disciples. He provides Prospero and Ariel with their only source of control over the different groups, some of them would-be-murderers, dispersed around the island.

The first instance of music in The Tempest is played by Ariel, and is associated with our first impressions of Ferdinand. Our perceptions of Ferdinand are influenced by this factor, likewise Miranda's perceptions of him, his of her, and his of this new world. This is not the first instance of atmosphere-evoking sound effects in the play, which opens with the dramatic effect of rolling thunder. Using the macro-microcosm concept to understand the sound effects of the play, the island, and the waters surrounding

it, we would understand that the thunder indicates that the harmony of the spheres has been ruptured or disturbed. The passengers on the ship are threatened with drowning because of the behaviour of the elements which mirror cosmic chaos. Such uncontrollable elemental fury may reflect a fury in the macrocosm. A disturbance which has been the direct result of the actions of the passengers on the very ship that is now threatened. The play progresses only a short way and we see the peaceful island at the centre of this elemental disturbance. The seeming anarchy of the mariners is no real anarchy at all. They swear allegiance to anyone who can control the elements, this anyone turns out to be Prospero. In usurping Prospero's position Antonio and his co-conspirators have disturbed the balance and harmony of the social fabric. To restore that balance, Prospero, or his line, must regain this lost position. The entrance of Ferdinand, accompanied by Ariel's music, suggests a degree of harmony is restored or can be restored, and Ariel's song suggests that a change has already taken place in that Alonso is changed to something "rich and strange" because of his sea experience.

Even the simple but dramatic sound effects of the initial scene provide not only a splendid chance for dramatic effect and theatrical device but are an integral part of the play; setting the scene in auricular and visual symbols that guide our ears and eyes to a fuller understanding of the images of the play as it is revealed to us.

There are other instances of the sounding of thunder in the play. Each of these instances suggests something about the characters it introduces or those on the stage at the time. The stage directions do not specify thunder again until II.2., with

the entry of Caliban, who is apparently unmoved by it, whilst it terrifies Trinculo; bringing him scurrying onto the stage to seek cover. Another peel introduces Stephano. Thus both camps of conspirators are introduced by thunder, whilst Ferdinand is introduced by music. The sounds illustrated can be seen to play a two-fold role; they are a theatrical device which reflects an integral element of the play, and also influence our perception of the characters before us.

The first musical episode in the play is introduced with the entry of Ferdinand, Ferdinand's entry follows Caliban's exit. Caliban's period on the stage has been linked with harsh words, attack and counter-attack, and abuse. The emphasis of the scene has been rooted in the physical. Ariel's strange song; Ferdinand's reaction to Miranda and Prospero; Miranda's reaction to Ferdinand, and Ferdinand's inability to resist Prospero, followed by his resignation to his lot, so long as he can see Miranda, brings about a change in tone and feeling. This section of the scene becomes almost metaphysical by comparison to the Caliban portion. Its concerns are not past and petty arguments, it holds hope for Ferdinand, Miranda and Prospero for the future. There is joy expressed at a possible relationship between Miranda and Ferdinand. The previous part of the scene has contained accusations and hate generated by Caliban's attempt to become too familiar with Miranda. This scene goes some way to counteracting any suggestion that Ferdinand is a coward, a slur that might be felt justified when we learn from Ariel that Ferdinand was the first to jump from the ship. The other option open to the audience is that Ferdinand is an enlightened prince, who jumped from the ship to escape the devils on it. Devils in some way related to the climatic disturbances

experienced by all on the ship.

The actions of Ariel are of a supernatural kind and are a major part of the disturbance on the ship. Ariel's reasons for effecting such disturbances are not based on an idle whim, but stem from the develish nature of the royals whose previous behaviour has resulted in this action and who in Prospero's estimation are related to the develish, as he reveals at the phantom feast. Ariel's song at Ferdinand's entry is almost a welcome to him:

> Come unto these yellow sands,
> And then take hands.
> Curtsied when you have and kissed
> The wild waves whist,
> Foot it featly here and there;
> And, sweet sprites, the burden bear.
> Hark, hark!
> Bow-wow!
> The watch-dogs bark.
> Bow-wow!
> Hark, hark! I hear
> The strain of strutting chanticleer
> Cry cock-a-diddle-dow! (I.2.375-87)

Anne Barton, in the Penguin edition, suggests the following reading of the lines:

> 377-8 "kissed/The wild waves whist." The ordered measure of the dance stills the sea's violence. Precisely how this is brought about remains as vague as the syntax. (p.149-50)

It seems just as likely to me that the music and the dance together calm the sea, and that the dance itself may be the courtship dance of Ferdinand and Miranda whose relationship and projected marriage at the end of the play, does still Prospero's fury and corrects the imbalance in the macrocosm. There is a suggestion then, at this stage, that the dance, and perhaps the music can calm the wild sea, but there is also a suggestion that the courtship dance of Ferdinand and Miranda will still the troublesome elements loose in the universe on a more permanent basis. Ariel's song is

followed by a speech from Ferdinand that suggests that it is the music that has stilled the waves and calmed his passions:

> Sitting on a bank,
> Weeping again the King my father's wrack,
> This music crept by me upon the waters,
> Allaying both their fury and my passion
> With its sweet air. Thence I have followed it,
> Or it hath drawn me, rather. (I.2.390-95)

Ariel's second song provides ambiguous information about the fate that has befallen Alonso, indicating a radical sea-change, that might be interpreted as death:

> Full fathom five thy father lies,
> Of his bones are coral made;
> Those are pearls that were his eyes;
> Nothing of him that doth fade,
> But doth suffer a sea-change
> Into something rich and strange.
> Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell: (I.2.397-403)

Anne Barton's commentary on this song suggests that:

> The sea change of which Ariel sings, the transmutation of the body of Ferdinand's father into substance 'rich and strange' makes this death suddenly unreal and without pain. It allows Ferdinand to turn his whole mind to Miranda, almost at once, without seeming callous or heedless of his loss. (p.150)

But surely this song does more than this, either it tells of Alonso's death and in so doing proves Ariel to be untrustworthy or it tells of change that may be linked with death, or an equally dramatic change, telling of the transmutation of Alonso into something 'rich and strange'. The inclusion of the alchemical symbols of coral and pearl and the associated colours of red and white in this imagery imply alchemy and suggest that this change is not necessarily of life into death. The substance into which Alonso changes are living-gems. Implicit within this song is the suggestion of alchemical change, transmutation from one type of physical life, to a richer kind of physical life. In Ariel's song Alonso becomes the gems that might adorn his crown, he is transmuted into the symbol of himself and the

symbol of his power. Whether we read these lines as a false notice of Alonso's death or his transmutation in life, we cannot fail to notice that the song suggests an elevation in him with the words 'rich and strange'. As Anne Barton says, the song if it is of death, makes this "death unreal and without pain", almost desirable.

Reuben Brower[8] discusses these lines, and this 'sea-change', that supposedly converts Alonso to something 'rich and strange'. He concludes that this is a magical change. Anne Barton rightly calls it a 'transmutation', but it is more than a mere change of characteristics as her use of the word transmutation implies. It is instead a real transmutation in all that the word implies, linking this phase of Alonso's change with alchemy. Although often applied to the change of base metals into the pure and royal metals of gold and silver, transmutation can also be applied, in a more esoteric alchemical sense, to the operation of an elevating agent upon the spirit of man. This is a part of the message conveyed in Ariel's song, and although this meaning can be gleaned from the words alone, Shakespeare has seen fit to convey this message of alchemical transmutation in a song that superficially purports to tell of Alonso's death.

Ariel's first song then welcomes Ferdinand "Come unto these yellow sands", and is a part of the music that has drawn him onwards and tamed the water and Ferdinand's own passions. At the same time, implicit within this song there is a clue to the future relationship of Ferdinand and Miranda, and to the pacifying power that this relationship will exert upon the chaos-torn macrocosm of the play. The second song speaks of the sea-change of Alonso in such a way as to suggest his past, based in the physical and the wordly, has no place in the present and future of the play. Both songs contain

the elements of change that will become more obvious as the play progresses. It is already apparent that the concept of music we are being asked to accept and understand in The Tempest is not of the kind that we are altogether familiar with: we have heard of music that tames the elements; tames the passions of man; and that contains within it alchemical images, and suggestions and prophecy for the future.

Ferdinand and Miranda's first encounter is to the accompaniment of music. Each believes the other to be a supernatural being, and from the outset they are seen to fall under some spell that looks suspiciously like love, or the effects of a magic device not unlike Puck's love-juice. Prospero's delight at this phase of his plan, and the way that he expresses this delight to Ariel, suggests that Ariel is more than an observer of the mutual feelings of love that are rapidly growing stronger between Ferdinand and Miranda. To our knowledge Ariel's only device has been his music, he has not, like Puck, any special device or mixture to apply to lids of the young couple. Ariel's music then is the only external factor at work, and in this instance it seems to work on the emotions of Ferdinand and Miranda. Ferdinand, subject only to Ariel's music, tells us the further effects he feels:

> My spirits, as in a dream, are all bound up.
> My fathers' loss, the weakness which I feel,
> The wrack of all my friends, nor this mans' threats
> To whom I am subdued, are but light to me,
> Might I but through my prison once a day
> Behold this maid. All corners else o'th' earth
> Let liberty make use of. Space enough
> Have I in such a prison. (I.2.487-94)

In lines 388-396 Ferdinand points directly to the music as the element that has allayed the fury of the elements and his own passions, and he further suggests that the music is linked to "some

god o'th' island". Which of course it is, being linked through Ariel to Prospero, who in the limited environment of the island is indeed a 'god', able to control spirits, men, elements and doubtful creatues such as Caliban and the 'meaner fellows' under Ariel's control. We need only refer to Prospero's abjuration of magic to see a fuller catalogue of the areas in which he can exert not only influence, but control.

The powerful effect of Ariel's music is not felt exclusively by Ferdinand, although he articulates more fully than any other character the effects it has on him. This again indicates an insight in Ferdinand which the other characters seem to lack or at least fail to articulate.

Prospero, with the aid of Ariel, sets about controlling the various factions now in residence upon the island. Lacking a large force of soldiers, or guards, or even other mortals, his most powerful source of control lies in the music of Ariel. With this music Ariel controls Ferdinand; leads Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano around the island, confusing them and temporarily thwarting their plan to overthrow Prospero; and controls the court castaways.

There are on the island two characters noticeably unaffected b Ariel's music. At II.i.187 Ariel enters playing 'solemn music'. All the court castaways, with the exception of the three original conspirators against Prospero, are quickly asleep. Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian are the exceptions to this rule. They do not respond to the music in the same way as the other characters. Those out of tune with the harmony of the spheres are more immune to the power of music.

The lack of effect of this music upon the conspirators is a result of their original sin acting as a blocking force to the

power of music. In many of Shakespeare's plays sleep is linked with grace, and the lack of, or inability to, sleep is linked with sin. In Richard III and Macbeth for example, sleep is the gift of the innocent, it is a sign of grace and a heavenly blessing, it indicates a free conscience and a receptiveness to grace. The Tempest is not different. Alonso, already a sea-changed man longs for sleep:

> What, all so soon asleep? I wish mine eyes
> Would, with themselves, shut up my thoughts. I find
> They are inclined to do so. (II.i.194-6)

Alonso, having expressed his desire for sleep, also falls under the spell of Ariel's 'solemn music'. This tells us much about Alonso, he can no longer be classed with Antonio and Sebastian. The stain of his original sin may remain, but his expressed wish to receive grace in the form of sleep and his ability to receive that sleep induced by Ariel's music indicates that somehow he has been cleansed of the actual sin itself. From hearing Ariel's song we know that Alonso has been changed by the sea, he is now something 'rich and strange', he has undergone an alchemical transmutation. We can only presume that this has been brought about by the sea. Ariel's song says that it has. The words of Gonzalo, echoing the words of Ariel, suggest that the sea experience has been a Baptism. Gonzalo illustrates this by reference to the external signs:

> But the rarity of it is - which is indeed almost beyond credit -...
> That our garments, being, as they were, drenched in the sea,
> hold, notwithstanding, their freshness and glosses, being
> rather new-dyed than stained with salt water ...
> Methinks our garments are now as fresh as when we put them
> on first in Africa, at the marriage of the King's fair
> daughter Claribel to the King of Tunis. (II.i.61-73)

This echoes Ariel's report to Prospero on the success of their plan so far:

> Not a hair perished.
> On their sustaining garments not a blemish,
> But fresher than before; (I.ii.217-19)

Consider Ariel's song, Gonzalo's insistance on the renewal of their garments, Ferdinand's decision to jump from devils on the ship, and Alonso's ability now to sleep due to Ariel's 'solemn music'. Something very special has happened to the court castaways between the ship and the shore, and even now their experiences and trials are not ended. Antonio and Sebastian are unaffected by the music, or rather they are not enticed to sleep by it, in fact they state directly that they do not wish to sleep. They employ the period while others sleep to plot the overthrow of Alonso and the murder of Gonzalo. Rather than accrueing grace unto themselves, Antonio and Sebastian steep themselves further in crime and sin. It is hardly surprising that sleep, if it is in any way related to a spiritual grace, is ineffectual so far as they are concerned.

The music that has lulled the court characters into sleep ceases with Alonso's sleep and only resumes when Antonio and Sebastian have laid their plot and are about to execute their plan. To overcome the musically induced sleep Ariel plays a different variety of music, (this time incorporating words), to rouse Gonzalo, who in his turn rouses the rest of the party. Gonzalo is rapidly emerging as the person most receptive to the plans or spells of Ariel and Prospero. He originally saved Prospero and Miranda. He notices the condition of the clothes. He hears Ariel now, when no-one else does. He articulates the sleepiness of the court party before they sleep. Later he talks of the phantoms that lay the feast, in terms that allow Prospero's aside to the audience pointing to Antonio and Sebastian as devils, or perhaps worse than devils. Gonzalo's total receptiveness to Ariel's music puts him in diametrical opposition to Antonio and Sebastian, as his actions have done.

Shakespeare's use of music to induce sleep in the court characters, and again to wake Gonzalo, suggests that he wishes us to understand this is not a normal drowsiness. He indicates, subtly, that Ariel has been responsible for this sleeping state, and that a similar ritual must be employed to counteract the original spell.

Ariel's is not the only form of music in the play, and lest we believe all music to possess the powers of Ariel's music, there is a total contrast in the drunken singing of Stephano. Caliban, who later talks of the delights of the music of the island, believes Stephano's singing to be a form of torment. Not a source of pleasure and insight, so great that he would want to experience it again, as he does with the music of the island.

Having caused discord between Trinculo, Stephano and Caliban, Ariel renews his musical tricks, accompanied by a tabor and pipe (SD). This music evokes fear in Stephano and Trinculo, a fear to which Caliban is immune, a fear he notes, which appears to lessen Stephano's stature in his eyes:

> Caliban: Art thou afeard?
> Stephano: No, monster, not I.
> Caliban: Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
> Sounds, and sweat airs, that give delight and hurt not.
> Sometimes a thousand twanging instruments
> Will hum about mine ears; and sometimes voices
> That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
> Will make me sleep again; and then, in dreaming,
> The clouds methought would open, and show riches
> Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked
> I cried to dream again, (III.ii.136-44)

For Caliban the music of the island is a high point of his life. The 'riches' that Caliban speaks of are not explained, but there is a similarity to Bottom's rare vision in A Midsummer Night's Dream. Caliban's use of the word 'riches' seems to be the key. If these words had been given to Stephano or Trinculo we could be very sure that they referred to material wealth. Their original response to

Caliban has been to evaluate his curiosity value in the civilised world in terms of money. They are enticed by all the glitter that Prospero and Ariel hang up to distract them. Caliban, however, is not impressed and refers to it as 'trash'. We can presume from this response that Caliban does not see material possessions as wealth, and indeed his life on the island would hardly have suggested that such trappings, inessential for life, would in any way represent riches to him. The riches of which Caliban talks do not equate with Stephano's and Trinculo's idea of riches. Caliban talks of the natural resources of the island as riches, a wealth he showed to, and shared with Prospero, and now is prepared to show to Stephano and Trinculo. The island being full of these riches it seems unlikely that Caliban would wish to sleep again merely to see the riches that daily surround him. The riches that mean so much are of neither material nor are they natural resources. This suggests that what he sees as riches is something of a supernatural nature. Music is the element that has elevated Caliban adequately to perceive these riches. Music, with relation to Caliban, can be seen to fulfil an elevating role.

Ariel uses music to lead the lowly conspirators astray. His music beguiles them adequately to stop them committing their planned crime. Ariel's music has thwarted the plan of Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban, and the plan of Sebastian and Antonio. By thwarting them Ariel has succeeded in keeping the plans to murder Gonzalo, Alonso and Prospero as plans only, saving the would-be murderers from the guilt of actually perpetrating their planned crimes, and using music as the only method of defence against murderous attacks on the unprepared.

The phantom feast laid before the court castaways by the 'several strange shapes', is also accompanied by music. Gonzalo considers it to be 'marvellous sweet music' (3.3.20). There is no stage direction indicating when the music should cease. I believe it has already ceased by the time Ariel enters like a harpy. His arrival is accompanied by thunder and lightning, and his actions cause the banquet to vanish. Ariel's words effectively inform the characters of the play, and the audience, of the reason for their present state (bewitched), the vanished banquet, and the trials they are now to endure:

> You are three men of sin, whom destiny -
> That hath to instrument this lower world.
> And what is in't - the never-surfeited sea
> Hath caused to belch up you, and on this island
> Where man doth not inhabit, you 'mongst men
> Being most unfit to live. I have made you mad;
> And even with such like valour men hang and drown
> Their proper selve ...
>
> You fools! I and my fellows
> Are ministers of Fate. The elements,
> Of whom your swords are tempered, may as well
> Wound the loud winds, or with bemocked-at stabs
> Kill the still-closing waters, as diminish
> One dowle that's in my plume. My fellow ministers
> Are like invulnerable. If you could hurt,
> Your swords are now too massy for your strengths,
> And will not be uplifted. But remember -
> For that's my business to you - that you three
> From Milan did supplant good Prospero,
> Exposed into the sea, which hath requit it.
> Him and his innocent child; for which foul deed
> The powers, delaying, not forgetting, have
> Incensed the seas and shores, yea, all the creatures
> Against your peace. Thee of thy son, Alonso
> They have bereft; and do pronounce by me
> Lingering perdition - worse than any death
> Can be at once - shall step by step attend
> You and your ways; whose wraths to guard you from
> Which here, in this most desolate isle, else falls
> Upon your heads, is nothing but heart's sorrow,
> And a clear life ensuing. (3.3.54-83)

Ariel has used terms like 'destiny' and 'fate'. We know he obeys Prospero's bidding, his words then suggest that Prospero equates with, or serves, destiny and fate. The music in this

instance plays two easily definable roles, and indeed may play more. The first function of the music is familiar, to beguile the humans, they are enchanted. Ariel says: 'I have made you mad' (3.3.59) and Gonzalo, who presumably neither hears, nor is affected by the speech, asks: 'I'th' name of something holy, sir, why stand you In this strange stare?' (3.3.95-6). Prospero takes full responsibility for their distracted state: 'My high charms work, and these mine enemies, are all knit up In their distractions.' (3.3.89-91). We, the audience, may not have been directly informed that the music has been the means by which Prospero has managed to effect his spell, but to counteract this spell Prospero calls for music:

> A solemn air, and the best comforter
> To an unsettled fancy, cure thy brains,
> Now useless, boiled within thy skull. (5.1.58-60)

The frantic Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian are brought onto the stage to the accompaniment of solemn music (SD). Their movement is controlled by Ariel's music, these two factors lend weight to the idea that it is the music that has originally bewitched them. In the phantom-feast scene it is not only the three guilty men who Ariel has to control by the power of his music, but the phantoms also. They are purely spirit and have no physical barrier to the power of Ariel's music, if the music can control the humans, then in a Ficino orientated theory of music, the phantoms would be easy to control. They are spirit, and thus are air, music too is air.

This two-fold role of music, controlling the 'shapes' and the three guilty men, functions in the final analysis, in the same way. It makes both parties susceptible to Prospero's wishes through Ariel's directions. The next appearance of the 'shapes' is again accompanied by music. The masque put on for the benefit of

Ferdinand and Miranda is, as the SD specifies, accompanied by 'soft music'. Ariel is know to have power over these 'meaner fellows' and this power is granted to him by Prospero, and music is the only means we see Ariel employ to exert this power.

The masque which puts forward an ideal vision of harmony, exiling any elements that may disrupt that harmony in the shape of winter and barrenness and Cupid; breaks up 'to a strange, hollow, and confused noise' (SD p.120) and it seems the spell is broken when the music ceases. Sound again plays an important role in our interpretation of what is happening on the stage and in the sub-plot. The harmony of the projected masque is shattered by the real state of anarchy that exists on the island. The phantom creatures, of such doubtful origin, vanish so that Prospero and Ariel can attend to the more evil characteristics and machinations of the humans.

Ariel's words to Prospero, on the methods he has used to control and confuse Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo, positively identifies music as the most, indeed the only, powerful source of control. His words confirm, by their detailed account of the responses in the humans, just how powerful music is in this play:

> I told you, sir, they were red-hot with drinking.
> So full of valour that they smote the air
> For breathing in their faces, beat the ground
> For kissing of their feet; yet always bending
> Towards their project. Then I beat my tabor,
> At which, like unbacked colts, they pricked their ears,
> Advanced their eyelids, lifted up their noses
> As they smelt music. So I charmed their ears
> That calf-like they my lowing followed, through
> Toothed briars, sharp furzes, pricking goss, and thorns
> Which entered their frail shins. At last I left them
> I' th' filthy mantled pool beyond your cell,
> There dancing up to th' chins, that the foul lake
> O'erstunk their feet. (IV.i.171-84)

Clearly Ariel sees the music as the source of the charm and enchantment, and this music made the three conspirators sufficiently

unaware of their physical selves, that they followed Ariel through this multitude of physical trials, to find themselves abandoned by the music, stranded in the 'foul lake'.

Of the plays I have discussed, The Tempest, undoubtedly relies most heavily upon music and the power of music. We rarely encounter Ariel without music, and Ariel works all his charms with the aid of one kind of music or another. Ferdinand tells us that the fury of the elements and his own passions are allayed by music. The sleep induced in the court castaways is evoked and revoked by music. The three guilty men are driven to madness by music, and then returned to sanity with the same device. The 'monsters' that lay the feast, do so to the accompaniment of music and the masque too seems to be controlled by Ariel's music. Ariel uses music in all these instances, and others in the play, to control the subjects on the island, and in the case of Alonso to seemingly cleanse him spiritually in a way that mimics Pythagoras' training of his disciples.

As I have noted, Antonio and Sebastian are immune to Ariel's sleep-inducing music, they are obviously not cured of their evil and troublesome passions, they plan their most evil act so far, whilst the other members of the party undergo this cleansing. By the end of the play Sebastian seems to have had his sins purged, he expresses a degree of contrition for them, but even in the closing scene we cannot be sure of Antonio as he remains resolutely silent. The play thus ends on an ambiguous and realistic note. Miranda and Ferdinand are to be the founders of a new empire based on love, forgiveness and harmony, but evil has not been removed from their world, although rendered impotent. Antonio is the threat that evil cannot be removed or purged away completely. Antonio may be powerless to bring about his plans as the play ends, but should the inhabitants of the island

ever return to Naples or Milan, there is the possibility that he may find friends and helpers. The Tempest then ends on a note that in an abstract way mirrors the end of The Winter's Tale. There is promise for the future and the audience are led to anticipate a new united empire, founded on the best of beliefs and ideals. but the past cannot be eradicated. The evil of the past will always be present, nothing can recover the perfection that might have existed before crimes were committed. Leontes will never regain Mamillius, Antonio will never forget how it felt to be Duke of Milan.

Any suggestion that the characters of the play move forward into an ideal society and idyllic environment must be tempered with our knowledge that evil does exist in the world. There can be no return to Eden, only a creation of something very like Eden.

The two plays that so surely employ music and its magical properties also point to a new kind of empire. The fact that music has played a major part in bringing about the resolution of these plays and the hope for such an ideal society, may seem to imply that neither the resolutions nor the devices employed to reach these resolutions are realistic or worldly. This surely is a major point being made by Shakespeare, there is no attempt to clarify the 'real' in either play. In The Tempest that which seems real, is shown by the action of the play, to be the result of Prospero's magical powers, and Prospero's magical powers are presented to us in a strangely matter-of-fact way. Thus the areas of the real and the unreal are clouded, all is illusion. The Winter's Tale also presents us with an ambiguity in the statue of Hermione. Throughout the play we are told and told again that Hermione is dead, we are never led to believe that Antigonus, the Oracle, Paulina. the sculptor and Hermione have all been guilty of the most brutal 'lesson' for

Leontes. When it comes to considering the life exhibited by the 'statue' of Hermione, we almost baulk at accepting this as the one thing Shakespeare will have us believe it is. We deal with the narrow concepts of the individual when we resist Hermione as a living, breathing statue. When we fault either or both the magical content and idealism, be they romance or no. in the endings of The Winter's Tale and The Tempest, we fail to grasp the width and breadth of Shakespeare's vision. He has employed and implied the fantastic or supernatural device to bring about a fantastic or a supernatural resolution. A resolution that is more in tune with the universal or supernatural plan and the ideal, than in tune with the particular, wordly, or dramatically realistic. In dealing with such vast concepts Shakespeare has had to find and employ a versatile and powerful metaphor that can not only imply a change in mood in the play and characters, but can equally bring about a change in mood in the audience. Music is probably the only such device or metaphor. The very fact that this music is not written down indicates that it is the concept of the music itself and not its actual sound which Shakespeare hopes to convey and use to its maximum extent. The concept of music that can seem to restore health, life and sanity, can resurrect the dead or instil life into statues, that can be used to control elements, men, and spirits, and can be used as an indicator about the nature of man and changes he might endure is indeed a versatile metaphor and device. It is most firmly rooted in the renaissance hermetic tradition and proceeds directly from Pythagoras and Orpheus, and in this context is more than merely music, but is magic-evoking music.

Footnotes to Chapter 2 Orphic Music

1. Aristotle, His Works 'Metaphysics' trans. Ross, Vol. VIII.
   Zeller, A History of Greek Philosophy.
   Scoon, Greek Philosophy Before Plato.

2. Walker, Spiritual and Demonic Magic. p.37

3. Walker, Spiritual and Demonic Magic. p.10 cites Ficino's Opera Omnia p.563.

4. Walker, Spiritual and Demonic Magic. pp.40-41
   Walker trans. and cites 'Asclepius' CXIII Corpus Hermeticum edited by Nocke & Festiere pp.347-9.

5. Walker, Spiritual and Demonic Magic. pp.18-19.

6. Walker, Spiritual and Demonic Magic. p.30

7. Walker, Spiritual and Demonic Magic. p.19

8. Brower, 'Fields of Light' Shakespeare's Later Comedies.

CHAPTER 3 THE NEW EDEN

For renaissance hermeticists and cabalists, inspiration proceeded from documents, philosophies, and ideals that related to Greek antiquity. Among these documents so prized were those credited to the supposed Hermes Trismegistus. These documents were thought to pre-date, or be contemporary with Moses, for this reason they were seen as prophetic in their mention of a messiah, the Son of God, Christ. Thus the Corpus Hermeticum which was considered to be primarily pagan became elevated to the same stature as the prophecies of the equally pagan Sybil. Augustine's references to, and acceptance of them helped to substantiate their position of credibility for Christian hermeticists and cabalists.

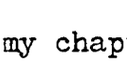
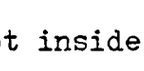
In the early seventeenth century Isaac Casaubon dated the Corpus Hermeticum. His findings suggested that it was not contemporary with Moses, as had previously been supposed, but had been written some centuries after Christ, thus it did not offer inspired prophetic wisdom but rather a retrospective vision. Casaubon's work did not disprove the contents of the Corpus Hermeticum, and this body of work still forms the basis of occult philosophy today, but he did succeed in discrediting it because it was not the prophetic and antique body of documents as had previously been supposed.

Casaubon's success in discrediting the Corpus Hermeticul relied upon the renaissance tendency to elevate all that pertained to antiquity and to man's previous cycle. The age when Eden had just been lost, and as a consequence man's contact with, and knowledge of Eden had not atrophied to the same degree as in the following centuries.

This renaissance perspective, elevated not only the antique philosophies of Greece but also the first and most elevated golden age, man's existence before his fall from Eden.

The gnostics believed that through a rediscovery of lost knowledge an Eden could be rediscovered, and by the application of this knowledge it would be possible for man to create a world mirroring the perfection of Eden. It was admitted that if it were possible to recreate the perfection of Eden, such a recreation neither would, nor could, negate the original fall. Nor would it invalidate the sacrifice of Christ. Rather the rediscovery of such perfection would only be possible because the blood of the Son of God had been split in atonement for man's sins. The gnostics then, believed that it was possible to recreate an Eden on earth. It is possible that orthodox Christian catholicism and gnosticism run on parallel lines here, although the two philosophies seem to contradict on the essential point of a world that mirrored Eden, and how man could hope to obtain access to this earthly or heavenly paradise. Neither orthodox christianity nor gnosticism sought to negate Christ, indeed the contrary was true in both. Neither suggested it was possible to return to Eden or recreate an exact mirror image of Eden. Evil had come into the world, and regardless of man's progress, this could not be denied or negated. Thus any golden age would be a new golden age, and any Eden it was thought possible to establish in a renaissance world would take account of man's fall, his basic flaws, and of the consequent evil loosed in the world, and would in consequence be a New Eden, obtainable because of the sacrifice of the Blood of Christ.

To follow the application of such a philosophy into the literature and drama of the renaissance, it is helpful to remember

that Christ was known by a string of epithets:- Son of God, Son of Man, The Lamb of God, The Good Shepherd, and Redeemer. We may now draw the line at equating The Son with The Sun, but such was not the case in the renaissance, as reference to Shakespeare's plays will prove. The symbol for the Monad (No. 1) is a dot inside a circle,  . In my chapter on Numerology I have noted that the No. 1, the monad was thought to relate directly to God. In astrology the symbol for the sun is a dot inside a circle,  , in fact it is the same symbol. Attached to the Sun are numerous attributes, light being the most universally accepted. In Christian philosophy God is the source of light in the Universe. Attached to the Sun are other deities, the most notable being Apollo. Thus we see that there are a series of symbols or images, not all overtly Christian, that might be used in the renaissance, indeed in any age, that can be seen to relate to the Son of God or to God. It is possible also to depict a physical experience in a way that might be seen to relate to or imply the Christian sacraments. Immersion in water preceding a spiritual cleansing being one such parallel that might imply baptism, and a specially prepared last supper perhaps suggests the Last Supper of Christ and by implication the Eucharist or the brotherhood of Christ's chosen disciples.

In my chapter on Orphic Music I have indicated that Apollo was the deity to whom orphic music was directed and dedicated. I have also indicated that there are implicit and explicit references to Apollo in plays like Pericles, The Winter's Tale and The Tempest. In this chapter I hope to show that these references can be seen as a part of a much greater theme, not merely of music or orphic music, but of the renaissance world. This theme relates to Empires rather than to the individuals who are the princes of those Empires,

and depicts the foundation of Christian Empires in a non-Christian world. Empires founded on love that go some way to mirroring the perfection and innocence of a heavenly or earthly paradise or a lost Eden.

At the centre of The Tempest is Prospero, wielding immense supernatural power, which is reminiscent of a god's. Indeed in the limited environment of the island, Prospero is a god. For twelve years Prospero has waited in hope for this fateful day of the tempest. His task is to be essential for the survival of his line and to restore the balance of the universe, (an imbalance caused by his removal from power by Antonio, Alonso and Sebastian). Prospero's task is not to simply remove Antonio from power, nor is it so simple as to bring about his death. Neither of these solutions will suffice. To remove Antonio from power will partially answer Prospero's problem, but bringing about, or contriving in Antonio's death will stain his project with blood. Prospero sets out to restore the balance without shedding blood, as a consequence his solutions must be subtle. This subtlety demands that Prospero exert his power to its ultimate strength, stopping short of exacting the ultimate price, death. Prospero not only resists any temptation he might feel to extract the ultimate price, but ensures that no blood is spilled in his realm by anyone else. Indeed he goes so far as to protect the court characters from the intrigues of one another.

In the original plot against Prospero, Antonio is the adversary. Antonio lays the plot and is the chief beneficiary of its success. Despite the complexity and number of the plots on Prosper's island Antonio and Prospero find themselves opposed again. Antonio, unaware that Prospero survives, is equally unaware that he is

pitted against him, and mistakenly sees his opponents as Alonso and Gonzalo. The elements Antonio has not allowed for, are Ariel and Prospero, and it is Ariel's musical intervention on Prospero's behalf that saves Alonso's life. Antonio and Prospero can be seen as opposed to one another throughout the action of the play, and due to their prior encounters, beyond it. Prospero faces an old adversary, who represents an evil capable of exerting force through his allies, and an evil that must be overcome.

Prospero's character is at first ambiguous. We know that he is powerful, indeed on this isolated island he is all-powerful. He controls both the natural and supernatural through his immense power. The way in which he will use this power to further his own plans is a focal point of the play. The extent or real nature of his power is never clarified beyond its immense proportions. On a first reading of The Tempest it may seem that Prospero is prepared to subject the court characters, and anyone else unfortunate enough to fall under his jurisdiction, to any manner of experience or trial, merely to prove his superiority and win the day. He seems particularly vengeful to Caliban and Ferdinand, making both subservient to his will through their log-lugging tasks, and even Ariel is not spared his threats and temper. Miranda alone rests in the security that all is done for her. A deeper examination of The Tempest will reveal that this is not the case, and for Prospero the end does not only justify the means, but the means are all a part of the solution at the close of the play. It is undeniable that his unwilling subjects go through a wide range of trials, but the trials are not arbitrary. Each is perfectly suited to the individual to which they are applied, testing relevant areas that have previously proven faulty, are in need of purging or adjustment,

or have never been tested before. Antonio is Prospero's only real failure. As the play closes he remains uncommitted to Prospero's plans for the future, but he lacks the power to resist them. This does not mean to say that Antonio will always find himself in such a powerless position, although I would suggest that Prospero does his best to render Antonio an impotent adversary. Auden's Antonio quite clearly awaits his day, when he will again be in a position to wrestle power from Prospero[1]. If we look into the future that follows the play we may well anticipate, as Auden and other writers and critics do, another day when Prospero will again be toppled from power by Antonio. Even in such a projected future, we find Antonio anticipated in a position of opposition to Prospero. We see here two brothers who represent opposed positions. The good and the evil face of the same coin, which Harold Jenkins argues is a familiar theme for brothers[2]. If we see Antonio and Prospero in diametrically opposed positions in the play, one representing good and the other evil, we will find it necessary to establish just who the 'good' half of the brotherhood is, and just how evil the 'bad' half is. Even though Prospero's actions may seem distasteful to a modern audience; that his abjuration of magic indicates a magic that is in some ways related to less than 'holy' magic; leading to the suggestion that he practices 'black magic'; that he subjects the less powerful to his will, and rules with the iron fist of the tyrant, I would suggest that despite all these negative charges Shakespeare invites us to accept Prospero as a symbol of good on the island. Prospero's supernatural powers, which echo the power of a god or God heighten this image.

Regardless of all the negative and positive qualities we note in Prospero, his role and character remain to some degree ambiguous. Antonio's character, less fully or sharply drawn than Prospero's is not so ambiguous. We have in Antonio an evil man. Prospero's willingness to ultimately forgive Antonio for his mis-deeds may tempt us to do the same, or mislead us in our understanding of the very real evil that Antonio manifests.

In Antonio we have a character who suffers less from the pangs of conscience than Shakespeare's arch-villains Richard III, Macbeth, Claudius or Iago. Antonio clearly states to Sebastian that he suffers not from conscience (2.1.281-85). Richard suffers for his crimes; Anne speaks of his timorous dreams and uneasy sleep. In the scene of the eve of Bosworth Field we become onlookers to horrifying dreams which predict Richard's imminent downfall. Throughout Richard III, Richard is cast in the role of a super-naturally evil force. He is linked time and again through suggestions, imagery, and direct comment, with the devil. Macbeth horrifies himself, and Claudius prays, albeit inadequately, for forgiveness, Antonio is not treated in a similar way by Shakespeare, in failing to acknowledge pangs of conscience, he fails to acknowledge his criminality and guilt. This does not affect the crimes that Antonio is actually guilty of, or the further crimes he is prepared to commit. The evidence exists within the play to suggest that Antonio is in every way as evil as is Richard, his crimes are limited not by any hidden qualities within himself, but because of the power that the other characters in the play are able to exert. Prospero would have perished at sea with Miranda had Antonio had his way. Alonso and Gonzalo would be slain on Prospero's island, had Ariel, on Prospero's behalf, not intervened.

Antonio is as predisposed to the pursuit of evil as is Richard. Indeed his lack of any form of conscience makes him alarmingly untouchable by any form of conventional morality. We may find it hard to comprehend the depth of Antonio's blackness because of Shakespeare's handling of his character. Antonio's corruption is not externalised in physical deformity, and this makes his evil less marked and a more sinister and disturbing element to deal with than the overtly evil Richard. Like Claudius, Antonio can 'smile and smile and be a villain', and those without the insight to look past the veneer will be duped, and exposed to his ambitious plots.

Antonio's plots to gain power are not executed solely by Antonio. To overthrow Prospero Antonio has had to involve Alonso and Sebastian. In his attempt to overthrow Alonso, Sebastian necessarily becomes involved. Antonio involves others not only by physical involvement in his plans, but because he reveals the full extent of these plans and in the black and white terminology of 'good' and 'evil' lack of objection equals assent, thus all who know but fail to act become accomplices and are equally steeped in guilt. Antonio's ambition then damns the other characters who become involved with him.

The plot to overthrow Alonso is formulated by Antonio, he is most insistent when Sebastian is most unsure. As Sebastian hesitates or pretends not to understand Antonio, Antonio tempts him on, feeding any strain of ambition or greed that Sebastian may have. When the plan is foiled by Ariel's actions it is Antonio who reintroduces the subject although it seems that he has the least to gain, he asks no reward or fee of Sebastian; it is only when Sebastian finally accepts Antonio's plan that Sebastian says

he will reward Antonio by waiving the tribute that Antonio now pays to Alonso. A tribute which represents Alonso's fee for complicity in Antonic's original plot to overthrow Prospero, and comes to represent the bribe in plans of fratricide and usurpation, it is the fee for betrayal.

Antonio's seeming obsession with the proposed murder of Alonso is alarming. Chiefly because he seems to be more ambitious on Sebastian's behalf than is Sebastian. We may conjecture that this is because Antonio sees in Sebastian a man that he will be able to control once the deed is done. Equally we may think he plans to overthrow Sebastian at a later date. These ideas lie beyond the realm of the play, the only motive suggested by the text of the play is the tribute, which Sebastian seems to add as an after-thought, which makes this too seem unlikely. We may infer one last and plausible reason; Antonio tempts Sebastian (in true satanic form) to this crime for the pleasure of tempting him, and to exercise or exert his own egotistical power. The role of the tempter is as old as Eden, it is the role of Lucifer, who offers knowledge and consequently power to Adam and Even. Here, on Prospero's island then, Antonio fulfils the role of the archetypal tempter, in this context he becomes the personification of Lucifer and evil. It is for Prospero to overcome this plan not Alonso. Here again Prospero is in a position opposed to Antonio, in that Antonio, next to Prospero, was the most powerful man in Milan and, next to Miranda, was the most beloved of Prospero, we find evidence that the roles of Prospero and Antonio are in some way analogous to God and Lucifer. Lucifer was second in power and closest in affection to God before his rebellion and exile from Heaven.

At the time that Antonio and Sebastian are laying their plot, the other court characters sleep. This sleep induced by Ariel's music, is linked with grace, and is a measure of the receptiveness of the individual to grace. Alonso is the last of the party to be affected by the music, Sebastian notes that there is something, "strange in the drowsiness" that affects the other characters, but Antonio finds it neither strange that the other characters sleep so easily nor that he is not disposed to sleep. He fails to notice that this sleep is anything other than natural sleep borne from physical exhaustion. Sebastian, unaffected as he is by the music, and unable to receive any grace from the sleep, is still able to see that something out of the ordinary is happening. Of all the characters from the court party Antonio is the only one that is both unaware of, and unaffected by Ariel's music. Remaining unaware that anything supernatural is in progress, he remains unaffected and is consequently the least disposed to grace.

If we reflect upon Prospero's words about his overthrow in Milan, the implicit evil of Antonio is reinforced. Prospero's indictment suggests that Antonio, not happy with his secondary role wanted the primary position in the kingdom. His egotistical greed for power sold Milan into bondage to the King of Naples, to whom he had to pay an:

> annual tribute, do him homage,
> Subject his coronet to his crown, and bend
> The dukedom yet unbowed - (1.2.113-115)

Antonio's concern then can be seen to be the pursuit of personal power and prestige, his concerns are not for either his kingdom or his subjects. His method of securing advancement is equally tainted:

> Thy false uncle - ... new created
> The creatues that were mine, I say, or changed 'em,
> Or else new formed 'em; having both the key

> Of officer and office, set all hearts i'th'state
> To what tune pleased his ear, that now he was
> The ivy which had hid my princely trunk,
> And sucked my verdue out on't, ...
> I, ... neglecting wordly ends, ...
> in my false brother
> Awaked an evil nature; and my trust,
> Like a good parent, did beget of him
> A falsehood in its contrary, as great
> As my trust was, which had indeed no limit,
> (1.2.77-96)

These words indicate an incipient evil in Antonio that knows no bounds, and depict Antonio as a parasitic and cankerous growth that sucks Prospero's person dry whilst changing, transforming, and bewitching, those loyal to Prospero.

In essence Antonio's overthrow of Prospero goes some way to mirroring Lucifer's attempted overthrow of God. In overthrowing Prospero, Antonio has directly involved Alonso and Sebastian, less directly, but nevertheless, implicated are all those court characters exemplified by Adrian and Francisco who, in doing nothing to resist, are by Dante's standards[3] at least, tarnished with guilt. Antonio's evil, like Satan's, contaminates by contact.

Antonio comes to resemble, more and more, the biblical and Miltonic figure of Satan and evil, caring only for the semblance of power, prefering to rule an incomplete kingdom than serve in the more complete. Nothing in the play redeems him, although there is ample opportunity for redemption through the sea experience and Ariel's grace related music. Antonio fails to see the opportunity or the need for redemption. Lucifer too was ambitious, his attempt to gain power brought about the downfall of himself and the other angels involved in the plot with him.

At the end of the play Antonio remains unchanged and unrepentant, his silence is almost complete, his only words are provoked by Sebastian and they indicate no change of heart or thought. Antonio

stands in silence, hearing his fate with 'obdurate pride and steadfast hate.'[4] Unable to feign friendship or repentance Antonio says and does nothing. Whilst all around him acknowledge Prospero and his claim to his kingdom.

The arrival of the castaways on Prospero's island heralds a divided society. Caliban, Ariel and Miranda have presumably co-existed here for twelve years. Caliban has been unable to resist Prospero's power, and his enmity has been limited to cursing, which has been more a way to defuse the frustration and hate he feels, than real resistance. The arrival of outsiders, with their weaknesses and ambitions, brought from the 'real' world, divides the society on Prospero's island. Three notable groupings emerge, Ferdinand and Miranda, Antonio and Sebastian, and Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo. Of these three only the alliance of Ferdinand and Miranda succeeds, and theirs is an alliance built on love, without greed or ambition. The relationship of Ferdinand and Miranda is marked by their expressed desires to serve one another and be done with self-centred considerations. At the close of the play the divided factions of this society, with the exception of Antonio, unite behind their union based on love. The divisions based upon social stratification remain, but this does not lead to a division in the society, but rather reflects the renaissance stratification of society. The resolution of the play does not suggest total success for Prospero, he has been unable to win Antonio on to his side. The island's inhabitants are not, as Frances Yates suggests in Shakespeare's Last Plays, fully purged of evil. Antonio remains a symbol of evil waiting his chance to exert pressure again.

Regardless of Prospero's failure to negate all evil, he has achieved the foundation of a society and situation that should prove capable of rendering that evil impotent. Because Antonio's power lies not in his own resources but in the resources of those he can win to his side, the union of Ferdinand and Miranda has brought about a stable union between Naples and Milan and has left Antonio friendless. As Gonzalo succinctly puts it:

> Was Milan thrust from Milan that his issue
> Should become kings of Naples? O, rejoice
> Beyond a common joy, and set it down
> With gold on lasting pillars. (5.1.205-8)

This is indeed an achievement 'beyond a common joy', Prospero has regained Milan, and something far greater in the union of Ferdinand and Miranda. Milan and Naples will be united through love; under Prospero and Alonso the kingdoms had formerly been divided by hate; under the rule of Antonio and Alonso the kingdoms had seemed to have been united, but any union was based on usurpation, greed and ambition. The tribute that Milan pays to Naples has cost Milan its freedom. The alliance, through love, of Milan and Naples is Prospero's guarantee that Antonio will not again succeed in gaining the dukedom of Milan and will secure Milan its freedom. The success of Prospero's plan leaves Antonio without allies and the marriage of Ferdinand and Miranda makes them Prospero's allies. Antonio is rendered impotent and, Miranda's and Milan's safety is guaranteed. In consequence, at the end of the play Prospero feels he can return to Milan where his every third thought can be of death, he has assured the continuation and security of Miranda. It is for the success of this plan that Ariel has intervened to save the life of Alonso, and there is an emphasis on a 'sea-change'. Prospero's most outstanding achievement is not his victory but that he has achieved it without shedding blood, and by mutual consent.

The security of Miranda and Prospero depends upon the love bond between Ferdinand and Miranda. For this reason Ferdinand has been so thoroughly tested by Prospero, it is essential he is seen to be tested and that he should pass with credit.

At first it seems as though Prospero has had an ambiguous response to the developing relationship between Ferdinand and Miranda, saying one thing to them and something else in his asides to the audience or to Ariel. This seeming ambiguity is easily misinterpreted. It represents two threads, the first the love bond between Ferdinand and Miranda, and the second keeps the audience informed of the progress of Prospero's plan. We are informed in no uncertain way that the relationship and strength of the love between Ferdinand and Miranda is of paramount importance to Prospero's plan. It is the most essential element of those he juggles with throughout the play.

When Ferdinand first appears on the island he is exhausted, isolated and believes his father drowned, and suddenly he must learn to make his own decisions, accept responsibility for them, and make the transition from boy to man, Prince to King without further ado.

From Ferdinand's first encounter with Miranda to the resolution of the play, we watch him choose Miranda as his prospective queen, and then undergo Prospero's trial of the logs and his chastity. These trials do more than test Ferdinand, they also test Miranda and unify both Ferdinand and Miranda against Prospero.

Prospero's first words about Ferdinand give us a clue that his later words and harshness are born out of something other than his knowledge of Ferdinand:

> This gallant which thou seest
> Was in the wrack; and but, he's something stained
> With grief, that's beauty's canker, thou mighst call him
> A goodly person. (1.2.414-17)

Within forty lines Prospero seems to have a change of heart, accusing Ferdinand of treachery, and threatening him with punishment. Ferdinand finds himself the prisoner of the man his father has helped to overthrow. Incredibly he shows no signs of fear, he resists once, finds it futile (1.2.487-94), and then accepts the task that is set him, which is the same task as Caliban's has been, log-lugging. The attitude manifested by Ferdinand is markedly different to the morose attitude of Caliban who has raved and cursed. For the second time in the play Ferdinand's intuition and sharp perception of the situation is illustrated. He accepts the task as a trial and as a means to an end, that end being Miranda:

> There be some sports are painful, and their labour
> Delight in them sets off. Some kinds of baseness
> Are nobly undergone, and most poor matters
> Point to rich ends. This my mean task
> Would be as heavy to me as odious, but
> The mistress which I serve quickens what's dead,
> And makes my labours pleasures. (3.1.1-7)

Ferdinand and Miranda have chosen to support one another, and their relationship blossoms despite the seeming opposition of Prospero, but we are aware that this relationship is contrived by Ariel and Prospero, or at least the initial attraction between the two is the result of Ariel's work. The relationship of Ferdinand and Miranda has been manipulated to no lesser degree than the relationship of Demetrius and Helena is manipulated by Puck and Oberon. Prospero is well pleased by the progress of his plan, his reactions to the various tit-bits of news that Ariel brings him, (almost military despatches), telling how his campaign progresses, how characters act and react, and how the love between Ferdinand and Miranda

flourishes illustrates this. It is only in relation to the plan that directly concerns Ferdinand and Miranda that Prospero exhibits signs of joy. Their first meeting is punctuated with comments from Prospero that show this joy. The joy most obviously manifests in the way that Prospero relates to Ariel, congratulating him and promising him his freedom in return:

> Spirit, fine spirit, I'll free thee
> Within two days for this! (1.2.421-2)

and

> At the first sight
> They have changed eyes. Delicate Ariel,
> I'll set thee free for this. (1.2.441-3)

and again

> Thou shalt be as free
> As mountain winds; (1.2.499-500)

No other part of Prospero's plan occasions such an excessive show of pleasure and happiness. All other successes are greeted with restrained pleasure, if pleasure at all. Ferdinand's trial, then, is a trial that he must endure to secure Miranda and prove his worth. Prospero and Ariel are not alone in this prior knowledge. Ferdinand's attitude indicates that he too is aware that this is a trial and that the outcome of that trial is the hand of Miranda. Thus understanding Prospero's need to try and test Ferdinand and the other characters who arrive on this island, we come to understand that Prospero is not being petty or vicious in his dealings with Ferdinand. Likewise all the trials endured by the characters who find themselves on the island are equally suited, they seek to balance or cleanse, and are surprisingly generous. All are given opportunity to redeem themselves for their past, some grasp that opportunity, others - Antonio and Sebastian - reject the opportunity, and become more deeply steeped in crime. The ability of Antonio

and Sebastian to resist Ariel's music, and the plot by Caliban and his co-conspirators show us that this is a world where free will exists.

Prospero is not seeking revenge, his plan is to subject those who have transgressed against him and the higher moral order to trials and punishments that will purge away their crime, and lead them to repentance and contrition. The trials and punishments may look like revenge, and it seems that Ariel has to remind Prospero that he is human, suggesting he should temper his wrath and desire for justice with kindly emotion and concern for the sufferings of the innocent Gonzalo. Ariel's words here seem as much an observation of the plan and its success as a directive to Prospero as how he should behave at this stage. Prospero agrees with Ariel and with no further debate tells him:

> Though with their high wrongs I am struck to th' quick
> Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
> Do I take part, The rarer act is
> In virtue than in vengeance. They being penitent,
> The sole drift of my purpose doth extend
> Not a frown further. (5.1.25-30)

True to his word, Prospero no longer dispenses punishments and trials, but instead, forgiveness. This forgiveness follows directly upon Ariel's reminder, but it also follows the betrothal of, and masque for Ferdinand and Miranda, and as such marks the successful completion of one of the phases of Prospero's plan.

Prospero has not indulged in an unseemly rush to get Miranda married off. He has planned for her to marry Ferdinand, but only if Ferdinand is seen to love and honour Miranda beyond his own comforts and ambition for power. In essence, Ferdinand has had to prove his love is untainted by consuming self-interest, and is as pure as love between the sexes can be. Fittingly he woos Miranda

not as an object that will either increase his kingdom and power, nor as an object that will gratify his sexual appetites. This is a union brought about by Prospero's supernatural power, made in heaven, and as a consequence it must manifest the heavenly virtues of marriage in its fulfilment. Indeed it must fulfil the Erasmian principles of chastity within marriage. The coming together of two spirits which is mirrored in the sexual act, and not the sexual act legalised by marriage.

The root and foundation of the relationship between Ferdinand and Miranda must be a love that implies a divine love. The first encounter between the two implies such thoughts and feelings are not foreign to either. Both think that the other is a supernatural being. Each expresses their admiration of the other in these terms. Divine love is beyond the corruption or atrophy due to physical or financial enticements, and stresses self-sacrifice rather than self-interest. There is no financial or political agreement included as a part of this marriage, and rather than seeming to be a political marriage master-minded by a materialistic father, it is a marriage that on Miranda's side seems to fly in the face of her father's commands and against his wishes.

As the informed audience we are aware that this marriage is not contrary to Prospero's plans but is rather totally in tune with them. As the god of the island, Prospero has been responsible for the manoeuverings that have led to this marriage and as such we would not expect any real resistance to come from that quarter but from Alonso's. It is the father of the groom who might be expected to be the cause of any conflict on this point.

In The Winter's Tale there are marked parallels with themes in The Tempest. Just as Prospero can be seen as the god-figure

dominating The Tempest so Apollo can be seen as the god-figure dominating The Winter's Tale. Apollo represented by the Oracle at Delphos, is ever-present at Leontes' court by the insistence of Paulina that the Oracle be both trusted and obeyed. Apollo can also be seen in relation to Florizel who uses the same disguise as the god has done when he sets about wooing Perdita, and as such Apollo can be seen as being instrumental in the marriage of Florizel and Perdita.

The expected animosity of Alonso to the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand never materialised but in The Winter's Tale the father of the groom does become a source of conflict on the projected marriage of his son and heir, whilst the father of the bride, Leontes, unwittingly acts as an ally to Apollo in protecting the couple from the wrath of the irate Polixenes.

Florizel, like Ferdinand, chooses his own prospective queen. Both princes are steeped in an awareness of their position in society, and of what their future role will be. Both discover their prospective queens by a chance of fortune, or perhaps the intervention of the supernatural. Miranda's discovery by Ferdinand is not an accident, Fortune and the stars have had a role to play in this discovery, motivating Prospero to act when he does. Florizel discovers Perdita when his falcon flies over her father's land, Florizel reveals this to the audience, when dressed as Apollo has been dressed when he came to earth to woo, in this way it seems that Florizel is related to Apollo. It is also through Apollo that Perdita is discovered, just as it is through Apollo's oracle that we know she will be discovered. Both princes woo honourably, neither allowing their lust to dictate or corrupt their actions, nor allowing what seems to be parental opposition to deter them.

The supernatural guidance that leads the two princes to their prospective queens is a further indication that these are special marriages. The princes both show a degree of perception and insight in selecting their prospective brides and being instinctively aware of their royal blood. These are special marriages, the princes are perceptive and special people. It is not a little remarkable that two princesses living in exile, unaware of their real heritage, should attract to themselves the only princes capable of restoring them to their rightful position in the world. This of course is in line with the best of 'romance tradition' and as with other romances, the central characters, the princes and princesses are to be seen as 'special' characters, perhaps not realistic but at the very least as symbolic or allegorical of the triumph of love over obstacles and ordeals.

The next generation of monarch, in both plays, will not be of the same kind as their fathers. The princes who will take over the reins of power are shown to be endowed with high principles, considerable honour, a quality of self-sacrifice, loyalty in love despite threats and hardships, and a considerable degree of inspired perception.

Ferdinand will not be the same sort of king that Alonso has been. There are suggestions within the text of The Tempest that he possesses a perception that enables him to see beyond the surface. In deciding how special Ferdinand is, we have to examine the ordeals he is subjected to and the way in which he deals with them. Consider his leap from the ship. He jumps because 'Hell is empty, And all the devils are' on board the ship. If we accept that Antonio is linked with Lucifer, and that Alonso and Sebastian are the evil men Ariel says they are; an indictment echoed by Prospero

at the phantom feast:

> Thou hast said well, for some of you there present
> Are worse than devils. (3.3.36-7)

Ferdinand is proved correct. If he wishes to escape evil, he is safer in the sea than on board. Ariel is responsible for the chaos on the ship, and it may be to this chaos that Ferdinand refers. We are aware of Ariel's supernatural powers, and if Ferdinand does refer to the chaos that is directly attributed to Ariel, then equally his comments indicate he is aware of this supernatural power. Whether Ferdinand refers to the real devils present in the shape of Antonio and his co-conspirators, or to Ariel's activities, he is perceptive enough to know that the storm which is presented to us with such realism, is in some way linked with a supernatural force of uncertain morality. Ferdinand chooses to see that branch of the supernatural as linked with devils.

Ferdinand's receptiveness to and understanding of Ariel's music is another mark of his perception. He is aware that this music has calmed his passions and the passions of the sea, his readiness to attribute the music to a goddess or god indicates a realization that this is much more than mere music, and is linked with the supernatural. Again Ferdinand proves to be correct. His acceptance of the log-lugging as a trial, which will ultimately lead to a rich reward, and his love of Miranda, as I have already discussed, is yet another mark in his favour. Ferdinand quite clearly possesses a remarkable degree of insight. As a consequence of these tests and insights we see Ferdinand as a spiritually aware young man, who will one day rule a kingdom that has been divided by self-interest, ambition, jealousy and hate.

Perhaps the most telling of the trials that Ferdinand undergoes is on the ship, which we don't witness, but the result of which we do.

Ferdinand's response to devils and evil is to take to the sea, seemingly he believes he will be safer in a tempest-tossed sea. Ferdinand cannot refer here to physical safety, which he puts at risk, but rather is concerned with spiritual safety, and his jump from the ship may be viewed as a form of spiritual protection or cleansing, perhaps an attempt to wash away evil. Ferdinand's resistance to Prospero, and rapid acceptance that resistance is futile and ineffective against Prospero's awesome powers, indicates courage combined with realism and to me it seems that we must judge Ferdinand as special, and strangely enlightened.

If my premise is correct, Ferdinand's jump into the sea represents more than a way of dealing with a storm at sea. It could be viewed as a way in which Ferdinand safe-guards or cleanses himself from the evil he feels is at large on the ship. If such is the case then the sea plays a more important part than merely as the watery element that separates the ship from the shore. The effect that the sea has upon the other characters in the play is of importance here, not only in relation to Ferdinand's insight but also to its effect upon them. If the sea has any effect on these other characters we will see Ferdinand as the initiator of that effect.

To find a character who has been affected by the sea is not a difficult task. Ariel's song clearly states that Alonso has been sea-changed, this song suggests to Ferdinand that Alonso's change has been one of life to death, this is not quite what Ariel is saying but for the moment it will suffice in that we have a character who is definitely sea-changed. In his song Ariel refers to only Alonso. He has already stated to Prospero that all the members of the court party, indeed all those on board the ship have survived their ordeal:

> Not a hair perished.
> On their sustaining garments not a blemish,
> But fresher than before; (1.2.217-219)

Ariel's words indicate not only that Alonso has not perished, but that his garments, like those of the other members of the party on board the ship, have been renewed and refreshed. Ariel is not alone in this observation; Gonzalo also comments upon this fact but he has much more to say on the subject. Shakespeare gives to Gonzalo speeches that imply far more than merely safe arrival on the island, and deliverance from the sea. Gonzalo says that the garments worn by himself and the other members of the court party are, 'rather new-dyed than stained with salt water' (2.1.66-67), he goes on to say that these garments are 'as fresh as when we put them on first' (2.1.71-2). Gonzalo's words imply that the clothes are not only undamaged by the sea experience, but they are fresher than before that experience, indeed they are as good as new, they have somehow been given a new lease of life. Although Ariel's comments substantiate this suggestion, they fail to make the suggestion with so much force, or indication of further implication. In his book The Crown of Life Wilson Knight takes up this point:

> Even their garments are unsoiled: ... it as though
> we were to die and find oneself no discarnate spirit,
> but with one's own body, yet newer, stronger, more comely.
> (p.231)

and in what he says we have the essence of a renewal. He sees the renewal as one of the physical body, but as with most occult and spiritual matters, the experiences or sacraments that apply to the physical or external body are but a symbol for a spiritual equivalent, thus an experience which seems to equate with the cleansing and renewal of the spirit seems to have taken place, confirmed resoundingly in Ariel's 'sea-change' song about Alonso, now something

'rich and strange'. Thus we are presented with a renewal and cleansing that reminds one of the claims made for Baptism.

Gonzalo's other comments suggest that the safe arrival of the court characters on the island, 'our preservation' is nothing short of a 'miracle' (2.1.6-7). He then goes on to list, with Adrian, the good points about the island. These comments are opposed by Antonio and Sebastian, who take every opportunity to laugh at Gonzalo's expense, but Gonzalo is not alone in his vision, which is shared by Adrian in the immediate circle. Perhaps more importantly, the person who knows the island best, Caliban, also sees it as fertile and pleasant, supplying all that is necessary for life. He lists many of its good points and assets when he promises to show the island to Stephano and Trinculo, amongst the resources named by Caliban the island had 'springs, ... berries, ... fish ... wood ... crabs ... pignuts, ... jays, ... marmosets ... filberts, and ... young scamels' (2.2.157-69).

The island then is far from a barren waste-land, indeed it has supported Caliban all of his life, and Prospero and Miranda for the past twelve years. The supposed climate of the island is not so easily delineated. However it has been suggested that the island is somewhere near the Bermudas, or that at least Shakespeare's sources related to the Bermudas to 'the collection of Jacobean pamphlets that deal with the wreck of the Sea-Adventurer off the coast of Bermuda in 1609.'[5] Although Shakespeare does not mention the Bermudas in <u>The Tempest</u>, he mentions Carthage, Tunis, Milan and Naples, all warm places when compared to England. There is no mention of Prospero and Miranda living in a hostile climate, and there is a lack of comment on cold-wet clothes, from the sea-soaked courtiers. All this leads one to believe that the island is far

from being inhospitable or barren. Indeed it would be hard to make out an argument that suggested the island is any less hospitable than is Bohemia in The Winter's Tale, which also has a coast line which features a ship-wreck but, in the case of Bohemia, it is a real ship-wreck, and amongst its wild life there is at least one man-eating bear.

If we were drawing a comparison between Bohemia and Prospero's island, we should have to admit that, although less densely populated, Prospero's island would seem to be the more hospitable of the two. The more distant perspective then suggests physically and spiritually renewed and cleansed characters arriving on an island - almost a paradise - where they will be given an opportunity to repent their pasts and make a fresh start with a new structure of ideals and philosophy in an old world.

The pastoral scene (4.4) of The Winter's Tale suggests, in its simplicity, an idyllic place, full of festivity, mirth and music; love and care; food, wine and a bountiful supply of the good things of life. Any evil that enters the society in this setting, enters in the shape of outsiders, initially and namely Autolycus.

It could be, and has been suggested, that the pastoral scene in The Winter's Tale relates to Eden or an Eden, and if these scenes in the more hostile environment of Bohemia relate to an Eden what are we to make of Prospero's island? As Alan Brissenden has pointed out in Shakespeare and the Dance, Autolycus is followed by the masque of Satyrs and the outburst of fury from Polixenes. Everything starts to go wrong with the arrival of Autolycus, and cannot be put right until Perdita and Florizel leave Bohemia and make the journey to Sicilia, where the king mourns his dead son and lost daughter and rules alone without issue, or any hope of issue, until they arrive.

Leontes is condemned to familial isolation because of his past unreasonable jealousy which relates more to his being a man, than to his kingship. Mamillius' death is brought about not by the sin of a king, but by the sin of a man, who just happens to be a king too, and his death is not caused by any other external factor. He dies, possibly of a broken heart, perhaps not. There is no suggestion that he intentionally takes his own life, or that he is a sickly child. This presents us with a perplexing problem, his death is not from natural causes, nor is it intentionally self-inflicted. The Oracle of Apollo at Delphos predicts, allowing for this situation, and this would seem to indicate that Mamillius' death is in some way tied up with the Oracle at Delphos, and through the Oracle with Apollo himself. Our view then of Mamillius' death must be that he dies through the intervention of, or connection with, the oracle. His death is neither self-inflicted nor natural, but of supernatural origin, representing either a punishment to be endured by Leontes and the people of Sicilia or as the price that must be paid by Leontes and his subjects for the eventual safe return of Perdita and Hermione, and the reconciliation of Bohemia with Sicilia. Here then we find ourselves juggling with several abstract concepts, which are given life and motion by the characters and the action of the play. We have the supernatural power of Apollo, the Sun God; a king who sins as man, and as a consequence his son, the son of man, dies; all hope of the continuation of his line is lost, until he does adequate penance. Then Apollo intervenes again, this time to return his daughter and his wife, uniting the royal house of Sicilia with the royal house of Bohemia in the relationship of Florizel and Perdita, who have initially become lovers in the idyllic setting of Bohemia that in some way reflects an Eden.

In the pastoral scene in The Winter's Tale Florizel likens himself to Apollo:

> The gods themselves,
> Humbling their deities to love, have taken
> The shapes of beasts upon them; ... the fire-robed god,
> Golden Apollo, a poor, humble swain,
> As I seem now. (4.4.25-31)

We already know that it is Apollo's oracle at Delphos that has said, 'the king shall live without an heir, if that which is lost be not found.' (3.2.133-4). Paulina's insistence that Leontes does not marry again and that he places his faith in Apollo the sun god, is not so much that she wishes to inflict further suffering upon Leontes, but that she is certain his daughter and wife will be returned to him. As I have argued in my chapter on Orphic Music, Paulina has a special relationship with Apollo and the Oracle, keeping the demands of the prophet alive when everyone else in the court would much rather the incident and prophecy be forgotten. Apollo is present at the beginning of the tragic element of the play in the prophecy, through Paulina in the other sections set in Sicilia, and yet again when the prophecy is realised with the resurrection of Hermione by Orphic Music, which relates directly to Apollo. At the pivotal point of the play, the incident that leads Perdita back home to Sicilia is also related to Apollo, for Florizel, linking himself with Apollo, indirectly links his own discovery of Perdita to Apollo. If Florizel can be seen to be a representation of Apollo on the level that relates to his wooing of Perdita, would it be too great an extension of the conceit to suggest that Florizel can be seen as a surrogate for Apollo in his discovery of Perdita and her return to Sicilia. In much the same way that Paulina can be seen to be Apollo's agent at Leontes' court, Florizel can be seen to fulfil that function in Bohemia. Suffice to say that Florizel and Apollo are linked, just

as Paulina and Apollo are linked; and the prophecy of the Cracle and Apollo are linked: and the resurrection of Hermione by Orphic Music, and Apollo are linked; as Mamillius and Apollo are linked; as the death of Mamillius, the discovery of Perdita and the resolution of the play, and Apollo are linked. Apollo's power is at the core of The Winter's Tale, in much the same way that Prospero's power permeates The Tempest.

It is perhaps most fitting that the pastoral scene, which is so important for the final revelation of Perdita's true heritage by Florizel/Apollo, being the pivotal point of the play, is a sheep-shearing. It can be suggested that Mamillius is a sacrifice demanded by Apollo, and is thus a sacrificial lamb, the innocent not suffering with the guilty, but for the guilty Leontes. Leontes and Polixenes are linked to lambs in their youth, this link is emphasised by Polixenes:

> We were as twinned lambes that did frisk i'th'sun,
> And bleat the one at th'other. What we changed
> Was innocence for innocence: ... Had we pursued that life
> ... we should have answered heaven
> Boldly 'Not guilty', the imposition cleared
> Hereditary ours. (1.2.67-75)

The maturity of Polixenes and Leontes is emphasised by the passage of sixteen years, and that maturity is emphasised yet again by Perdita when she presents Rue and Rosemary in this same scene.

The opening of The Winter's Tale seems to promise a special relationship between Sicilia and Bohemia, but as we see, it takes very little in 'real' terms to rupture this special relationship. Shakespeare powerfully illustrates in The Winter's Tale that harmony between two kingdoms, which indicates a special relationship, is only possible through an equally special relationship between specially chosen people. Just as Prospero succeeds in uniting

Naples and Milan, so Apollo, (it seems there is no one else who can take the credit in The Winter's Tale), succeeds in restoring all the elements of happiness from Leontes' life, as well as unifying his kingdom with Polixenes' through the marriage of Perdita and Florizel.

At the close of The Winter's Tale and The Tempest both plays look forward to a golden future. Each play presents a royal marriage which is founded not on a treaty, not on financial considerations, (there are no references to dowries or the like), rather, each anticipates a marriage which is based upon a special kind of love. These relationships are based in that which will survive and, as a consequence, the kingdoms founded on such solid relationships will endure. The relationships, and associated kingdoms, represent hope for the future at the end of each play.

Thus far we have worlds that are not untouched by evil, but time and supernatural power have played a large part in defusing this evil or in isolating it so as to render it impotent. Each play brings together two kingdoms that have been forced apart by evil, jealousy, ambition or hate, and are drawn together in a union far more powerful in its bond of love, than the original evil. Both relationships are made in heaven or are brought about by supernatural powers. Florizel, likening himself to Apollo, draws the essential link for us in The Winter's Tale, and in The Tempest we are only too aware that Prospero is a man of immense supernatural powers.

It would be relatively simple for Shakespeare to incorporate a resurrected Mamillius when he re-introduces Hermione. From Leontes' words we know that Mamillius is not one of Shakespeare's 'forgotten' characters. His death is included intentionally, and

it seems that there are two essential reasons why this should be, apart from a reminder that the innocent do suffer with or for the guilty, and that death holds a finality all of its own, that even dramatic fiction cannot dilute in the final analysis.

Firstly, if Mamillius were to survive his seeming death, certain elements of the play would be nullified. As Leontes' heir Mamillius would inherit the rulership of Sicilia, consequently no union similar to Florizel's and Perdita's relationship would be possible. Theirs is a male/female relationship, based on love of a special kind. Thus, for the united kingdom of Sicilia and Bohemia to become a reality Mamillius must remain dead. The unity of the new kingdom relies upon this fact, it is therefore reliant upon the death of Mamillius, upon the innocent blood of Mamillius. In The Tempest Alonso declares that he would rather have Ferdinand and Miranda rule in Naples in his place, than lose Ferdinand in death. To regain Ferdinand Alonso must accept Miranda, and accept her as Ferdinand's queen. Alonso believes that Ferdinand is dead, as strongly as Leontes believes that Mamillius is dead. Polixenes is in danger of losing Florizel when he flees the country because he (Polixenes) will not accept Perdita as the future queen of Bohemia. Leontes, in deciding to help the cause of love, and promising to intercede on behalf of Florizel and Perdita with Polixenes, accepts Florizel's plea about time and accepts unwittingly Florizel as his heir. Had he not been prompted so by Florizel, Perdita's true identity would not have been revealed. The acceptance of love, brings reunion with an old enemy, and returns to the deserted kings their children and hopes for the future of their line. This promises greater stability in the future.

It may seem that 'enemy' is too strong a word for Leontes and Polixenes, but we should remember that Leontes would, like Antonio, have seen his rival dead, both men escape the full consequence of their plans because the orders of neither are carried out in full due to the intervention of other characters. Leontes differs from Antonio in that he feels the full guilt of conscience for his actions and repents long before the second half of the play opens.

In the last act of The Winter's Tale Leontes rediscovers his lost daughter and meets Florizel, he remembers the lost Mamillius but allows Florizel to fill the gap that Mamillius has left. In Perdita and Florizel Leontes sees a brother and sister, equal to Mamillius and Perdita and in being prepared to accept Florizel as Mamillius' surrogate Leontes puts Florizel in Mamillius' place. 'Might I a son and daughter now have looked on, Such goodly things as you!' (5.1.76-77). The united kingdom of Bohemia and Sicilia had been possible because the blood of the son has been spilt. Mamillius is the innocent son of the guilty man, dying because of this sin and in consequence redeeming man and king with his blood. Christian belief has as a basis the redemption of man earned by the blood sacrifice of Christ. These kingdoms of the future are to be based upon a redemption of sin earned by the blood of the son of the king. Thus Mamillius and Ferdinand fulfil a similar role in the kingdoms portrayed in The Winter's Tale and The Tempest. In The Winter's Tale the situation is more clearly defined as a blood sacrifice of the innocent son, because Mamillius does not return and does not survive, which permits the unification of Bohemia and Sicilia. In The Tempest the situation is not defined by such absolutes, Ferdinand survives the ordeal, and three hours after his separation from his father he is reunited with him (5.1.186).

Instead of the almost pagan ritual of spilling the blood of the innocent to appease the angry god, the Christianized version of the ritual - Baptism - is substituted in The Tempest.

I have noted that Ariel states Alonso has undergone a 'sea-change'. This sea-change is not death, but some form of alchemical transmutation which is an elevation, Ariel's words suggest as much, when he says that Alonso has changed to something 'rich and strange'. That this something is a living something, is illustrated in Ariel's use of pearl and coral imagery, both organic and living gems, and alchemical symbols. Gonzalo and Ariel both note the renewed condition of the clothes of the courtiers, not only showing no bad effect from their sea adventure, but renewed and refreshed, as good as new. The clothes then are as good as new, better than prior to the sea experience. Alonso is also better than he has been, now that he has been elevated alchemically.

The least elevated role of alchemy is to physically transmute base metals into gold, the most elevated role is to operate on a spiritual level. Alchemists who sought to produce gold in mineral terms and not spiritual, were considered to be abusing the true function of alchemy. They were thought to be linked with the demonic side of the science.

After his sea-change Alonso is seen as less predisposed to evil than are Antonio and Sebastian, indeed we have no evidence to suggest that Alonso is predisposed to evil at all. Evidence to the contrary exists in the episode with the music of Ariel that induces sleep in those characters who are predisposed to grace. Alonso does not receive this music and grace as a matter of course, as does Gonzalo, but he need only express the desire to receive it and he does. Alonso's contact with the sea then has changed him inwardly,

predisposed him to grace through the external sign of renewal, Baptism. Alonso is inwardly changed to something 'rich and strange', all this has been brought about by his contact with the sea, just as Ariel tells us in his song (1.2.397-402).

Ferdinand is the first in the sea, and in this way is the forerunner and instigator of the other characters who jump into the sea, and is thus the instigator of Alonso's sea-change, and the sea-cleansing experienced by all characters. The action that is believed to have caused Ferdinand's death brings renewed life to Alonso and the other characters but only if they are receptive enough to accept this renewed life. In this context then Ferdinand becomes the instigator of Alonso's redemption and the renewal of the other characters. This in essence then implies Baptism, the sacrament that washes away all sin and predisposes the recipient to grace.

A union based on divine love cannot be tainted with the blood of self-interested revenge, and throughout The Tempest the tragic elements are pushed beyond the realms of the play. Although always present as a possibility, the tragic elements are never present as an actuality. Thus rather than spill the blood of the son in The Tempest, Shakespeare has it appear to the father that the son has perished, with that son leading the way to a ritual which will have an equal spiritual cleansing power. Alonso is born again of water. To be born again of water is to be spiritually renewed and cleansed by water, to experience Baptism.

The empires that we anticipate at the close of The Tempest and The Winter's Tale are based upon the Christian ethic. Societies redeemed from sin by the son, they are based on love, unifying two separated kingdoms. Most importantly they are built upon a ritual

that echoes the redemption of man by Christ, restating the sacrifice of the Son for the greater good of all.

Implicit within the suggestion of these new empires is a concept of government. For this reason Gonzalo's commonwealth speech (2.1.50-73) is an interesting focal point. Wilson Knight has seen this as an important introduction:

> While his (Gonzalo's) dreams of a new golden age ... both introduces and supports our central action, yet the bounties of nature and freedom are not to be had on terms so easy; certainly not by sinners, nor can they be described in categories so simple.
> (The Crown of Life, p.248)

Gonzalo later disavows any belief in this commonwealth concept (2.1.176-79), but through this speech Shakespeare puts before the audience an alternative vision of government that encapsulates a utopian approach. Perhaps not directly appertaining to More's Utopia, and rather more in debt to Montaigne's Des Cannibales, it is the suggestion of an alternative and perhaps a better way of governing that is of importance in this context, and not so much the originator of the concept that Gonzalo propounds. Miranda's closing words 'O brave new world' (5.1.183) suggest the same subject again, whilst Gonzalo's comments suggest this 'brave new world' is linked to the gods:

> Look down, you gods,
> And on this couple drop a blessed crown!
> For it is you that have chalked forth the way
> Which brought us hither. (5.1.201-4)

Antonio and Sebastian take full advantage of the flaws in Gonzalo's idea for a commonwealth but this does not indicate that the idea is being faulted by Shakespeare. We already know that Antonio and Sebastian have standards that, at best, are faulty and that Gonzalo's integrity is without question. Gonzalo's rapid disavowal of belief in this concept of government strongly suggests that we are not

expected to take the idea presented, in itself, too seriously. That it is introduced at all, leaves us to question why, and just what it is we are being asked to bear in mind or to consider. No doubt Shakespeare's audience and contemporaries would be familiar with Montaigne. It is probably safe to presume that anyone familiar with Montaigne would have been familiar with other forms of ideal governments and utopian-style societies, perhaps Bacon's 'New Atlantis' being amongst the many. The mention of one alternative would serve as a stimulus in bringing others to mind. Shakespeare indicates adequately through this episode that the method of government, that is considered orthodox, is faulty, it is open to misuse and abuse. If the men who control the system are not morally sound or above skull-duggery, then the system will manifest similar flaws.

The most serious criticism of Gonzalo's commonwealth comes from Shakespeare himself. The action and the structure of The Tempest do not support the idea. The government and stratification of Prospero's island contradicts the idea. There is less freedom on this island than it seems initially. The presence of the new arrivals on the island is due to Ariel's power and every move by every person is watched and reported back to Prospero by Ariel. The new arrivals find themselves manipulated by an invisible Ariel, his music and his magic. He plays them sleep-inducing music, sleep-awakening music, and they are subject to trials and various forms of penance, all of which are decided upon by Prospero who fulfils the roles of ruler and god. Here we witness not a commonwealth, not even a democracy or a republic, but a theocracy, the temporal ruler fulfilling the role of spiritual leader and having at his command immense supernatural powers. In this point the day-to-day workings of the island are in conflict with Gonzalo's ideal.

It may seem to us that the characters scattered about the island are located in a haphazard fashion, although we know they have all been located according to the specific instructions of Prospero (1.2.220). The numerous happenings on the island, the various sections of the community and Ariel's movement from one group to another adds to this seeming chaos, and random society. This chaos is a mere illusion, conjured by Shakespeare and thinly disguising the rigid underlying social stratification on the island. Prospero's island manifests a structure which reinforces the Elizabethan/Jacobean ideal of society, with rigid social stratification, confirming every man's position in life on the ladder which leads heavenwards.

The mariners who make their living from the sea, and live at sea, are the only group to remain on board the ship during and after the tempest. They have been involved in a disagreement with the court characters, and the opening of the play has depicted a scene of anarchy, close reference to the scene will contradict this. The tempest that tosses the ship and seems to threaten to destroy it is a direct result of the ambitious power-struggle insitaged by Antonio. The tempest reflects the disturbance in the chain of being, and this is illustrated through the elements, in much the same way that the disagreement between Titania and Oberon in A Midsummer Night's Dream brings elemental problems to the human world. The tempest experienced by everyone on the ship is not the fault of the mariners, nor is it the fault of Prospero. Although he has conjured it up, he has done so because of the failings of the court characters. The mariners through the boatswain, swear allegiance to Prospero, although the boatswain is probably referring to a god or God, he swears allegiance to whoever can control or has power over the elements

(1.1.13). Most certainly the audience neither sees nor hears him and nor do the court characters. In this way then the mariners are one society separated from the rest of the play, but even their society is structured through a ladder of hierarchies that leads from unseen master to boatswain to mariner.

The other characters who arrive on the island also remain within their relative stratum of society. Ferdinand, the heir to a kingdom, finds himself with his only equal, Miranda. Caliban, responsible for the menial tasks on the island, is to be found with Stephano and Trinculo his counterparts in the court society. The courtiers are all grouped together initially but this grouping becomes fragmented by their individual response to Ariel's music and their receptiveness to grace. This results in the pairing of the guilty Antonio and Sebastian, and isolates Alonso from the rest. In this group Gonzalo frequently makes points and statements that encapsulate some concept that is important to Prospero's plan, often unwittingly fulfilling the role of Prospero's mouthpiece.

As I have said it is perhaps a focus on Utopian ideals that is brought to our vision, and not the rather limited perspective of Montaigne's ideas, in Gonzalo's commonwealth speech. The last line of this speech recalls the glory of the past, to be emulated in the future: 'I would with such perfection govern, sir, T'excel the Golden Age.' (2.1.172-3). This reflects a commonly held ideal of the age as Frances Yates and Alan Brissenden point out in their respective books <u>The Rosicrucian Enlightenment</u> and <u>Shakespeare and the Dance</u>. The pursuit of perfection means and implies a rediscovery of past perfection, the original golden age, before man's fall. The new Golden Age, which is clearly what Gonzalo refers to, could not of course be identical to the previous, if only because the

original precedes the fall and the latter proceeds from that fall. Gonzalo's hope to excel the Golden Age was a commonly held ideal which most Utopian literatures of the time suggested was possible. That does not mean to say that each of these philosophies held up the same virtues and ideas for admiration and inclusion in this new society. The common factor is that all sought to recapture some past excellence, that seemed to be present in the original golden age.

The first difference between the original goden age and any other is the Fall of man brought about by the temptation of Satan. Followed by the redemption of man from his sins by Christ's death, and His spilt blood that would wash away the original sin that supposedly stained the soul. Allowing Man once again to have a place in God's kingdom and regain his lost immortality. All these concepts are represented, at least abstractly, in The Tempest and The Winter's Tale.

We have seen how the direction of The Winter's Tale and The Tempest lead us to anticipate a new kind of kingdom, with new qualities defined as admirable. The anticipated monarchs possess a surprising perceptiveness; a spirituality: a philosophy that elevates love and an ability to bring peace, happiness and stability because of this philosophy of love. They represent a force which draws opposites together and unifies, rather than one which creates opposites and forces them apart. The anticipated kingdoms propose brotherhoods based on wider ideals than the limited and parochial views of their predecessors. Their version of mankind is redeemed, it is cleansed by the blood of sacrifice. It is a redemption that takes place in the play. Perhaps it is for this reason that neither of the plays is set in an overtly Christian world,

The Winter's Tale has at its core Apollo, the sun god, but it also contains references to original sin. There is little difference, in phonetic terms, between the sun god, and The Son of God. This is an easy phonetic transition to make, bearing in mind Shakespeare's other references to 'suns' and 'sons', particularly in the opening speech of Richard III. The god that rules in The Tempest is Prospero, or seems to be Prospero, but Prospero is referring to signs in the stars, Fate, Fortune and Destiny, and in finally abjuring his magic, illustrates that he is not the source of the power he wields, he is only able to direct that power. In abjuring magic Prospero returns to his human role. He has made it possible for Miranda and himself to live happily and safely in Milan or Naples because of Ferdinand. The Magus who has sought to right the imbalance in the universe, and seemed to hanker after vengeance in that role, is replaced by a young man who takes all in his stride, and elevates love. This transition seems almost to represent the different faces of God as seen in The Bible, "'Vengeance is mine' saith the Lord" being Prospero's first phase, followed by "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's" illustrating the second phase, and finally resulting in the "Love thy brother" teaching of Christ. This "Love thy brother" philosophy, exemplified by the reconciliation at the end of the later plays, is more than a Christian platitude. It is elevated to great importance by Paul to the Corinthians. In the James I Authorized Version of The Bible, the quality becomes converted to charity, but The Geneva Bible (1560) states that it is love that occupies the position of extreme importances and not power or knowledge.

> And thogh I had the gift of prophecie, and knowe all secretes and all knowledge, yea, if I had all faith, so that I solde remoue mountaines and had no loue, I were nothing.[6]

Prospero in abjuring his 'Art' and accepting that he is human, in preparing to return to Milan with only love to sustain him, illustrates this verse. Forsaking his secret knowledge and putting behind him his supernatural powers he sees the love of Ferdinand and Miranda, and the union that love will bring, as the way to all peace. This love which has been tested to judge its quality and depth, and thus its endurance in the face of the trials that will come in the real world, also has a place in Corinthians, which implies that real love will survive, making the foundation of the New Empire of Naples and Milan solid:

> It suffreth all things: it beleuth all things: it hopeth all things: it endureth all things.
> Loue doeth never fall away, thogh that prophecyings be abolished, or the tongues cease, or knowledge vanish away.[7]

Taking then that a new and enduring Empire is come into being through the relationships of Florizel and Perdita, and Ferdinand and Miranda, now is the time to understand the nature of that Empire, and how it may relate to the Hermetic Tradition and the role that Frances Yates refers to as the 'Imperial mission' in her book Astraea.

From Augustine's time and with his The City of God there was an idea that society was made up of two elements, or as Augustine puts it, two cities, there being the city of God, which he sees as relating to the Church, and the city of Earth, which he sees as relating to man, society, evil and the devil. This idea of two cities split society, the Church always seeing its role as keeping the rest of society under control, and as free as possible from the taint of evil.

In 800, Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne Emperor. In establishing an Emperor of the earthly world it would seem that Pope Leo was perhaps elevating the city of the Earth, and thus the

devil. The church needed the protection of a powerful temporal emperor. There were now two rulers of the world, the Pope and the Emperor. The Pope retained, in theory, all the power. The role of the Emperor then was to protect the city of God and was to assist the city of God, in carrying the message of the church through the world, subjugating everyone to the power of the church. The Emperor, like the Pope, 'is in some kind of special relationship to Christ.'[8].

In The Winter's Tale, as I have noted, Mamillius as a sacrificial lamb, is in some kind of relationship to Christ, since his death is a foundation stone of the new kingdom to be built on love. Florizel, in succeeding Mamillius in Leontes eyes, and as the heir with Perdita to Sicilia, stands in relationship to Mamillius, and indirectly to Christ. Further, Florizel also stands in special relationship to Apollo, the god at the centre of The Winter's Tale; the sun god, who through a phonetic transition becomes the Son of God. In The Tempest we have seen how the supposed death of Ferdinand leads to the foundation of the Naples/Milan Empire, and how Ferdinand is the instigator of the sea-cleansing of the court characters, and the sea-change of Alonso, in the symbolic Baptism in the play, thus linking Ferdinand also with Christ.

In the Fourth Eclogue Virgil proclaims that the golden age is about to return; a child would be born who was destined to rule over a reconciled world. It was believed that Virgil referred to the reconciled world of Augustus, and its golden age, and that the child was Christ. But because of the associations it was possible,

> to use pagan imperial rhetoric concerning periodic renovations of the Empire, or returns to the golden age, medieval Christian emperors, thus retaining something of

> the cyclic view of history which such expressions imply; though in a Christianized form. A 'renovatio' of the Empire will imply spiritual renovation for a restored world, in a new golden age of peace and justice, Christ can reign.[9]

The Winter's Tale and The Tempest are not set in Christian worlds and the redemption of man takes place within the play. From that redemption a union of love springs up, promising to bear fruit in this redeemed, stabilized and united kingdom. Perhaps Shakespeare is, in his own way, illustrating an idea that elevates the monarch. Not unlike the way Spenser's The Faerie Queene, elevates and flatters Elizabeth I, seeing her as the fulfilment of the 'imperial mission' in female terms, which becomes Virgo/Astraea, the virgin queen.[10]

As Frances Yates points out in Astraea, Charles V became one of the hopes to fill the role of this 'special' kind of ruler, and Elizabeth seems to have become the female English hope, James I being the male English hope. If we see Elizabeth as the result of the reconciled houses of York and Lancaster, and remember John of Gaunt's words in Richard II (2.1.31-68) about England, we may accept that a comparison between England and Eden was not uncommon, at least in Shakespeare's own work. Equally if we look to James I king of Scotland and England we can see some of the ideal realized as a male actuality.

By this I do not mean to suggest that these later plays were merely Tudor or Stuart propaganda, but it is possible to see James and/or Elizabeth as the fulfilment of the 'World ruler'. Shakespeare does not limit his theme by coming down to the particular; although the idea may be implicit within the text, it is not explicit. However it is possible to find support for the idea of Elizabeth as the 'World ruler'. If we turn to John Dee we see that he saw her as the ruler of an Empire, and hoped she would increase the size of her navy to both protect and increase that Empire.[11]

Frances Yates succinctly puts the religious side of the 'Imperial Mission' or argument for the World Ruler or Emperor, as follows:

> the first Just World Ruler was Adam before the Fall; it is therefore the function of the Just Emperor to establish such a rule upon earth as will lead men back to the state of Adam before the Fall, that is to say, to the Earthly Paradise. This implies a Christ-like redemptive role for the Emperor, though united to the temporal sphere, and it is related to that interpretation of the golden age as being identical with the Earthly Paradise which Lactantius, among others had worked.[12]

This idea of the world ruler can be found in Dante[13] it was also considered as essential by Pico, Ficino, Bruno, and as already mentioned John Dee. The support given to this idea arose out of the need or desire for peace, and for a power that would keep Rome in order, and stop the tyrannical rule of the church. It suggested a greater degree of religious tolerance, and for this reason it became so important to the Renaissance Hermetic Tradition. Secret religious, and esoteric societies, which seemed to be springing up everywhere took a political stance in the hope of achieving the 'World Ruler'. In France there was 'The Family of Love'; in Bohemia 'The Bohemian Bretheren', in Germany 'The Rosicrucian Brotherhood'; which also had roots and supporters in England; and possibly, also in Germany 'The Giordanisti'.

From this evidence I think we can see that Shakespeare is suggesting a form of Utopia in both The Winter's Tale and The Tempest. It is not the commonwealth idea that Gonzalo talks of, it is a Utopia allied to this 'Imperial Mission' of the Just World Ruler, with its allied return to the Golden Age, and it is the term 'Golden Age' that holds the clue. Connected with this theme are the Emperors who fulfil the needs of the ideal, and are closely connected to Christ, they are 'special' people, able to lead their subjects to a

golden age and the Adam mysticism of Frederick II's circle, they can lead man back to the happy 'lamb' days before the Fall.

The social stratification and order maintained on Prospero's island also has an important place in this philosophy, because:

> The government of the world under One Ruler must reflect the government of the universe under one God in no vague and generalized way. It must be an ordered dispensation of justice within an organized state.[14]

Even on Prospero's island, located perhaps in Elizabeth's New World, this type of government is functioning. Although it is possible to see parallels between the government of this island and Campanella's City of the Sun, which in turn owes much to the 'City of Adocenty' in Picatrix, I would suggest that Shakespeare has linked the two not dissimilar Hermetic threads. One being based in the 'Imperial Mission' and linked by its end-product to the Hermetic. The other having its actual roots in the Hermetic through Campanella's City of the Sun, via Thomas More's Utopia to Picatrix which was credited, perhaps mistakenly to Hermes Trismegistus.

We see that Florizel and Ferdinand are both in some special relationship with Christ and fulfil the requirements of 'Just World Ruler'; the Empires over which they will one day preside, can be seen to be 'a restored world, in a new golden age of peace and justice,'. In this way then we see Shakespeare portray the ideal society redeemed in a relatively bloodless way, save for the death of Mamillius. The idea of the redemption of an entire society by some occult-related philosophy, through a specially equipped and chosen prince of the world, is not a new theme for Shakespeare in The Tempest and The Winter's Tale. Rather it is a resulting synthesis of prior dramatic experiments. I have noted how the worlds of both The Winter's Tale and The Tempest are not overtly Christian, indeed to begin with both

plays are overtly pagan. It is only as the plays proceed and end that the implicit Christianity is finally revealed. Both worlds portrayed in these plays, are redeemed in the process of the play by a Christ-figure or redeemer-figure who will rule the redeemed worlds.

Footnotes to Chapter 3 The New Eden

1. Auden, 'The Sea and the Mirror', *For the Time Being*.
2. Harold Jenkins, Introduction to the Arden *Hamlet*.
3. Dante, *The Divine Comedy*.
4. Milton, *Paradise Lost* 1.
5. Anne (Barton) Righter, Introduction to the Penguin *Hamlet*.
6. *The Geneva Bible*, (1560) 1 Corinthians v2.
7. *The Geneva Bible*, (1560) 1 Corinthians v7-8.
8. F. Yates, *Astraea*. p.3
9. F. Yates, *Astraea*. p.4
10. F. Yates, *Astraea*.
11. John Dee, *General and Rare Memorials Pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Navigation*.
12. F. Yates, *Astraea*. p.8
13. Dante, *Monarchia*, Convito IV.iv.
14. F. Yates, *Astraea*. p.7

CHAPTER 4 ALCHEMY

I have already dealt with the influences of Greek philosophy upon renaissance philosophy and the influence of this to be marked in some of Shakespeare's plays. The Greek influence is not limited to philosophy, the place itself and the concept of the 'heroic' ideal in literature also have a part to play, as have the myths and legends. Troilus and Cressida illustrates an original and cynical approach to the Trojan war. 'Heroic' figures such as Helen, Paris and Ulysses are shown as less than the 'heroic' idols of Greek myth. Thus in Troilus and Cressida Shakespeare still presents us with a tragedy of a kind but he presents it in mock-heroic terms, bringing the idols of Greek myth down to a human level, emphasising flaws rather than mythological ideals.

The Winter's Tale contains references to the oracle of Apollo at Delphos and in this it admits of a Greek influence, whilst Pericles includes with dreams and visions, the harmony of the spheres, and Cerimon who practices Egyptian-Greek-magic-medicine. In The Merchant of Venice, Pythagoras and Orpheus are mentioned by name.

A Midsummer Night's Dream and Timon of Athens are set in Athens and a wood outside it. A Midsummer Night's Dream and Timon of Athens have seemingly little in common, other than their settings. At the end of A Midsummer Night's Dream love has triumphed. The old law invoked by Egeus has been negated by the effects of love, and there is a promise for the future in a new order founded on love.

The movement in Timon of Athens is one from a society founded on the external and material values, to one founded in brotherhood and love. The device and metaphor that Shakespeare employs presents us with a play that is both black and dense, almost nihilistic.

The positive elements almost evade our eye because, perhaps, of our point of focus, or our comprehension of the parable that is enacted before us. In The Wheel of Fire Wilson Knight has said:

> Timon of Athens is as a parable, or an allegory; its rush of power, its clean-limned and massive simplicity, its crystal and purposive technique - ... if we recognize its universal philosophic meaning, it is then apparent in all its profundity and masterly construction. We are here judging the chances of the spirit of perfected man to embrace Fortune and find love truly interfused in this 'beneath world': to build his soul's paradise on 'the bosom of this sphere'; Timon is the archetype and norm of all tragedy. (p.220)

Wilson Knight suggests Timon as an example of 'the spirit of perfected man'. His hope is for a 'soul's paradise' in a world in which love and brotherhood are interfused. He suggests Timon seeks to build an ideal world in the earthly realm.

The word 'perfected' can play a dual role in our understanding of Timon. In both applications of the word it means to reach perfection, one application implying a mundane process, the other reading of the word would imply anything but the mundane. In alchemical terms 'perfected' means to reach perfection by alchemical transmutation. Such an act is also referred to as redeeming. Thus an alchemist 'perfects' base metals or 'redeems' them from their flaws by the act of transmutation. Timon sees his role as enmeshed with 'perfection'. At the banquet of luke warm water and stones Timon says to the gathered Athenian parasites:

> May you a better feast never behold,
> You knot of mouth-friends! Smoke and lukewarm water
> Is your perfection (3.6.88-90)

The alchemist that is capable of, and does transmute 'base metals', has performed the act of redemption. This act implies that the successful alchemist can be seen as the 'redeemer' of 'base metal', which is an alchemical term and often refers to lead. 'Base metal' refers to any material that can be perfected, a man's

soul and spirit being at one end of this spectrum, and lead at the other. It would be possible for an alchemist to redeem the soul of man or the souls of men. In this context he can be seen as a redeemer of mankind or a particular society. In suggesting as I do, that Timon be seen as an alchemist and consequently a redeemer, I also suggest that resultingly he should be considered in some kind of special relationship with Christ. A redeemer figure linked with Christ throughout the play.

It may seem unconventional to suggest Timon as a redeemer-figure, in a special relationship with Christ. There seems little to link Timon with Florizel or Ferdinand, (also to be seen in a special relationship with Christ), and there is a conspicuous lack of the Christian ethic, love or gentleness in Timon of Athens. Even Timon's behaviour seems to contradict this, spending as he does the second half of the play raving in the most misanthropic terms about the Athenians. In this phase he neither reflects, nor receives, or inspires, any element of the divine-love that is so powerful a force in both The Winter's Tale and The Tempest.

If we distance ourselves from The Winter's Tale and The Tempest we note that Shakespeare has made a decisive move in the tragic elements of these plays. In The Winter's Tale the tragic elements of the play occupy the first half of the play, it is only in the second half that anything hopeful or positive hapeens. The first half introduces us to the fragmenting of childhood friendships; the attempted murder of an old friend and a king; the death of a prince; the unjust imprisonment and subsequent death of a queen; the abandonment of a baby princess, and a kingdom that seems to exist on only the slimmest element of hope, in the shape of the oracle's prediction and demands. Sixteen years pass and only then do things

begin to right themselves, unravelling like a riddle for the final scenes of hope and happiness. The positive elements that lead to the final revelations take shape from the beginning of the second half of the play. It is perhaps not until the very end of the play that the death of Mamillius can be seen to be essential to the unification of Bohemia and Sicilia. In The Winter's Tale then we see the eruption of Leontes' jealousy, the dark years that follow this eruption, and finally in the company of the characters of the play, we walk into the light and see the larger and more universal patterning of the play as the final revelations are made. We the audience move through tragedy to comedy.

In The Tempest we are spared the tragic elements. Prospero's overthrow; the complicity of Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian; Prospero and Miranda's escape, aided by Gonzalo, and the 'loving elements'; the first hard establishment of Miranda and Prospero on the island; all this is spared us. It is a memory only and a memory that only Prospero retains. It enters into the play only as Prospero tells Miranda of her heritage. The tragic elements of The Tempest are not dramatised but they are never far away. All that happens on this island is a balancing out, that will negate the evil and tragic elements that are twelve years in the past. Thus we are aware of all these elements, and the chance that Prospero may fail in his plan. We are not subjected to the tragic elements themselves, they are beyond the realms of the play, if only just so.

We can see then, looking at these two plays that the earlier, The Winter's Tale, deals more fully with the elements that relate to the tragic, and the consequent working out of these themes so that a harmony can eventually be restored. As we move forward in chronology the tragic and black becomes less explicitly dramatised

and the positive elements take a larger and larger share of the action of the plays. I make this point because of a similarity in an underlying theme of the redemption of entire societies. The attainment of these perfected empires is not measured in blood and suffering. With each move forward in time it seems that Shakespeare moves the black and tragic elements further back, away from the resolution of the play, and in The Tempest away even from the start of the play.

With Timon of Athens we are moving backwards from both The Tempest and The Winter's Tale. Once again we are in a predominantly pagan world, again the gods are Greek and Athens the setting. The majority of the positive elements of Timon of Athens exist in a similar way to the tragic elements of The Tempest. Perhaps beyond the immediate boundaries of the play, but implicit nevertheless. Just as the tragic elements of The Tempest are not negated by the action of the play neither are the positive elements of Timon of Athens negated by the action of the play, rather the action of the play establishes them in the future.

In Timon of Athens Shakespeare has chosen an alchemical metaphor as his vehicle, and the majority of the play is taken up with the dark (Nigredo) period before the light. This alchemical metaphor is not easily accessible or understood by us in the twentieth century. Our difficulty with this metaphor may come from the necessary labouring of the nature of the breakdown of matter, the decomposition and physical corruption of things as they are before an alchemical transmutation and elevation can take place. The volume of decay and decomposition that the alchemical process requires may distract us from the play itself and the purified elixir that is distilled in seemingly minute quantities by the action of the play. A play that

hopes to hold a dramatic mirror up to the alchemical process, and not just to the image of an alchemist, must by virtue of the nature of this process be black, it must feature the breakdown of matter, the decomposition of the individual or society before it can feature the transmuted society. Once transmutation has been seen to commence, it is pointless to labour the point. The first sign of completion of transmutation is all that is required to suggest the total process, in alchemical terms. This is because the process is in itself a self-perpetuating cycle, once it has begun it cannot be halted. Thus a drama may seem to be less positive in dramatic terms than it would be judged to be in alchemical terms.

The transmuting of base metal is, as already mentioned, termed redeeming. In essence then the alchemist is something of a redeemer. Thus the redeemer-figure that I suggest Timon is, does not equate with the redeemer-figures of The Winter's Tale or The Tempest in anything other than that he too is a redeemer of man and society.

The world of Timon of Athens is more barbaric than the worlds of The Winter's Tale or The Tempest; drastic medicine, indeed 'radical physik' is required if Timon's Athens is to be redeemed and is to overcome the decadence that is escalating at its core when the play opens.

Considering Timon of Athens in the context of The Winter's Tale and The Tempest tells but only half the story, it is also illuminating to consider it in the more general context of the plays that are contemporary with, or precede it, particularly so King Lear, which Charles Nicholl has dealt with in alchemical terms in his book The Chemical Theatre.

In the Shakespeare canon Timon of Athens falls between Antony and Cleopatra and Coriolanus and is generally dated as 1605-08. This

dating makes it contemporary with King Lear at its 1605 date and with Pericles at 1608. It would be repetitive to point out the hermetic themes in Pericles, particularly with reference to Cerimon who Charles Nicholl has discussed in his book The Chemical Theatre.

In The Chemical Theatre Nicholl has put forward an argument for an alchemical transmutation in King Lear, but has discounted a similar theme in Timon of Athens; contending that the ending does not suggest the birth of a new king or the establishment of a new order. This is, I think, an oversight due perhaps to Shakespeare's use of Alcibiades as that new order, and due also to the complex alchemical transmutation that the play depicts. To me it seems that both Timon and Athenian society undergo a complex alchemical transmutation. What Nicholl has undoubtedly achieved in The Chemical Theatre is in establishing that King Lear has an alchemical metaphor, and that this is neither surprising nor unlikely. He contends that not only would Shakespeare have used such a metaphor but, like his contemporary Ben Jonson, he had probably read much on the subject. It is certain that he gleaned much information and knowledge from somewhere. Viewed in the context of Shakespeare's own work it is not impossible that there may be an hermetic metaphor or theme in Timon of Athens and it is equally possible that that theme may be alchemy. Viewed in the wider context of Shakespeare's contemporaries, not least Jonson, our expectations of such a metaphor increase.

In 1605 Jonson had already written and been imprisoned for his part in Eastward Ho!, the alchemical content of which Charles Nicholl discusses in his book. 1605 is the date of Volpone and King Lear. At the time of Timon of Athens' probable conception and writing the theatrical air was pervaded with alchemical vapours and, as a playwright of his time, Shakespeare would doubtless have breathed this

air and drawn upon, and utilized such a theme.

Timon of Athens is one of those plays that many scholars of Shakespeare believe to be incomplete. I do not wish to enter into this arena of debate. I know not whether Timon of Athens is complete, but if it is not it seems to me that the play has an aesthetic coherence of its own. This coherence can be followed through the underlying themes of the play, and they seem to be intact, and have suffered little, if at all. If any of the more prominent threads of the plot are incomplete or truncated they are not. More to the point, it seems that these underlying themes which relate to an alchemical redeemer, suggest when considered with what we know of the play, a complete concept and idea if not a complete play.

Starting with Timon's name, we note that it bears a link to alchemy. It represents a fragment of the word antimony, an essential ingredient in alchemy. Basilius, an alchemist admired by other erudite alchemists, wrote Triumphwagen Antimonii, this was a specifically Paracelsist work, written in praise of antimony as a 'chymicall physick'. The theme of this work is closely linked to homeopathic medicine of today, the central idea of both being that a remedy can be found in the substance that afflicts and poisons the body. It will be noted that Timon makes up the centre of this word, and that antimony was as I have already said an essential element in alchemy. If we seriously consider this link to the name Timon we may expect Shakespeare to be playing with concepts of redemption or transmutation, alchemy and homeopathic cures in the body in Timon of Athens. The body in question may equally be the body of the individual, of society, or the body politic.

Before dealing with the play and alchemy in greater depth it will perhaps be helpful to outline the bare bones of what may be

considered alchemical themes or clues. The most widely understood and accepted role of the alchemist is probably in his supposed ability to transmute 'base' metals to gold. This was thought to be brought about by a complex chemical chain of events of which the most important ingredients were the base metal and the alchemist's acid. This alchemical acid was known by a variety of pseudonyms, some of them implying its 'biting' nature and some its liquid nature. 'Dew' or 'Ros' were terms frequently used and animals that 'bite' were also thought of as suitable pseudonyms, hence the use of wolves, dogs, and hounds. This use of pseudonyms is traditional and comes from the alchemical parables, in which nothing is clearly stated, as is often the case with occult writings. This is to safe-guard the novice from becoming too involved with powers he cannot control, and to keep such secret knowledge as secret as possible, whilst ensuring its survival in a written form. Thus only those with adequate knowledge are able to understand the formula and progress further to learn the alchemical secrets.

In the context of alchemy this practice is doubly important. If it is possible to make gold from lead or other base metals, then it seems likely that any number of dubious characters, not unlike those in Jonson's The Alchemist, would have seized upon the opportunity to provide themselves with vast quantities of gold. For the true magi or alchemist the gold is itself only a welcome by-product of the alchemical process, the real purpose was to produce the philosopher's stone and the elixir vitae. The philosopher's stone could transmute anything to philosophical gold. The man who possessed this stone had all knowledge, and consequently all power at his finger tips. The elixir vitae was, as the name implies, thought to possess the quality of life, indeed it was thought to

give eternal life, not of the kind that degenerates with age, but that which maintains at its peak. Quite obviously these commodities were in demand, as they would be in any age. To the less informed then, mention of 'base metal', special gold, philosophers, philosopher's stones, stones, dew and biting would all be major clues to the alchemical. It was perhaps less widely known that the true magi or alchemist had to transmute himself into 'living stone' if he hoped to fulfil his transmutation of 'base' metal.

The alchemical process requires an initial period of decomposition and decay which is brought about by the introduction of certain chemicals, most widely known as the alchemist's acid which 'bites' the base metal, removes all imperfections, purifies, elevates and thus 'redeems' the 'base' metal. The alchemist then redeems the base metal and in this context is thought of as a redeemer. That he redeems the 'base' by the introduction of specific ingredients and is thought to use fire as a source of heat, the alchemist is sometimes known as a 'cook' and the word 'smoke' is often associated with this 'cooking'.

The alchemical experiments were carried out in a vessel known as a 'pelican', that is distinguished from other chemical vessels because it is hermetically sealed and has special tubes as a part of itself. Any vapours which arise from the first stages of transmutation are collected and cooled in these tubes, and are then returned by them to the original mixture, by this method the mixture becomes distilled. The process is isolated from the external world because it is contained within the pelican.

Thus indicators to an alchemical metaphor would certainly contain some or all of the following: gold, stones, philosophers, philosopher's stones, dew, biting, hounds, wolves, cook, smoke,

decomposition and decay, taking place in some kind of sealed vessel, leading to a perfection and redemption of base metal. To incorporate any of the above in a drama is a far from easy matter, not all the above can be mentioned or included as objects. In some cases a dramatic equivalent for a process may have to be found and implied.

I was first alerted to a possible alchemical content in Timon of Athens by the most widely known and obvious of clues. Namely Timon's two banquets, the first where he showers his guests with gold and the second where he pelts them with stones. Gold and stones and philosophers are important themes in Timon of Athens, and are strongly linked to the alchemical, it was from this point that I moved forward. Finding as I did a play rich with Christian alchemical ideas and metaphors. I say Christian and not merely alchemical, because Shakespeare has not only emphasised the alchemical process and transmutation of Athens, but he has undertaken this task in such a way as to elaborate upon the theme of the 'redemption' of the 'base' metal of the play. This he does by building links between Timon and Christ. That is not to say that he depicts Timon as Christ but rather that he implies links which in their turn imply another kind of redeemer. In The Wheel of Fire Wilson Knight has also noted the links and references that tie Timon and Christ together in a tenuous and strange relationship:

> 'Timon, in love or hate, bears truly a heart of gold. He is a being apart, a choice soul crucified ... Sun-like he used to 'shine on men' (3.4.10). The issues for which a Timon contends are the issues not of Athens but of humanity. He is a principle of the human soul, a possibility, his loss is as the loss of a golden age. A bright spirit has been on earth, spirit of infinite and rich love and bounty, and its wings have been soiled by mortality ... The elected of the heavens has been scorned of man ... When Timon lifts his voice to Heaven proclaiming 'one honest man' (4.3.506), his words hold an echo no less

> universal than Abraham's prayer to Jehovah to spare the iniquitous city, ... when Timon's servants part to wander abroad separated, they are as disciples of Christ meeting after the crucifixion. (p.235)

In a footnote to this passage Wilson Knight says 'The analogy is obvious and suggested by other passages ... (1.2.48), (3.2.73) and (4.3.475-6).'

Before dealing with the play in its wider and allegorical context I will consider Timon, because it is to Timon that all these ideas are ultimately pinned. When the play opens Timon appears to be at the zenith of his cycle. He is surrounded by the senators and merchants of Athens, all of whom flock to his home in the hope of receiving undeserved gifts. Under these circumstances we could say that Timon holds court, acting out the role of a benelovent monarch in a state that conspicuously lacks the authority of a monarch. In place of venerating a person in that awesome position the Athenians have elevated gold, they fawn, they flatter, they amble and they lisp in pursuit of that one commodity. Gold holds all power in Athens, like a monarch it reigns supreme, and Timon as a dispenser of gold assumes some of the power and glory that attaches to it. With his gold he has a man released from prison and buys a bride for another. A father cares only about the financial considerations of a marriage caring nothing for affection or rank. A son revels in his father's death, because such a death had elevated him from pauper to prince in Athenian terms. No matter how noble Timon may appear in his Athenian environment, he is a part of this society, he is at its very heart, he feeds the greed of these people with his prodigal generosity. We know no more about Timon than we see. He has no heir, he has no family and no past. He exists only in the present of the play and his behaviour leads one to suspect that he lives only for the present. There is a conspicuous lack of

emotional and family ties in Timon's life, and despite the fact that Timon is a central part of Athenian society he stands alone. Hamlet finds in Horatio a good and close friend, whilst Lear has his Fool. Timon has no such relationship. Any friends that Timon has become revealed by the action of the play, and are not found to be where Timon has most generously spread his wealth. Flavius, Apemantus and Alcibiades prove themselves to be true friends as the play progresses, but they are not drawn to represent characters to whom Timon can unload the innermost promptings of his soul. In short it seems that Timon surrounded though he is by Athenian society stands aloof at its very core. Timon feels this aloofness himself, saying 'Why, I have often wished myself poorer that I might come nearer to you.' (1.2.97-99). He recognises the divide, a divide that he feels is extended by his own wealth. Not understanding perhaps that without this wealth he would stand nowhere in Athenian society.

Almost as soon as Timon has wished he might be poorer, he is. Rather we learn that he is poorer than he believes himself to be; poorer than his extravagances have led us to suspect him of being. This newly discovered poverty of Timon is ironically predicted in the work of the poet, who brings his poem to this very banquet for Timon's approval. For Timon with his way of seeing things, this loss of wealth should be welcomed, giving him the opportunity to get closer to these people he claims to love so dearly; the people on whom he has showered his wealth; the people he has said so much to of brotherly love: 'what better or properer can we call our own than the riches of our friends? O, what a precious comfort 'tis to have so many like brothers commanding one another's fortunes!' (1.2.99-103). This banquet, at which Timon labours the point of

brotherly love and consequently brotherhoods, is seen by Apemantus in another light; he speaks in images that suggest cannibalism and more:

> O you gods! What a number of men eats Timon,
> and he sees 'em not! It grieves me to see so
> many dip their meat in one man's blood. And all
> the madness is he cheers them up to't. (1.2.38-41)

This is to be the last of these banquets, perhaps it is possible to say that this is Timon's last supper. Timon's talk of brotherhoods at this strictly male meal, and Apemantus' talk of the food as the body and blood of Timon strike a note that rings across cultures and creeds to the last supper of Christ with his disciples. The supper that precedes His betrayal to His enemies by Judas for thirty pieces of silver, followed by Peter's three-fold denial of Him. This too was a strictly male affair. When Apemantus says Timon encourages these 'brothers' of his to partake of his body and his blood we remember that Christ set the precedent, saying to his disciples 'Do this in memory of me'. At the Last Supper, Christ revealed that he knew the identity of His betrayer and that this betrayer was in the midst of the brotherhood. Apemantus and the poet are in possession of that knowledge, Timon reveals no such knowledge, although he is surrounded by those who will betray both him and his ideals of brotherhood.

The period preceding this supper has been marked by Timon's open-handed generosity to all who are present (with the exception of Apemantus), bestowing money on those with things to sell and gifts on those without. Timon is throwing money away, indeed almost showering gold on these members of Athenian society. The next occasion there is a similar gathering at Timon's home, it is for a banquet of a very different kind with a main course of stones and

water. At this banquet the guests will not be showered with gold, but will be pelted with stones. This turn of events is brought about by the three-fold betrayal of Timon by Athenian society.

The three-fold betrayal of Timon is emphasised by Shakespeare by his handling of the episodes that lead up to this circumstance. In reality Timon has been betrayed four times, but Shakespeare manipulates the dramatisation of the event so that he might make the most of the element of a three-fold betrayal. The third person that we see denying Timon is Sempronius. Into his mouth Shakespeare puts the words that emphasise this point for us. Sempronius refers to the previous denials, two of which we have witnessed and a third which we have not. In using this method to reveal these denials Shakespeare allows Sempronius to comment on the three previous denials at exactly the same time that we the audience are witnessing the third such denial. Sempronius, approached by Timon's servant (here also the number three is emphasised, 'a third servant') for financial help, suggests Timon apply to the same three people who have denied him help. The servant replies: 'My lord. They have all been touched and found base metal, For they have all denied him.' (3.3.5-7). Here the servant refers to the three subjects of Athens as 'base metal', incapable of or unwilling to yield gold. 'Base metal' is also the 'Raw stuff' that the alchemist works on to bring about transmutation and elevation.

The words of the servant then not only convey the essential three-fold denial of Timon they also imply that Athenian society, or that these three members that represent it are suitable 'raw stuff' for alchemical transmutation. These words then effectively link the alchemical theme in 'base metal' and Timon's relationship with the Redeemer, at the same time the servant's words negate none of the

baseness of such a society or its denial of a figure like Timon. Sempronius, equally as base as his fellow members of society, seizes upon any opportunity to avoid financial involvement himself and in so doing emphasises for us again the thrice denied element:

> Have they denied him? Has Ventidius and Lucullus
> denied him? And does he send to me? Three? Hum?
> ... His friends. like physicians, Thrice give
> him over. (3.3.8-13)

We can see then that Timon is being related to the Redeemer of man, Christ, but what a strange Christ-figure he is. Christ was never surrounded by the pomp and circumstance that Timon's gold brings, Christ knew the calibre of his friends without testing them, Timon has to test his friends to discover their true worth, and their inability to fulfil his expectations of them brings about his raging misanthropy.

The most crucial difference between Christ and Timon perhaps lies in the fact that Christ is not portrayed as believing himself to be the victim of injustice. Indeed his prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane indicate that he knew that the justice involved was of a higher order than that of man. Timon does not manifest the same acquiescence, he feels he has been the victim of injustice and greed, and everything base in human nature, and of course he is right, not least he has been the victim of his own price, hubris. Despite these basic differences, a parallel does exist between the Redeemer and Timon, not the least of these parallels lies in the words of the play, or rather the stage directions of the play. As Timon and his friends enter to the 'great banquet' the stage directions tell us: 'and then enter Lord Timon, Alcibiades, the States, the Athenian Lords, and Ventidius which Timon redeemed from prison.' (1.2). Timon then can be seen as having redeemed Ventidius, true this redemption is on a mundane level but it gives us a clue that Timon

too can be seen as a redeemer. It is well to remember at this stage that the act of the alchemist when he transmutes 'base metal' into gold is an act of redemption, the alchemist 'redeems' the gold when he extracts the precious ore from the base metal that holds it in a physical embrace.

In this pagan world of Athens we are being invited by Shakespeare to consider Timon in the following light. Firstly he is seen functioning in a male brotherhood, not as just a member but as the central inspiration, he holds a supper for these 'brothers', and through the words of Apemantus a link is drawn to the Last Supper of Christ and his disciples. The three-fold denial of Timon by Athenian society reintroduces and builds on this link. The stage directions suggest Timon as some kind of redeemer and certain lines and actions suggest Athens as 'base metal'. At this stage we cannot be sure what Shakespeare is implying but quite clearly this is more than a portrayal of a man who would buy friendship.

By linking Timon with Christ or a redeemer figure I do not mean to imply that Timon is without flaw, indeed I have already referred to his great failing, hubris. The most revealing commentary on, and illustration of Timon's pride comes after he has left the walled city of Athens. Roaming naked in the wood outside of the city he presents a figure not unlike Lear. Stripped of all the external show that has previously linked him to society, and to his role in that society which he now holds in abhorrence, he gives vent to his raging misanthropy caused by what he sees as his abandonment by that society. In all his ravings and railings against Athenian society he never seriously looks inwards. He does not accept any responsibility for any part he may have played in bringing himself so low. Apemantus points to Timon's pride as being partially responsible for his downfall

and as still Timon's single most major failing. He sees Timon's condition and suffering in the wood as an appropriate form of penance for his pride, if it were penance:

> If thou didst put this sour cold habit on
> To castigate thy pride, 'twere well; but thou
> Dost it enforcedly. Thou'dst courtier be again
> Wert thou not beggar. (4.3.240-43)

Apemantus is not totally correct about Timon's feelings. We know Timon has the wealth it would take to be a courtier again. Apemantus has underestimated the loathing that Timon feels for gold and Athenian society that venerates it so. Timon's continued presence in the woods confirms the genuinness of his action, and can be seen as an indication of his elevated **magus** role. As a true magi Timon must not be seen to benefit personally from the discovered gold which he sees as coming from the gods. Apemantus may be wrong about Timon's motivation, but he is not wrong in his observations of Timon's pride. The angry words between the two illustrate that Timon is proud of his birth and his fortune, something we know nothing of and that we only hear of here.

> Thou art a slave ... But, bred a dog.
> ... But myself -
> Who had the world as my confectionary,
> The mouth, the tongues, the eyes, and hearts of men
> At duty, more than I could frame employment: ...
> I to bear this, that never knew better, is some burden.
> Thy nature did commence in sufference, time
> Hath made thee Lord in't. Why shouldst thou hate men?
> They never flattered thee. What hast thou given?
> (4.3.251-271)

That Timon is proud does not prove an impediment to his role as hero of this play, as Nicholl observes of the tragic hero as he emerges from alchemical literature:

> The submission of the tragic hero to the 'will of the Gods', or to fate, or destiny, is a sacrificial necessity. ... It is not a question of guilt and innocence - even the classic 'flaw' of 'hubris' is inextricable from the necessary greatness of the hero. It is a question of

> destiny, the 'anger of the gods'. The machinery of some supernatural process requires the hero. His journey through darkness and ruin is indeed a healing journey. He is not healed; he is destroyed. But by his sacrifice the community he represents - a kingdom within the drama, an audience outside it - is redeemed, and in as far as he is a part of that community he is a recipient of that redemption. The king must die so that the king may prosper.[1]

Nor, as we see from what Nicholl says, does Timon's 'hubris' bar him from the role of redeemer, particularly in alchemical literature. Rather this 'classic flaw' confirms him in both roles.

Timon's failing may be pride, and he may well have proved a fool of at least equal stature to Lear. Indeed Timon has done much that reminds of Lear. Lear has given away all he possessed to those he believed loved him; to those who expressed love in honeyed words which proved enough to draw his kingdom from him. Cordelia, either unwilling or incapable of expressing her love in the terms of a flatterer, gains none of this earthly kingdom but is left to fend for herself with only her own virtue to recommend her. Her reward is in great measure for she becomes the Queen of France. Timon too has given away all he owns, his land, his house and his money. Indeed his entire kingdom. In the distribution of his wealth Timon has used no wiser standard than Lear, honeyed words have drawn all he owned. In the absence of a family Timon has distributed his wealth to those he has considered to be of his family, belonging to his select, privileged and specially chosen brotherhood. Timon's family, although proving to be less predisposed to evil than Lear's, reveal no greater respect for their benefactor. Apemantus, like Cordelia, is either unwilling or unable to express any feelings for Timon that may sound like flattery and he wants none of the rewards that flatterers flatter for.

Timon makes it clear that he would prove more generous to

Apemantus if Apemantus were prepared to sound more like the flatterers of Athens:

> Now, Apemantus, if thou wert not sullen, I would be good to thee. ... Nay, an you begin to rail on society once, I am sworn not to give regard to you. Farewell, and come with better music. (1.2.241-250)

Thus Timon's generosity is not to be assessed in the light that he is merely generous or that he gives to the needy. Like Lear, Timon gives that he may receive the external show of love from his family, confusing empty gestures and hollow words with something of substance. Timon exchanges material substance for hollow flattery or gifts of inferior worth. Even here in Athens Timon's behaviour can be seen as almost alchemical, repaying lowly presents with rich reward. Effecting an exchange that converts the 'base' to gold.

> Still in motion
> Of raging waste? It cannot hold, it will not.
> If I want gold, steal but a beggar's dog
> And give it Timon, why, the dog coins gold.
> If I would sell my horse and buy twenty more
> Better than he, why, give my horse to Timon,
> Ask nothing, give it him, it foals me straight,
> And able horses. (2.1.3-10)

Timon's prodigal generosity may be the indicator of a man with ideals that are too lofty, elevated or idealistic for the society in which he finds himself, or they may be the act of a fool, unable to comprehend the material workings of the world in which he lives. What is certain is that Timon's perception of Athenian society and consequently his expectations of it are 'out of joint', they bear no relationship to the reality of the situation, in this context he is a fool.

Lear's relationship to The Fool is marked and has frequently been commented upon. I am unaware of any study that has taken account of Timon and his relationship with The Fool, or the bearing of the part of The Fool upon the meaning or outcome of the play.

Despite the lack of interest shown in The Fool in Timon of Athens I feel it is a part well worth examining.

The relationship between Timon and The Fool is emphasised for us by Apemantus, who as the original cynic philosopher or misanthrope of the play emerges as an important outsider to Athenian society, commentating upon it and proving a touchstone to measure Timon's misanthropy by.

The Fool makes only one appearance in the play, this perhaps is the reason that he has not been closely marked. His entrance comes at 2.2.50, and it is in the same time-space that Timon learns of his drastically depleted circumstances, indeed in the scene that Timon learns of his own foolishness. Apemantus and The Fool enter together and become objects of fun for the debt-collecting servants who haunt the portals of Timon's house. Apemantus is unwilling to enter into any conversation with these servants, and is equally unwilling to allow The Fool to enter into any conversation with them. In this same scene another new character makes an appearance, The Page.

Neither The Fool nor The Page will be seen again in any other part of the play. The breathing space given by this scene of servants is reason enough for its inclusion. But if that is all that this scene represents - a breathing space for the main actor - there would seem to be little reason for the introduction of two new characters. The conversation between the servants amply illustrates the 'low-life' attitudes in Athens towards both the masters these servants serve and Timon. It is possible that this scene serves another purpose, and that Apemantus, The Fool and The Page are in some way inter-related.

The Fool enters with Apemantus, neither of them are really interested in the other characters, although these characters prove a good back drop and prompting device for the wit of both. When The Page enters he speaks directly to Apemantus and not to the other servants whom we would expect him to relate to. The Fool and The Page both serve the same mistress. All the other servants serve masters and their masters are known to us. The same is not known of the mistress that The Page and The Fool serve. Indeed their 'mistress' represents something of an enigma. Some folio entries read 'master'. We are given no clue to who this mistress/master may be, no name is ever mentioned.

The Page, who cannot read, has been given two letters by his mistress/master. One for Timon and the other for Alcibiades. Both characters are about to undergo a dramatic change of Fortune, indeed a reversal. Both will find that their past glories and service to Athens will entitle them to absolutely nothing, not even free affection or respect. Both will leave the walled city of Athens, exiled and self-exiled, declaring hate and vengeance on the short-sighted and ungrateful populace. It is possible that the letters that The Page carries reveal this, or that these letters represent a symbol of something other than a trivial intermission in the action of the play.

To understand the full import of these letters we must somehow establish from whence they come. That Shakespeare has introduced an illiterate page to deliver the letters is an interesting device. Without meeting with Apemantus or some other character who could read it may be possible to see the letters being delivered into the wrong hands. Alcibiades may have received Timon's letter and Timon, Alcibiades'. If the mistress/master of The Page was unconcerned

about this small detail, as I believe Shakespeare implies, then the contents of the letters may be considered to be of a similar nature, or the symbol that they represent for each may be of a similar nature.

One or two salient facts about the 'mistress' emerge from what The Fool says, but this information is encapsulated more in riddle than factual statement and it seems that Shakespeare is intentionally ambiguous on this point. Or perhaps this ambiguity resides more in our inability to understand the implication which may have been obvious at the time of writing, representing the clouding of issues by the passage of time. It is also possible that this vexing ambiguity is in itself a clue not to be ignored.

G. R. Hibbard, editor of the Penguin Timon of Athens seems quite happy to accept the 'mistress' as a bawd, and seems to draw no further conclusions from the appearance of The Page and The Fool. It is possible to see the mistress depicted as a bawd by the ambiguous comments of The Fool, but Apemantus seems to resent this suggestion. Hibbard also points out that Shakespeare often links the trade of a bawd with that of a usurer, and it is through the mistress's links with usury that this implication of a bawd arises. Shakespeare also connects the bawd with Fortune, in Hamlet Fortune is talked of as a 'strumpet', and in such a context references to money and usury are never far away.

The first hint to the identity of The Fool's mistress comes at 2.2.100-27. The mistress is a 'usurer' says The Fool but the different condition of men when they leave her and leave other usurers is a point to be marked:

> When men come to borrow of your masters, they approach sadly and go away merry. But they enter my mistress' house merrily and go away sadly. The reason of this?
> (2.2.102-5)

From this we deduce that an appointment with a conventional usurer delivers unto the applicant something he has not had and requires, whilst an appointment with the mistress rather removes something the applicant has had and is unwilling or unhappy at losing. Only very loosely may this be applied to a bawd, and taking into account Apemantus' resentment at this implication from Varro's servant, perhaps we would do better to reserve our judgement on the matter, noting that the mistress is neither a usurer of the normal kind nor a bawd in the conventional way, but that both identities in some way hold a clue to the identity of the mistress, who seems to be more in the business of decrease than increase. Timon and Alcibiades both certainly discover that their expected standing in the community of Athens is not reflected in reality, and that they are valued at nothing, in this context both are awakened to a reality that is a marked decrease in expectations.

The first riddling answer from The Fool leads to his comments upon the whoremaster who he says is; 'spirit ... lord, ... lawyer, ... philosopher, with two stones more than's artifical one ...' (2.2.112-15). The philosopher that The Fool talks of is undoubtedly an alchemist and the artifical stone that he talks of is the philosopher's stone. Since it has already been implied that The Fool serves a bawd, (the female of the whoremaster) and there is some confusion whether The Fool serves a mistress or a master, and here a link is drawn between the whoremaster and the philosopher, is it too great a leap to suggest that the bawd who The Fool and The Page serve is also linked to the philosopher? If we can draw this link it would in some way help with the textual problem of whether The Fool and The Page serve a master or a mistress as the Folio suggests both genders. This may suggest that both master and mistress are correct, implying an asexuality in

the character or perhaps implying that the one served is both male and female, an hermaphrodite. My suggestion of an hermaphrodite at this stage may seem as riddling as the Fool's original response, but there is a considerable argument to be made for the hermaphrodite. This argument derives from the alchemical parables and renaissance alchemical conventions.

Just as Fortune is associated with the goddess Fortuna so alchemy is associated with a female role, Lady Alchymia; the alchemists were seen as wooing this Lady Alchymia in an attempt to learn her hidden secrets.

The alchemical parables often feature an old and barren king who through alchemical transmutation gives birth to his own regenerated self, presenting a symbol not unlike the phoenix (Timon is related to a phoenix at 2.1.32) or an hermaphrodite. These alchemical parables also tell of incestuous sexual union between father and daughter; brother and sister; mother and son in which the body of the male becomes consumed by that of the female; thus dual principles of male and female exist at the same time in the one body that will ultimately bring forth new life, a regenerated king.

What the alchemist aimed at achieving is encapsulated in John Dee's Monas Heiroglyphica. This was a unit, a monad, a whole indivisible, a union of opposites; degenerative and regenerative, male and female, so that in being one and indivisible it was whole and entire and as a consequence would resist further attempts at separation, a separation which was seen as mortality. The indivisible became immortal because the spirit could not be separated from the body, no part of the whole was either corruptible or removeable. Michael Sendivogius says of the 'alchemists mercury', the active agent in transmutation:

> He is all things, who was but one; he is nothing, and his number is entire; ... he is a Man, and yet acts the part of a Woman;[2]

This seeming paradox is dramatised by Ben Jonson in his chemical masque Mercurie Vindicated from the Alchemist at Court (1615), in which he puts the following words into the mouth of his character Mercury:

> I am their crude and their sublimate; their praecipitate and their unctuous; their male and their female; sometimes their hermaphrodite;[3]

It would seem that the seeming ambiguity between male and female, 'master' and 'mistress' in this scene in Timon of Athens is perhaps Shakespeare's way of directing his audience towards this paradox, providing a clue that alchemical processes are being reflected in his play, directly affecting the characters and actions of Timon and Alcibiades. If we accept that 'mistress' is the correct reading, then that 'mistress' may well be Lady Alchymia, whose major distinguishing trait suggests decrease rather than increase, and in alchemical transmutation decrease and degeneration precede increase and regeneration.

Following Apemantus from the stage, The Fool throws the following enigmatic remarks at the tribe of servants and the audience: 'I do not always follow lover, elder brother, and woman; sometimes the philosopher.' (2.2.126-7). This may lead us to view Apemantus as that philosopher, but returning to the entry of The Fool we recall that he has come seeking Timon as has The Page, thus any intentional action that The Page or The Fool commit is in relation to Timon. It is the entry of Timon that suggests and coincides with The Fool's departure, without a word or perhaps even a glance being exchanged. Timon may even be unaware of his fleeting presence.

Apemantus' 'Fool, I will go with you to Lord Timon's.' suggests

that he acts as an agent, a guide or a go-between, and Apemantus is already established as some kind of philosopher. The Fool's question, 'Will you leave me there?' (2.2.93), is answered by Apemantus in a way that suggests that Timon is a fool or that The Fool and Timon are related, 'If Timon stays at home.' (2.2.94).

Shakespeare draws a link between The Fool and Timon. It seems relevant that the two are not, or cannot be, on the stage at the same time, one exiting as the other enters. They co-exist in only one frozen moment of time and space and then they part. Either we must see that this frozen moment of time is all that is required for The Fool to fulfil whatever is required of him, or the whole encounter between Apemantus, The Fool and The Page has been only a time wasting episode, allowing the actor playing Timon to catch his breath in the wings while it takes place. If one takes the latter point of view there is still the question as to why Shakespeare bothered to introduce two entirely new characters in this scene. As I have said a breathing space could have been achieved without their introduction. The servants who wait for Timon, could have provided both a certain amount of fooling and foolishness as well as depicting the 'low-life' attitudes to Timon and the Athenian state. If we follow the former idea there are several points that we should consider. The Fool seems to complete his task by existing only momentarily in the same space as Timon. In some way he has touched Timon and he has completed his task and can depart, making as he goes an enigmatic statement about a philosopher, which ties with the ambiguity about the 'master', 'mistress', 'whoremaster' and the 'philosopher with two stones more than's artificial one.', a philosopher who is undoubtedly an alchemist because of the reference to the philosopher's stone. If the 'master', 'mistress',

'philosopher' that The Fool serves are related to alchemy, as I suspect, then the fleeting appearance of The Fool is in some way related to alchemy. He is perhaps to be seen as a catalyst, who needs only to be introduced to bring about the beginnings of a change. Such a catalyst in Alchemy would be the Alchemist's acid, Alchemist's Mercury.

In The Chemical Theatre Charles Nicholl has shown how The Fool in King Lear is related to Mercury. In The Winter's Tale Autolycus, who fulfils the role of a fool-figure, tells us that he was 'littered under Mercury.' (4.3.25). It seems to me that the only plausible explanation for The Fool in Timon of Athens is that he too is to be seen as related to Mercury. Alchemical Mercury is related to vitriolic acid which starts the alchemical process; it brings about the first phase of degeneration, the beginning of the corruption of matter. If The Fool and The Page are seen as representing or serving this mercury, then we would expect to see the beginning of the breakdown of Timon, his physical self, his material self or his mental self. This of course is exactly what does happen. Alcibiades, who receives one of the mysterious letters delivered by The Page also experiences great change, but that change is not of the same nature as that experienced by Timon. The Fool has been seeking Timon alone, and in this context we would not expect Alcibiades to undergo the same kind of ordeal as Timon.

With the entry of The Fool 'something' may have started to happen to Timon and with the entry of The Page 'something else' related to the change already taking place happens to Timon and Alcibiades. In this way we can see that certain external forces are at work upon Timon. If we consider the implicit linking between Timon and The Fool we may have to ask ourselves if Timon too serves

the same master/mistress once contact between him and The Fool is made.

If we take a step back from our close involvement with the play, it is possible to see that not only is some mysterious process acting upon Timon but Timon himself is acting upon Athenian society. The first of these instances is at the opening of the play. Timon with unreserved generosity, showers his guests with gold and jewels. The next banquet that Timon gives for these same guests (with the exception of Alcibiades and Apemantus) he also acts upon his guests. In this instance he serves up to them 'luke warm water' that 'smokes', and 'stones'. He washes all taint of Athenian society from his hands with this water and then pelts his guests with the stones. At the same time he utters vitriolic curses upon Athens and then he vacates the city still spitting vitriol as he goes. He prays to the gods for the degeneration and the corruption of Athens, not only of the individuals of which society is comprised but of the very fabric of that society. Timon wants to see the breakdown of everything that Athens ever was. He curses the old and the young, the innocent and the guilty, the pristine and the corrupt, anything that resembles man. He begs for decay and anarchy. In the middle of all this misanthropic raving, whilst hunting for a 'root', Timon discovers gold. He then proceeds to give away this gold to the few stragglers who have made an excursion from Athens. It seems astonishing, but once again Timon showers the ungrateful Athenians with his gold; all the while he continues to curse.

The first of Timon's actions upon Athens is executed before he is disappointed and disillusioned by Athenian society. The stones, the vitriolic curses and the second distribution of gold after his disillusionment. The second distribution of gold is not a repeat

performance of his original error. This is an external similarity in gesture but that is all.

There are certain substances that we know are associated with the alchemist. We may over the years have lost much contact with the theory and practice of alchemical transmutation, but these substances are still known to us. They are alchemical gold, the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone. We also retain the knowledge that acid was used by the alchemist to assist in his transmutations. In Timon's second cycle three of the four are present. We see him throw the stones, find the gold and apply the alchemical acid, by way of his vitriolic curses to the 'base metal' of Athens. In this way then Timon is working upon Athens as an alchemist would work upon the 'raw stuff' or 'base metal' that he hopes to transmute.

If we return to a closer scrutiny of the play, and a more precise attention to detail we will perhaps be able to understand more minutely what is happening, particularly with reference to the banquet of 'luke warm water and stones'. The banquet of stones takes place after Timon has been in contact, brief and remote though it may be, with The Fool. His eyes have been opened to the real state of his finances and the true calibre of his 'friends'. Announcing to his steward Flavius that he will give one more banquet, he informs him that he, together with the cook, will have a hand in the preparation of the diet to be served. Timon then will play co-cook or 'cook'.

When the dishes are uncovered and the eagerly anticipated 'Royal cheer' (3.6.50) turns out to be 'warm water and stones' (SD) Timon describes the meal as the 'perfection' of his guests, saying it is 'Smoke and lukewarm water' (3.6.89-90). Timon's use of the words 'perfection' and 'smoke' is of alchemical interest here. Perfection is like redemption in alchemical terms, it is a mark of the salvation of the pure and refined from the 'base' that holds it in

'Smoke' was a pseudonym for and adjective of the alchemist, as Charles Nicholl puts it in The Chemical Theatre:

> 'Smoke' is a word that comes up again and again in describing him (the alchemist). The smoke of the furnace that clings to his beard and clothes; the smoke of chemical mishap when his retorts explode and all is 'flowne in fumo'1., the smoke of the promised end, when the dreams of endless gold vapours into nothing.4

Timon whilst giving full utterance to his fury and frustration juxtaposes the 'smoke' of failed alchemy with the much sought after end-product of successful alchemy, the perfection of 'the stone'. Indeed whilst pelting his guests with these stones and uttering curses, he describes his behaviour as a cure for the corruption that is Athens: 'What, dost thou go? Soft, take thy physic first.' (3.6.100). If this is as Timon says a 'physic', it is an alchemical physic, or perhaps the 'chymicall physick' that antimony is and Basilius writes of in Triumphwagen Antimonii.

At the original banquet we were presented with Apemantus' cynical grace. At the banquet of stones Timon assumes the role of pronouncing the grace. What has appeared misanthropic in Apemantus' grace now appears almost benign in comparison to Timon's particular genre of misanthropic ravings. In his grace Apemantus asks for nothing. He wants no change; his wish is to be able to maintain his own outlook on life. He wishes to remain in his position of isolation from Athenian society, untouched by the flatterers, their hollow flattery and their greed. Apemantus' grace discredits Athenian society but does not call for its dissolution. Timon's grace both discredits Athenian society and craves its downfall; the total dissolution of everything. In its place Timon does not beg for an ideal or 'utopian' society, he wants all that is to be replaced with all that is not, nothing.

Timon's grace exposes the failings of Athenian society. By

asking for thankfulness, a quality conspicuously absent in the Athenian make-up, Timon highlights the reason for the exile of Alcibiades, his own self-exile and the quality that a new regime would have to manifest. His prayer gathers negative momentum, reaching a climax of destruction with, 'What is amiss in them, you gods, make suitable for destruction. For these my present friends, as they are to me nothing, so in nothing bless them, and to nothing are they welcome.' (3.6.81-4). Timon's grace at its most negative is a plea for the dissolution of Athenian man and society. At its most positive it is a plea for a purging out of all impurities. He does not, like Christ, ask for their forgiveness, mercy because of ignorance, or grace to overcome their blemishes. He prays for destruction that will bring about a purged society, if any part of society should survive after such a scale of destruction. Timon's 'physic' is radical and not cosmetic surgery.

Although Timon's call to the gods is for a radical purging and his prayers are for dissolution and destruction, he does not ask for quick results. Indeed in his cursing he makes it clear that the reverse represents the ideal, and this ideal equates with longevity, with lingering decay and disease that will ultimately lead to dissolution of the base metal and purging, which will consequently lead to elevation. This together with the symbolic stones that he throws at his guests, is Timon's 'physic'. He says:

> Live loathed and long,
> Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites,
> Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears,
> ...
> Of man and beast the infinite malady
> Crust you quite o'er! (3.6.93-99)

This theme of disease, decay, dissolution and decomposition leading to destruction is introduced again as Timon leaves the walled

city of Athens behind him. But here he calls for even greater changes, a total reversal of the natural order, an anarchy in man and nature, a plunging of Athens into further and further fragmentation, decay and dissolution:

> Piety and fear,
> Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,
> Domestic awe, night-rest, and neighbourhood,
> Instruction, manners, mysteries, and trades,
> Degrees, observances, customs, and law,
> Decline to your confounding contraries,
> And yet confusion live. Plagues incident to men,
> Your potent and infectious fevers heap
> On Athens, ripe for stroke ... Itches, blains,
> Sow all th'Athenian bosoms, and their crop
> Be general leprosy. Breath infect breath,
> That their society, as their friendship, may
> Be merely poison. (4.1.15-32)

Here he imagines Athenian society sealed within the city walls, poisoned and poisoning, a seething, corrupt, degenerate mass, caught in a cycle of corruption that is self-perpetuating. Everything and everyone stewing in the noxious juices and vapours. On both the occasions that I have mentioned, Timon refers to Athenians as, amongst other things, wolves. As Charles Nicholl has pointed out, wolves and dogs, indeed fanged animals that 'bite' are often associated with the alchemist's acid, which also bites. In these instances then Timon is suggesting that Athenian society is responsible, at least in part, for the 'biting' that he has experienced, and he wishes upon them a similar fate. That this 'biting' is related to alchemical transmutation, the alchemist's acid, suggests that in some way Athens is responsible for the transmutation that Timon is undergoing. In that he has moved his attitude to Athens from a condition of beneficency to misanthropy is indisputably their responsibility. But this move is only the first part of the chain of events, they have set in process a cycle that cannot be halted. Just as Timon hopes to set in progress a cycle, that it will be

impossible to halt by the application of his vitriolic curses and prayers for destruction.

I have already noted how Timon has prayed for destruction and disease to afflict Athens, and that these curses and prayers are extremely vitriolic in content. In these curses Shakespeare has created a verbal equivalent to the alchemical acid. They are the catalyst that Timon applies, together with the specially applied and newly discovered gold, in the hope of bringing about a building decomposition. This negates none of their purpose of conveying his raging misanthropy that gnaws at his inner self. Should we doubt that Timon's true intent is to see Athens as thoroughly 'bitten' as himself it would be well to consider his words at the opening of 4.3, where he says:

> O blessed breeding sun, draw from the earth
> Rotten humidity. Below thy sister's orb
> Infect the air ...
> Destruction fang mankind. (4.3.1-23)

These lines are highly alchemical. Timon has already conjured an image of Athenian society sealed within the city walls, he has wished that 'infinite malady crust you quite o'er!' (3.6.98-99). Athens is not only to be seen as a city of closed walls it is to be seen crusted o'er also, suggesting that all this action takes place in a sealed vessel.

The alchemist perfected his base material in a sealed vessel, a pelican, by applying heat, fire or acid, he made the material to be transmuted give off vapours. These vapours rose to the top of the sealed vessel where they became liquid again and returned to the mixture from which they had originally come. The vapour that returned to the liquid state was seen as refined, and was referred to as 'dew' or 'ros'. This liquid was seen not only as purified in itself but also as purifying. Indeed with all transmuted matter, by virtue of

its own transmutated state, further transmutation and purification was believed possible. Thus transmuted 'dew' would help to transmutate unrefined 'base metals' or 'raw stuff', as would transmuted gold, or the philosopher's stone. Once these substances were whole and entire, and purified they were capable of bringing other substances to 'perfection'. When Timon conjures an image of Athens as a sealed vessel full of decomposing, decaying and dissolving humanity, Shakespeare is inviting us to view Athens and everyone in it as an alchemical mixture, ripening ready for the final stages of elevation. The worse Athenian society appears to become then the closer it gets to its own final stages of elevation. Referring to the 'breeding sun' Timon refers to the heat required to produce the vapours that indicate transmutation is in process. Whilst his 'draw from the earth rotten humidity', asks that the vapour proceeds upwards to the top of the vessel so that they might return as a refined 'dew'. In his 'Destruction fang mankind' Timon uses the image of 'biting' that he has previously applied to his own condition, now he utters it as a curse conjured to destroy Athenian society; asking yet again for the destruction and the ultimate alchemical dissolution of Athens. Thus we see that Timon's ravings are not merely misanthropic, they point to the errors of Athenian society, express fully his fury and frustration, and are an integral part of an alchemical process that the play reflects, and that will lead to the perfection of Timon and Athenian society.

This idea of dual transmutation of Timon as the alchemist and of Athens as the 'base metal', can be found to have an alchemical origin in the writings of the Belgian alchemist Gerard Dorn, who asserted: 'Thou wilt never make from other things the one that thou seekest, except there first be made one thing of thyself.'[5]. If then

we remember that Timon first felt himself 'bitten' and then prayed that 'Destruction fang mankind', we will note that an alchemical transmutation of Timon commenced before that of Athens.

I have said much of the transmutation of Athens that Timon evokes, but little of the transmutation of Timon himself. At this stage I will temporarily leave Athens stewing in its own juices, fermenting and dissolving into 'nothing' and look to Timon. Because if Shakespeare has included a metaphor of alchemical transmutation of Athens, he will have had to include one for the transmutation of Timon, who is responsible for the eventual transmutation of Athens. That is if he is following the alchemical authorities in any serious way.

As I have indicated, the numerous references to 'wolves' in relation to the Athenians, suggest that Timon has been 'bitten' by them in alchemical terms. That Timon's estate is reduced from something of consequence to absolutely nothing also suggests the biting away by the alchemist's acid, marking a continual erosion in the external show associated with Timon, just as it does when he applies the word 'nothing' to the people of Athens who are supposed to be his friends and brothers.

Whilst haunting the woods, outside of the city Timon does not totally evade the society of man that he has come to abhor. He receives visits from Shakespeare's chosen few who come from within the city, and from Alcibiades who, like Timon, is external to the corruption of Athenian society and is tenuously linked with Timon by The Page, and is more firmly linked with him in his desire to see Athens destroyed. These visits are of interest, they give further opportunity for us to consider Timon's misanthropic tirade against Athens, and as a consequence provide Timon with further opportunities

to demand the alchemical decomposition of Athens. They also provide us with a vision of how Timon's own physical appearance marks an internal change in him.

Alcibiades is Timon's first visitor, and he does not immediately recognise Timon. This suggests that not only has Timon altered internally in his way of thinking, but his external self has also undergone a change. Flavius expresses fully the change that has taken place in Timon's appearance:

> O you gods!
> Is yond despised and ruinous man my lord?
> Full of decay and failing? ...
> What an alteration of honour
> Has desperate want made!
> What viler thing upon the earth than friends,
> Who can bring noblest minds to basest ends!
> (4.3.460-67)

According to Flavius then, Timon had not just returned to nature he is decayed and failing. Timon does not see his condition in the same negative light that Flavius does. When Flavius returns, for the second time, with the Athenian senators Timon talks of health as a sickness he will soon overcome:

> Why, I was writing of my epitaph;
> It will be seen tomorrow. My long sickness
> Of health and living now begins to mend,
> And nothing brings me all things.

Flavius' words then describe Timon as decayed, and Timon sees his sickness of health as mending. These two indications to the physical state of Timon suggest decay, decomposition, and dissolution. They imply that Timon is in the process of decomposing in a way similar to that he has wished upon Athens. Timon's physical decomposition is reflected in or is a reflection of, the blackness of his thoughts. His inner self and outer self have taken on characteristics of blackness and decay that will lead to 'nothing' and bring him all things. These characteristics suggest that he is at the 'nigredo'

of the alchemical cycle. The blacker and more decayed that Timon becomes the closer he gets to the 'nothing' that indicates the end of the alchemical cycle. The most elevated end-product of the cycle is the philosopher's stone, and it is this which brings 'all things'.

The last that we see of Timon is here with Flavius and the two senators from Athens, when Timon gives them his message for the Athenians:

> Come not to me again, but say to Athens,
> Timon hath made his everlasting mansion
> Upon the beachèd verge of the salt flood,
> Who once a day with his embossèd froth
> The turbulent surge shall cover. Thither come,
> And let my grave-stone be your oracle.
> Lips, let four words go by, and language end:
> What is amiss, plague and infection mend!
> ... Timon hath done his reign. (5.1.212-221)

In effect this is Timon's death scene, that he walks from the stage and does not die upon it may present one or two problems in accepting it as such. But Timon announces his death in this speech, and announces his intentions for his grave.

Timon is the only one of Shakespeare's heroes who exits from the play in this manner. To comply with an alchemical requirement he has had to sacrifice dramatic convention. He has had to forgo the opportunity of dramatising the death of the hero. We see neither Timon's last rasping words, nor is there a report of them. Timon walks from the stage and disappears for ever. If the end of Timon of Athens were the end of a conventional drama we might be tempted to think that Shakespeare had failed to capitalise to the maximum degree on the death of his hero. Indeed he must have been aware that this was not quite what his audience were used to at the end of a tragedy, where under normal circumstances they could expect the dead body of the hero, at least, but generally in the company of other corpses.

What seems to be an anti-climax in the death of Timon is the alchemical climax of the play, it is the signal that one alchemical cycle, Timon's, is complete. Timon disappears from view, all that now remains is his epitaph, which is carved upon a grave stone. Indeed this epitaph had been written by Timon himself, and it seems that Timon has placed this grave stone 'Upon the beached verge of the salt flood, Who once a day with his embossed froth The turbulent surge shall cover.' (5.1.214-16). To try to calculate the actual mechanics of Timon's self-burial is a daunting task, and it is hard to resist a certain degree of incredulity about the ending that Shakespeare is asking us to accept. In a conventional drama this could present a problem. But this is not a conventional drama, certainly not quite what we in the twentieth century might expect of Shakespeare. On this point it is difficult to speak for his renaissance audience.

As I have said all that remains of Timon is his epitaph, written upon his grave stone, and this grave stone is to be considered an oracle and is subjected to erosion from the sea. The ultimate end of, and most elevated end-product of alchemical transmutation is the philosopher's stone. Timon tells the senators to take a message to Athens, part of that message relates to his grave stone, 'Thither come, And let my grave-stone be your oracle.'. The very nature of an oracle suggests that hidden beneath its surface, be that a stone, an image or an idol, there is supernatural life. At the very least the idea of an oracle suggests a link with the supernatural. Implicit within Timon's last words there is a suggestion that his grave stone will possess some kind of life or knowledge of its own. Timon's grave stone then seems to be other than inert or dead stone. It could be argued this is a living stone, endowed with a certain

kind of life of its own. Gerard Dorn, the Belgian alchemist that I have already quoted, issued the following command to those who would be alchemists: 'Transmute yourselves from dead stones into living philosophical stones.'[6]. Dee in his Monas Heiroglyphica refers to transmutation of the magi as a metamorphosis. In the following quote it will be helpful to remember that the monad is the unity and the whole of individible material that has been transmuted, that I have already referred to as the aim of the alchemist. Dee says of Gamaaea:

> When that advance has been made, he who fed (the monad) will first himself go away into a metamorphosis and will afterwards very rarely be held by mortal eye. This, O very good King, is the true invisibility of the magi which has so often (and without sin) been spoken of, and which (as all future magi will own) had been granted to the theories of our monad.

If we put these two alchemical theories together we are presented with a King who is a magi and who has metamorphosised himself, (because of his alchemical work on the monad). Dee does not tell us just what the magi could metamorphosise himself into, but he does suggest that the true magi, who is the true alchemist will become invisible. Dorn on the other hand commands that to be the true magi or alchemist it is necessary to transmute into 'living philosophical stones'. It seems to me that the 'disappearance' of Timon from the play and his reference to his own grave stone, with the hidden and supernatural life of an oracle can point us in only one direction. Timon has as the true alchemist can, and must, transmuted/metamorphosised into a living stone, the philosopher's stone, and this supernatural grave stone is the external sign of that. The transmutation of Timon himself is essential if he is to transmute Athens. It would be impossible, in alchemical terms, for the magi who is involved in the transmutation of Athens to die a natural death on the stage, this dramatic convention would deny the essential elements and requirements

of alchemical transmutation. For this higher reason it seems Shakespeare has sacrificed the dramatic and conventional death scene; with such a departure of the hero the play confirms the alchemical transmutation of Timon and consequently Athens.

Timon in the wood has raved and cursed at Athens, I have suggested that these misanthropic ravings equate with a verbal form of alchemical acid, that the alchemist applies to the 'base metal' that is to be transmuted. Bringing about the first step in the cycle of the transmutation of Athens. Timon's alchemical activities in the wood consist of more than this application of vitriolic curses. The action he takes to bring about a transmuted Athens is as positive as the actions of Alcibiades, who leads an army against Athens. Alcibiades' attack on Athens is of an external nature, he applies pressure and threats from outside of the city walls. The Athenians fearful for their very lives, having no adequate means of defence other than the city walls, hand their city over to him. Timon's attack is of a more subtle and internal nature. His application of vitriol is an external application to the individual, because the individual is a component part of Athenian society it becomes internalised to the city when these individuals return to Athens. Timon's curses, which call for plague and disease to strike Athens and mend that which is amiss, together with his images of breath infecting breath, man infecting man, poisonous vapours breeding and circulating, are all depicted as an attack that comes from within the city walls. This may seem a strange way for Timon to wage a war, but in alchemical terms this is precisely what he is doing, equally in alchemical terms this is also the best way.

Timon's war is not a war of words alone, he does not spend all his time cursing. Every person who visits him in the wood is given a supply of gold to take back to Athens with the expressed condition

that this gold be used to bring about the curses and downfall of Athens. Apemantus is the single person not given this gold, instead he carries information about it to the Athenians so that as many as possible will come to see Timon and receive a supply to take back to the city. The important element here is not that the recipients agree to use the gold as Timon specifies, but that they carry it back to Athens and initiate its circulation, and because of the alchemical nature of the gold, contribute to the contamination of Athens.

Timon's first fortune, so generously dispensed, was given away in the name of 'brotherhood'. In reality it was also a part of an ego-fulfilling exercise, a reward to those who could flatter him most convincingly. The second fortune of buried treasure is spread widely to achieve the opposite effect, to bring about the end of any such brotherhoods; to bring about the breakdown of the community; to propagate the spread of disease; to buy, if it is possible to buy, all the things he has cursed upon Athens. Since the application of the first fortune of gold has failed to produce the required result, it may seem that there is little reason to expect Timon to succeed in his second endeavour. But the very failure of his first attempt has exposed the weaknesses of Athens. In the second application of gold Timon hopes, not to cure these exposed weaknesses, but to exploit them. In this second project then his chances of success are considerably higher than in his first.

His instructions to the bandits seem to have had a reverse effect. In telling them to go and ply their trade, to rob and steal and murder Timon dissuades one of them from his trade: 'I'll believe him as an enemy, and give over my trade.' (4.3.456-7). As I have said antimony was praised as a 'chymicall physick' in Triumphwagen Antimonii,

which recommended cures or 'physicks' not unrelated to homeopathy as we know it today. The central point of this kind of 'physick' rests upon the treatment of a complaint with a substance similar to, or derived from, the poison that afflicts the body. The disease that afflicts Athens is gold, everything foul about the city is attributed, by Timon, to gold. Gold is venerated as a god in Athens, elevated to the role of a monarch where there is no monarch. In applying gold to a city or a person poisoned by gold and effecting a cure, Timon has succeeded in applying a 'chymicall physick'; he has effected an homeopathic cure.

We are not led to believe by this one instance that the whole city of Athens suddenly stops venerating gold just because Timon is pouring it in through every portal. Indeed the visit from the Poet and Painter suggests that the situation in Athens has deteriorated since Timon made his exit, uttering curses. At the first banquet the Poet and the Painter present themselves and their 'works' to Timon in hope of patronage. The jeweller presents a real jewel, and merchants provide some kind of merchandise for his approval. Their flattery may be hollow but their 'goods' are real. By the time the Poet and Painter visit Timon in the wood it has become unfashionable for anyone to honour their word or to expect the same of anyone else. There is nothing only words, everything is words, only empty rhetoric and hot air. There is no equivalent in 'real' terms. As the Painter says:

> Promising is the vary air o'th'time; it opens the eyes of expectation. Performance is ever the duller for his act, and but in the plainer and simpler kind of people the deed of saying is quite out of use. To promise is most courtly and fashionable. Performance is a kind of will or testament which argues a great sickness in his judgment that makes it. (5.1.22-28)

If the promise is all there is, and that is known to be worth 'nothing',

we are presented with a very different Athenian society to the one which Timon left. The Athenians are now interchanging 'nothings', all of them aware of this 'nothing'. In his ravings against Athens, in his grace, Timon has asked that this nothingness be both their just deserts and reward. His transmutation of Athens begins to take effect.

Timon's discovery of buried treasure is made whilst he is digging for a root. Instead of the root he finds gold. This becomes a source of disappointment and remembrance of past disappointment to him. He delivers a speech not unlike Volpone's in which he lists the powers of corruption and control that gold exerts upon society. Timon sees his discovery of this gold as associated with the gods, he blames the gods for its discovery, and in this way he sees it as having some supernatural origin.

> What is here?
> Gold? Yellow, glittering, precious gold?
> No, gods, I am no idle votarist.
> Roots, you clear heavens!
> ...
> Ha, you gods! Why this? What, this, you gods? Why, this
> (4.3.25-31)

Timon's suggestion that the gods are responsible for this gold is not our only indicator that it is more than 'vulgar' gold. That he unearths the gold whilst calling and digging for roots is of importance in establishing its origin. The word 'root' is related to dew, which as I have already mentioned is in itself an alchemical pseudonym for the liquid that descends from the vapour which is derived from the transmutating matter. This use of the word root and its alchemical connotations indicates that Timon has found or made transmuted gold. Transmuted gold like all other transmuted substances has reached its 'perfection', and by its perfection it has the power to transmute anything that it comes into contact with.

The gold then that Timon so readily distributes from the wood will bring plague and infection, if that is the best way to bring about a transmutation. With every piece of gold that Timon gives to the people of Athens the closer are they brought to the 'perfection' that follows the decay and decomposition of the 'nigredo' of the alchemical cycle.

The arrival of the senators in the company of Flavius shows us that Athens is still changing. The senators ask Timon to return to Athens and offer him the captainship of the city, a position of absolute power. This represents an entirely different approach in Athenian politics, or so it originally seems. They admit they have been neglectful of Timon and have failed to honour him as he deserved. The senators make these statements not because they wish to do honour to Timon now, but because he is their only hope against Alcibiades. In this they have not changed, they still only move in the direction that they move because of self-interest and not from feelings of genuine remorse. However they do offer Timon the captainship of Athens, absolute power, the role of monarch, in this it seems that the rulership of Athens by gold is over. Timon once fulfilling the role of monarch, because of the power that his money wields, is now their monarch-elect, in the hope that he will have other resources of power to use on behalf of the Athenians. They still have not really learnt their lesson, but for the transmutation of Athens to be complete some person must take the captainship of the city, if only so that gold with its attached superficial values cannot be allowed to assume that position again. It is equally important for a new regime to reign in Athens, a regime that is seen to venerate all that the gold-orientated regime has been seen to negate.

As we consider the characters of the play in the hope of discovering a character who is honourable, untainted by Athenian standards, faithful in friendship and credible as a leader, a yawning chasm opens up that can only be filled by Alcibiades, who now leads an army against Athens in his own name and in Timon's. Both Timon and Alcibiades have fallen foul of the Athenian lack of 'thankfulness'. Timon in his grace asks the gods to sprinkle a liberal quantity of thankfulness upon the Athenian people. Both Timon and Alcibiades have believed in friendship, brotherhood, and appropriate gratitude, and both have found themselves abandoned by the city, and outside of its walls because of their individual values. Timon and Alcibiades are the only characters who are external to the city of Athens. Apemantus stays aloof from the inhabitants of Athens but he lives within the city walls. Timon and Alcibiades, outside of the city, go about their different and separate ways of avenging themselves. The mystery letters that are delivered by the Page have been delivered to Timon and Alcibiades, and from this point on they have been strangely linked, because of these letters, because of their exile, because of the reasons for their exile, and because of their declaration that they will have vengeance.

It may seem that Alcibiades is not a very positive figure, or that he lacks credibility as Timon's successor and the ruler of Athens. As a dramatic figure he is every bit as positive and convincing as is Fortinbras as a successor to Hamlet. Neither Fortinbras nor Alcibiades are to be seen as the successor of Hamlet or Timon; just as Fortinbras supplants Claudius, Alcibiades supplants the gold.

The old order of Athens has been based upon the veneration of gold. The state has been ruled by an unestablished number of impotent senators who, like the Athenians themselves have no respect for the

claims of friendship and no time for loyalty or gratitude. Alcibiades is not of the same ilk as them. He has been exiled because of his high ideals as far as friendship is concerned, and when he triumphantly wins the captainship of Athens he does so in the name of himself and his friend Timon. His triumph is in the name of friendship, thankfulness, loyalty and brotherhood. The old and corrupt order of Athenian gold is overthrown and the void left is filled by Alcibiades' new order. An order that promises an entirely different foundation and that will not be built of the corruption of the old. The old corruption has been stamped out, not by Alcibiades but by the Athenians themselves, under the influence of Timon's alchemical manipulations, an influence exerted by his curses, gold and the dew that will result from his grave stones' erosion by the sea. They promise to deal with the offenders against Timon and Alcibiades in return for the mercy that Alcibiades promises to show them. This then is the 'perfection' of Athens. It has transmuted from its previous corruption to a new strength, and perfection. And those who have been responsible for the old corruption have been removed by the 'perfected' Athenians, in the same way that a scum of foreign particles rises to the surface of the transmuted mixture and can easily be removed.

Thus it seems to me a dual alchemical transmutation takes place in Timon of Athens, and that seemingly misanthropic ravings of Timon are constructive in their own destructive way. It also seems to me that the play is complete, the alchemical metaphor is fully expressed in both transmutations and the play ends on a positive note for the future.

Two alchemical transmutations have taken place, the transmutation of Timon into a living stone; his grave stone that is to be treated

by the Athenians as their oracle, and Athens itself. That Timon has chosen the specific location for this stone, 'upon the beached verge of the salt flood', (5.1.214), where it will be washed by the tide, suggests an element of erosion of this stone. The erosion in itself is in keeping with the purpose of Timon's transmutation. Being washed by the tide will remove from the grave stone certain particles, the elements working upon the sea will draw up some of the humidity of the sea, and with it the certain particles of the grave stone, which will in the natural cycle of things be applied as rain or dew to Athens. In this way a further ingredient of an alchemically transmuting nature is to be applied to the already festering city of Athens.

At the end of Timon of Athens there is a hope that the society or brotherhood that Timon so esteemed will come to be. Throughout the play then Timon's inner and dramatic purpose never changes, although his method of treatment and of achieving this purpose dramatically reverses. Nevertheless the outcome of the play reinforces Timon's original hope even if it refutes his original method of achieving such an ideal.

Thus in Timon of Athens the embryonic beginnings of an ideal society are envisioned and held up to the audience for their approbation. The price for its establishment has been the guilty of Athens and their victim and vanquisher Timon. Athens has been redeemed and perfected, and Timon, unlike the Christ of the Bible, but bearing certain pertinent similarities to His function, has paid the price of this redemption. However it must be said that it is not common agreement at the excellence of Timon's original vision that wins Athens over, it has been Timon's alchemical treatment and the threat from Alcibiades' army outside the walls of the city that have scored the victory.

In dramatising this dual transmutation, Shakespeare has demonstrated much more than a passing acquaintance with alchemical theory. His illustrated knowledge that the alchemical magi must himself become transmuted to a 'living stone' points to this. His ability to find in Timon's acidic tirades against Athens a way of conveying the alchemist's acid, and his subtle interweaving of alchemy and dramatic device, suggest an understanding of the essence of the science as well as the more obvious clues of gold, stones and philosophers.

Timon of Athens is not alone amongst Shakespeare's plays in demonstrating reference to the alchemical processes. In The Tempest Alonso who is 'sea-changed' is linked with coral, an alchemical symbol. In King Lear as Nicholl points out there are numerous references to the alchemical, and an underlying metaphor that is almost as powerfully stated and fully resolves as that in Timon of Athens.

It is also possible that references to the 'table of green' in the report of Falstaff's death, that has caused such editorial problems, may be linked with alchemy. Nicholl has pointed to the alchemical content of The Merry Wives of Windsor in relation to Falstaff; and the green table is mythically accepted as the table that the alchemist performs his 'magnum opus' upon. Falstaff in moving from life to death, or from the physical to the spiritual world, would be a suitable subject for such a metaphor. An alchemical metaphor may also be found in Hamlet, although I can only pick out certain elements that surround Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and the 'much changed' Hamlet, that suggest this. There are many clues that I have been unable to fit together to make a coherent whole. It is equally possible that the alchemical references in Hamlet are to be

seen as a part of the larger theme of Saturnian Melancholia, which also implies an elevation of the individual in a spiritual sense.

Footnotes to Chapter 4 Alchemy

1. C. Nicholl, The Chemical Theatre. p.142

2. Sendivogius, Novum Lumen Chemicum (1604) trans. A. E. Waite MH 1182 (sig A4v).

3. Ben Jonson, Mercurie Vindicated from the Alchemist at Court (1615). BJ vii (410=11)

4. C. Nicholl, The Chemical Theatre. pp.7-8

5. G. Dorn, Philosophia Meditative TC 1 472 cited JWCI XII p.255

6. G. Dorn, Speculative Philosophia Gradus Septem TC 1 267 cited JWCI XII p.269

7. J. Dee, Monas Hieroglyphica trans. C. H. Josten Ambix XII pp.135-71

CHAPTER 5 SATURNIAN MELANCHOLIA

At the close of the last chapter I have noted that there may be an alchemical metaphor in Hamlet, or perhaps that the seeming alchemical clues pertaining particularly to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in relation to Hamlet are a part of a larger theme (in this play) of Saturnian Melancholia. In Shakespeare's Living Art Rosalie L. Colie has suggested that Timon is a melancholic. In essence then, we agree that there is a similarity between Timon and Hamlet, Ms. Colie suggests this to be melancholia, but I believe it is alchemy. Our agreement and disagreement rests in our differing perception of melancholia. Ms. Colie deals with what I would call mundane melancholia, and I with Saturnian or 'inspired' melancholia. Ms. Colie sees Timon's blackness of mood as an expression of melancholia whilst I see it as an essential part of the alchemical cycle he is undergoing. The essence of the confusion between the alchemical and the melancholic in this instance resides in the necessity of the 'nigredo' phase of the alchemical cycle, which manifests in a blackness of mood which may well be confused with melancholia.

The alchemical cycle is one of change and, because 'inspired' melancholia also effects a change which is an elevation, there are certain areas where the two conditions can become confused. These elements can be noted by reference to changes in Timon and Hamlet themselves. Timon's situation is one of continual change, a breakdown of his self into nothing. In Hamlet the change is less easy to define, because we have no knowledge of him preceding his melancholia. It is a fact we have to accept because of the general agreement of the characters of the play, Hamlet included. Both Timon and Hamlet

change before the eyes of the audience, even if Hamlet has already undergone a change in the period prior to the play.

I suggest that Timon's change is alchemical in nature and Hamlet's is brought about by his 'inspired' melancholia. The 'inspired' melancholic can ascend the ladder of the angelic hierarchies to that of the Thrones and this elevation may contain references to change that although similar to, do not indicate alchemy. To understand the nature of this elevation it is first necessary to delineate the differences between the mundane melancholia that Rosalie Colie has dealt with in Shakespeare's Living Art and the inspired Saturnian Melancholia that I deal with here with reference to Hamlet.

Rosalie Colie has pointed out that Shakespeare's plays are lightly peppered with melancholics. As I have said she suggests Timon as a melancholic, and also includes Jaques from As You Like It and Antonio from The Merchant of Venice in this number. Daniel Banes[1] has suggested that both Shylock and Antonio are melancholics. Although I cannot agree that Timon is melancholic, I can see that his blackness of mood, and sickness at and with society, does provide a link with the melancholia of Jaques, Antonio, Shylock and Hamlet. These same traits exemplify, in varying degrees, the melancholia treated by Robert Burton at such length in The Anatomy of Melancholy.

Whilst it is readily admitted that Hamlet too is a melancholic, it is difficult to ignore the immense differences in the character and actions of Hamlet when compared with these other melancholics. Indeed both Hamlet and the melancholia he exhibits are of a different calibre. His temperament is different, his position in the society of the drama is different, and the delineation of his character is more fully undertaken. Like Timon he is in a central and pivotal position in the play. With the exception of Timon, the melancholics mentioned

do not manifest a multitude of moods. They do not move from elation to depression, rather they are permanently depressed. Neither do they possess the extra-keen wit and biting intellect of Hamlet which allows him to stand out against his co-inhabitors of the drama. Shakespeare's delineation of Jaques goes some way to illustrate a self-conscious attempt at the same kind of wit, but it is never with such depth, insight, or with the desperate sincerity of Hamlet, whose degree of angst compares with that of Timon. By comparison the other melancholics are rather low-key characters. Even Timon does not suffer Hamlet's extremes of mood. He moves from prodigal generosity to seething misanthropy, but once the change is affected he does not revert. There are no sudden movements between elation and depression, no logical expression, none of the mystifying riddles that seem to disturb the inhabitants of Elsinor so.

A devastating experience changes Timon's attitude to man, society and life. He is not capable of disguising that change, nor is he capable of acting out any role other than the one he feels. Timon's change is in relation to mankind in general, he finds it difficult to differentiate, and once he washes his hands of Athens he washes his hands of all men.

Hamlet's altered state is more specific. He is capable of hating Claudius, and loving his dead father; of suspecting 'friends', such as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, of underhand duplicity and trusting Horatio; of railing at fate for the role that he will have to play in life, and then acquiescing to everything that is to come, because 'the ripeness is all'. He is capable of telling Horatio that he admires him because of his stoic attitude and them blaming himself for being too stoic, almost simultaneously elevating the player who is moved to emotion because of a mythic figure in the literature of

epic-history. Hamlet appears to be a parcel of contradictions which are a part of the complexity of the character that Shakespeare has drawn. Hamlet's position never becomes fixed, he is always moving, geographically, emotionally, intellectually and even spiritually.

In saying that Timon is continually changing and Hamlet continually moving it may seem that I imply a similarity, expressed in different words. But Timon does not move, he becomes fixed both geographically, in the wood outside Athens and in his misanthropy. The change that affects Timon is one of decomposition as he undergoes the nigredo phase of the alchemical cycle. External factors are at work on Timon, they begin with the erosion of his estate and end with the erosion of his self.

Hamlet's continual movement is reflected not only in his different settings in the castle of Elsinore, in the court, on the ramparts with the night-watch, in his mother's chamber, and Ophelia's closet, with the players, roaming empty chambers, embarking for England, and in the graveyard. His intellectual movement is marked with Polonius, Claudius, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. If one word were to be used to describe Timon, static would probably be that word, whilst Hamlet is erratic.

Hamlet's erratic behaviour is a part of the 'inspired' melancholic's 'furor'. Before embarking upon a delineation of the minutia of 'inspired' melancholia it is essential to come to terms with the more general condition of melancholia.

The melancholic is related to the Saturnine humour and in this we must see all melancholics as related to the Saturnine. Hamlet is no exception to this rule, but is more directly related to it than other melancholics.

The Saturnine humour is, as its name implies, related to the

planet Saturn, Saturnine Melancholia and Saturnian Melancholia are not quite the same thing. Saturnian Melancholia, in that it proceeds directly from the planet Saturn and not from the humour that derives from the planet, is more closely connected with Saturn. Thus a Saturnine Melancholic would be less Saturnian and consequently less extreme than a Saturnian one. I would suggest that one of the essential differences between Hamlet and the other melancholics is that they, as melancholics, are Saturnine whilst Hamlet is Saturnian. Hamlet may also be Saturnine. It may seem that I am splitting hairs on an academic point of whether Hamlet is Saturnine, Saturnian, or both, but the particular role of Saturn in relation to the melancholic and melancholy is of immense importance in some cases, Hamlet is such a case.

Saturn is of such importance to a fuller understanding of melancholia that Saxl, Klibansky and Panofsky collaborated on Saturn and Melancholy to underline this importance for renaissance man. Where Burton's The Anatomy of Melancholy deals with the more general and humour-related Saturnine Melancholia or merely melancholia, Saturn and Melancholy deals with the more specific and elevated form of 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholia. Of great importance to this work is Durer's engraving of 'Melencolia 1', which throws much light upon the renaissance attitude to the Saturnian Melancholic. In her The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age Frances Yates dedicates some considerable space to her understanding of Saturnian Melancholy. The majority of what she says agrees with Saxl, Klibansky and Panofsky's findings in Saturn and Melancholy, but where she differs she takes the argument further. This chapter in The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age together with Saturn and Melancholy are of considerable importance to a new, but essentially old, understanding

of melancholia, Hamlet the character, and Hamlet the play.

The Saturnian Melancholic has a closer relationship with Saturn than the Saturnine, and it is because of this relationship that the Saturnian Melancholic is liable to 'inspiration'. It is interesting to note the links that Shakespeare draws between Hamlet and Saturn. The first such link is in Hamlet's appearance and his propensity for black.

We visualise Hamlet dressed in black, and countless directors have dressed him in black. The authority for this resides in the text with the words of Gertrude: 'cast thy nighted colour off' (1.2.68), and with Hamlet himself when he says:

> 'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
> Nor customary suits of solemn black,
> Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
> No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
> Nor the dejected 'haviour of the visage,
> Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief, ...
> I have that within which passes show -
> These but the trappings and the suits of woe.
> (1.2.77-86)

With these words Hamlet makes it clear that the black that he wears is an external expression of his inner self. It represents, as much as it can, together with the other external features he mentions, a valid external visual image of what Hamlet feels within. For Hamlet this blackness represents a dense core rather than a shallow veneer. Shakespeare does much to emphasise the link between Hamlet and black, this is not merely because Hamlet is a melancholic. We have no emphasis upon Antonio and black, or Jaques and black. Neither does it seem that these 'customary suits' of black are so 'customary', because the conventional period of mourning for old Hamlet has passed.

Black as a colour relates to Saturn, just as lead does as a metal. To express Saturn in terms of colour one would use black. If a renaissance man had wanted to attract the power of Saturn with a

talismanic image or some other occult device then black, or lead, or both, may have been used. Thus Shakespeare's emphasis on a link between Hamlet and black is for a purpose other than to express his continued mourning, and fulfils perhaps two purposes. Firstly, it expresses the link between the real Hamlet and Saturn, and secondly, the black that Hamlet wears can be seen as a talismanic image to attract even further Saturnian influence. These references to black and melancholia would also have the effect of alerting the audience to the hidden theme of the play.

The works of Pico and Ficino abound with advice for those who are too closely linked with Saturn. They suggest that the subject should, amongst other things, wear colours that relate to Jupiter or Venus to help dissipate the Saturnian influence, and to attract the influence of these beneficial planets. In dressing Hamlet in black and forging the link between Hamlet and Saturn, Shakespeare is rather pointing to a concentration of Saturnian influence.

Hamlet's age, 30, which becomes revealed by the grave-digger at 5.1.140-160, is also related to Saturn; 30 is critical when linked with Saturn as it is the age that most strongly relates to the planet. Astrologers believe that the period between 28-33 is a particularly difficult time. It represents a period of change, adjustment and transition, and thirty is considered the mid-point here. The reasons for these beliefs are based upon the movements of Saturn, and its effects by transit on a natal and progressed birth chart. This age is referred to as the second age of Saturn. Saturn does not move quickly or directly, as a result it takes 2 years 4 months (approximately) in one particular sign of the zodiac. Thus it takes 28 years (approximately) to return to a specific point in a personal horoscope. Talking in terms of a natal horoscope one would

say that the transiting Saturn was making an aspect (a conjunction) with the natal Saturn at 28 years. By 30 the transiting Saturn is making an aspect (a conjunction) with the progressed Saturn and will continue to do so for the next 2 years 4 months. Thus the age 30 produces a much exaggerated effect of Saturn in a personal horoscope, perhaps the most powerful Saturnian influence before middle age and the third age of Saturn (56).

The revelation that Hamlet is thirty is another of Shakespeare's large clues to his Saturnian nature. Even his age conspires towards making his melancholia more Saturnian. The closer the links between the melancholic and Saturn the more powerful his 'inspiration' from this planet would be. This together with his black clothing, black mood and brooding melancholia serve to amplify the effect of Saturn on him and his life, and underline again for the audience the importance of Saturnian elements in the play.

Much of our understanding of the melancholic derives from Burton and his The Anatomy of Melancholy, but this represents only one aspect of the condition. The renaissance man, familiar, if only superficially, with the Hermetic tradition or astrology and astrological sympathies would have recognized Hamlet's links with Saturn and consequently the Saturnian Melancholia. This understanding would have been brought about in part by the re-evaluation of Saturn, which made it more of current interest than at present.

Due to the astrological systems of Giorgi and Pico, Saturn which had traditionally been considered to be 'bad', came to be regarded rather as 'best'. This was because it was the 'outmost of the highest planets in the cosmic order, ... nearest the divine source of being and therefore associated with the loftiest contemplations.'[2] Saturnians became the 'inspired students and

contemplators of highest truths. They are placed with the Thrones, the next after the Cherubim of the angelic hierarchies.'[3] The qualities associated with Saturn which had previously been frowned on as 'bad', like the planet, were now considered to be 'good'. The propensity for contemplation long associated with the melancholic was no longer considered by those versed in astrological or hermetic matters, to be an illness to be treated by the various remedies suggested by Burton, but was essential to the state of mind that enabled the melancholic himself to come closer to his potential position with the Thrones.

In Hamlet both types of melancholia are represented. Hamlet is the Saturnian or 'inspired' melancholic, whilst Polonius, Gertrude and Claudius proceed as though they are dealing with a case of melancholia as discussed by Burton, seemingly unaware of the other kind.

Polonius follows orthodox thinking when he suggests that Hamlet's melancholia stems from love. Burton devotes one half of his third volume on the subject to the reasons for, varieties of, and treatment to be administered in the case of, love-melancholy. Likewise Claudius and Gertrude follow the same orthodox treatment in their application to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to cheer Hamlet with their company. The players' visit to Elsinore and even Hamlet's proposed journey to England, can all be seen as following the prescribed treatments for standard melancholia. Good company, mirth and a change of air are all prescribed by Burton as advantageous to the melancholic, and he suggests that frequently they will be enough to effect a cure. In this he follows Ficino, who he frequently refers to and quotes, who recommends a similar regime of treatment. Even if Claudius does not believe Hamlet to suffer from love-melancholy he can be seen as playing the role of someone who does what he can to effect a cure for some form of melancholy.

Of the melancholics I have mentioned, Hamlet is the only one to be visited by a ghost, temporarily returned from Purgatory or worse, calling for revenge. Revenge at best would mark Hamlet as a regicide and at worst would doom him to the eternal torments of Hell. It is not the arrival of the ghost in Hamlet's life that brings about his bouts of melancholia. If anything, the appearance of the ghost gives a further direction to this melancholy and supplies a bona-fide reason for his already apparent melancholic feelings and behaviour.

When the play opens we are made aware that all is not well in the state of Denmark. The men on the cold night-watch talk of the ghost they have seen. They talk of the twenty-four hour day, and seven day week that the armament manufacturers work. Possibly to combat the threat that Fortinbras represents to the state. They talk of the dispute and duel between old Hamlet and old Fortinbras as though it happened only yesterday, but it is a dispute that has taken place thirty years previously, the same day that young Hamlet was born. To these men on the battlements, the ghost - old Hamlet, old Fortinbras, young Hamlet, young Fortinbras and the state of preparation for war are inextricably linked. Their understanding of the walking of the ghost of old Hamlet may not be correct but the end of the play in presenting the reins of power to young Fortinbras is not far from the scenario their words have conjured. The one flaw in that scenario lies in the role young Fortinbras will play. He does not need to lead an attack on Denmark to win the throne, the corruption that is Denmark will destroy it from within.

Our first encounter with Hamlet shows him unaware of the portentous walking of the ghost. His only source of information about the foul deeds perpetrated in Denmark is internal to himself, and therefore represents feelings rather than hard facts. His dismay

at the marriage of Gertrude and Claudius is heightened to disgust by the haste of that marriage and manifests as a loathing of Claudius. His emotion can almost be explained away by the facts of the case and Hamlet's state of mind, but the logical explanation lacks the degree of passion that Hamlet manifests and leaves questions unanswered and arguments inconclusive.

Hamlet's first scene is in the company of this man he resents and despises so deeply. The scene is a state occasion. Messengers come and go; Claudius plays the role of the statesman controlling his newly won kingdom from its centre; like a spider at the centre of its web. Claudius does not follow the pattern established by old Hamlet. He dons no armour, his way does not lie with strength of arm, but is more akin to diplomacy sprung from duplicity. Claudius may seem an able diplomat in that he can, and does, adequately control Denmark on this state occasion, but he is unable to so convincingly control Hamlet.

Hamlet is subjected to belittling and unfair comments from Claudius, born of Claudius' frustration with Hamlet's continued mourning and melancholy. There is little room for Hamlet to respond, but in his own clever way Hamlet both responds to, and refutes Claudius' words condemning his melancholy and demanding his respect as Claudius' son by marriage.

From the outset Hamlet is antagonistic towards Claudius. The essence of his resentment derives more from Claudius' personal usurpation, by way of marriage, than from his public usurpation in becoming king. Hamlet's resentments lie in the personal realm and are fuelled by his feelings. Initially we may wonder why Hamlet should so despise his capable and seemingly caring, although unsentimental uncle. Hamlet is the weak link in Claudius' chain of

command and Claudius must call upon Hamlet to please Gertrude in order to obtain anything resembling obedience, respect is never forthcoming. Hamlet's position of opposition to Claudius is established before any hard facts can justify it.

It is not the appearance of the ghost that brings about Hamlet's loathing of Claudius, disgust at Gertude and Claudius' marriage, or Hamlet's melancholy. The ghost supplies the reasons that lie behind Hamlet's feelings: it justifies Hamlet's questionable behaviour towards Claudius and explains the sentiments that Hamlet expresses in his first soliloquy.

Hamlet's disgust with what he sees as gross or base in Gertrude's marriage to Claudius is a disgust with human appetites. His own attitudes to these appetites differ from those that have outraged him so. His first soliloquy suggests that he is more spiritual in outlook, and his self-condemnation to Ophelia, because of his own flaws, confirm this attitude. The spiritual quality Hamlet possesses is a part of his make-up, and this contemplative, spiritual facet of his nature is magnified to some degree by his melancholia. Already Hamlet manifests 'feelings' that are later justified by the words and demands of the ghost.

Horatio and his partners of the night-watch come to tell Hamlet of his father's ghost, but he pre-empts them: 'methinks I see my father ... In my mind's eye Horatio.'(1.2.184-5). Hamlet's words suggest that somehow he sees internally what Horatio and the men of the night-watch have seen externally. Once again Hamlet exhibits internal knowledge or feelings that have a basis in the real and the external. This suggests that Hamlet has a strange second sight, a second sight we are to notice again.

Throughout the action of the play there are other occasions when

Hamlet appears to be in possession of information relating to intrigues against him, but there is no indication of an informer at court. We, the audience, have to content ourselves with the notion that Hamlet has a gift of 'knowing', and that this knowing, in relation to Claudius and the walking of the ghost, stems from an internal vision and feeling and is intuitive. This second sight confirms Hamlet as an 'inspired' melancholic, which is a very different kind of melancholia to that manifested by Shakespeare's other melancholics, and is certainly not the kind of melancholia detailed by Burton in The Anatomy of Melancholy.

As I have noted Hamlet shows an insight that reveals to him internally what Horatio has seen externally. When Horatio reveals the actual walking of the ghost, Hamlet deduces that this indicates 'some foul play' (1.2.256). Hamlet does not see the reason for the walking of the ghost as directly related to the pre-war state of the country, nor does he suggest that the ghost dressed in armour has any link with the slaying of old Fortinbras thirty years previously. The conclusions that he draws differ from those drawn by Horatio and the night-watch. It is only when the ghost eventually speaks that Hamlet is proved to be correct, and he can rightly exclaim 'O my prophetic soul!' (1.5.40). There is no indication in Burton's The Anatomy of Melancholy that the complaint will give psychic ability. Prophetic souls play no part in the melancholy he prescribes for. But a prophetic soul is an essential requisite for the elevated form of 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholia: it is part and parcel of the condition, it is the state that Saturnian melancholics strive to reach through contemplation. It can be, as Hamlet later discovers, a considerable asset when dealing with duplicity and deviousness.

The chief work written on melancholy is Burton's The Anatomy of

Melancholy, and it may be thought that the 'inspired' variety to which I refer is too esoteric a subject for Shakespeare to dramatise. Some years after Shakespeare was writing and indeed after the Hermetic documents had been discredited by Isaac Casaubon, Milton wrote two particularly pertinent poems. These poems, 'L'Allegro' and 'Il Penseroso' put forward two visions of melancholy. Both poems deal with the 'inspired' form of melancholia, the difference lies with the source of the inspiration, demonic or angelic. The first poem 'L'Allegro' deals with the demonic and negative aspects of 'inspiration'. Milton refers to melancholy as:

> loathed Melancholy
> Of Cerebus and blackest Midnight born,
> In stygian cave forlorn,
> 'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!

Whilst in 'Il Penseroso' it becomes:

> divinest Melancholy,
> Whose saintly visage is too bright
> To hit the sense of human sight,
> And therefore to our weaker view
> O'erlaid with black, staid wisdom's hue, ...
> But first, and chiefest, with thee bring
> Him that yon soars on golden wing,
> Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
> The Cherub Contemplation; ...
> let my lamp at midnight hour
> Be seen in some high lonely tower,
> Where I may oft out-watch the Bear
> With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
> The spirit of Plato, to unfold
> What worlds, or what vast regions hold
> The immortal mind, that hath forsook
> Her mansions in this fleshy nook: ...
> bring all heaven before mine eyes ...
> I may sit and rightly spell
> Of every star that heav'n doth show
> And ev'ry herb that sips the dew,
> Till old experience do attain
> To something like prophetic strain.
> These pleasures, melancholy, give.

Both Milton and Burton were writing after Shakespeare had written Hamlet, but Hamlet in its turn was written after Agrippa's De Occulta Philosophia and Durer's engraving of 'Melencolia 1'. The

work of Burton illustrates the more mundane and orthodox version of melancholy, whilst the poems of Milton illustrate a knowledge of both kinds of 'inspired' melancholy. In 'Il Penseroso' Milton quite clearly refers to inspired prophetic wisdom and the guiding cherub. A further aspect of Milton's 'inspired' and divine melancholy is a form of modesty and a distaste for the bestial, the physical, or the worldly, this distaste has already been noted as being pertinent to Hamlet. Milton refers to 'divinest melancholy' as a:

> pensive Nun, devout and pure
> Sober, steadfast, and demure,
> All in a robe of darkest grain,

Hamlet's railings against the world, against Gertrude, and even his misplaced attack upon Ophelia - in which he refers directly to a 'nunnery' - reflect this modesty and distaste for 'Things rank and gross'.

At a very early stage of the play Hamlet exhibits links with 'inspired' melancholy, the most pronounced link is his 'prophetic soul' which becomes more and more manifest as the play proceeds. It may be that Hamlet's contact with the ghost brings this 'prophetic soul' more to the fore. Certainly after this encounter Hamlet acts with more certainty when dealing with the plans laid against him, plans of which he should know nothing. Indeed he acts with such certainty that in his film of Hamlet, Sir Laurence Olivier felt it necessary to incorporate an eavesdropping Hamlet to explain this secret knowledge.

Hamlet's certainty becomes more noticeable when he deals with the plan to lose Ophelia to him. Claudius and Polonius formulate the plan and, with the plan fresh in his mind, Polonius is unfortunate enough to encounter Hamlet, who is ready and waiting, 'antic disposition' to the fore, disguising his quick and probing wit. With

heavily veiled cryptic remarks Hamlet harps on and on, on the theme of Polonius' daughter and his plan to use her as human bait. He refers to Polonius as a 'fishmonger'. In that Polonius is an adviser to the king, Hamlet is acting in an antic or lunatic fahion, but in that a fishmonger is a bawdy reference to a brothel keeper, a leaser-out of human female flesh, Hamlet is astute. Hamlet speaks an inspired version of the essence of the truth. Even after the entry of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern he will not let the matter drop. He continues in his assault upon Polonius with references to Jephtah of Israel. He manoeuvres the conversation back again to Polonius' daughter, in so doing suggesting Ophelia as the sacrifice Polonius is willing to make. That Hamlet actually calls Polonius Jephtah confirms this allusion. So pointed is Shakespeare about this that he makes Polonius acknowledge the allusion and the relevance of it to himself: 'If you call me Jephtah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.' (2.2.410-11). Shakespeare also has Polonius take note of Hamlet's seeming obsession with the subject of his daughter (2.2.408). Hamlet's insistence on the subject of Ophelia as bait, as leased out human flesh, and as Polonius' sacrifice, indicates that he is aware of the plan that Polonius and Claudius have just hatched. The cryptic remarks in which he reveals this knowledge to Polonius and audience alike are almost too clever and too cryptic, Polonius missing the relevance and the audience suspecting, but like Polonius being confused by the cryptic comment and antic disposition.

Whilst Hamlet is demonstrating his 'prophetic soul' in relation to Polonius' plan, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern arrive and he demonstrates it yet again in relation to their arrival and purpose at court. Within minutes of their meeting Hamlet demonstrates his knowledge for their coming: 'You were sent for ... I know the good King and Queen have sent for you.' (2.2.278-81).

In the conversation that ensures Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Hamlet exchange bawdy puns and cryptic comments, it becomes revealed in this exchange that Hamlet is aware not only of their reason for coming but their plan of operation in the hope of discovering his secret. Throughout this conversation Rosencrantz and Guildenstern find themselves hopelessly outwitted and out-manoeuvred by the 'antic' Hamlet.

From the conversation between Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Hamlet about the players it appears they have all been together in a particular city. There is no direct suggestion which city that may be, but we do know that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Hamlet's 'school-fellows', and that Hamlet has been a student at Wittenberg University as has Horatio. It seems possible that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are University friends of Hamlet's, if only because it seems even more unlikely that Shakespeare would have us believe that Gertrude and Claudius have proved so hopelessly inefficient as to dig up old friends from Hamlet's distant past to uncover what lies hidden in the depths of his troubled soul. Indeed Claudius' words suggest that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern knew Hamlet not long before his 'transformation':

> Something have you heard
> Of Hamlet's transformation - so call it,
> Sith nor th'exterior nor the inward man
> Resembles what it was. ... I entreat you both
> That, being of so young days brought up with him,
> And sith so neighboured to his youth and 'haviour,
> (2.2.4-12)

We have no reason to believe Gertrude's injunction to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to stay, but she does indicate that the relationship between them and Hamlet has been one between men and not boys:

> Good gentlemen, he hath much talked of you,
> And sure I am two men there is not living
> To whom he more adheres. (2.2.19-21)

For the sake of argument let us accept, if the above fails to convince, that Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, Horatio and Hamlet have all been at Wittenberg University, a city which the players have visited. It would be a mistake to think of Wittenberg as merely a provincial University town. Indeed it is a considerable landmark in some areas of literature and history. To fully understand all that Shakespeare implies by using Wittenberg as a background to which Hamlet wishes to return, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have recently left, we should reconsider what we know of the place.

Literature features another famous scholar from Wittenberg, the ill-fated Dr. Faustus, whose area of study was magic, and whose hope was to be a demi-god by way of this magic. Faustus was not inspired, he sold his soul for this hoped for power, and in so doing he followed the bad angel, leaving the good to mourn the loss of his soul and salvation. Faustus represents all that terrified the renaissance thinker by way of magic or the supernatural. Faustus' dealings with Satan and Mephostophilis and the realms of Hell are the dangers that magic was thought to threaten. In Marlowe's Dr Faustus Agrippa is referred to by name (1.1.116). The myths that surround the memory of Agrippa suggest him as a black magician accompanied everywhere by his familiar, a black dog. Due to Marlowe's position relative to Shakespeare's, and the stage success of Dr Faustus it is hard to think of Shakespeare writing of other scholars from Wittenberg without some reference to the mythic occult connections of that city and its university.

Wittenberg is equally well remembered now, and was known in the renaissance, for its links with Luther. It was in Wittenberg that Luther nailed his thesis to the Cathedral door. Wittenberg was prominent in connection with the reformation movement and was of

considerable importance for the roots of Protestantism. For the renaissance audience Wittenberg represented the city involved in religious revolution with a movement away from the orthodox Catholicism to the unorthodox, in the shape of Protestantism, reformation, or some species of the occult. Of equal importance, but perhaps less universally known now, is the period of residence of Giordano Bruno in Wittenberg. Bruno spent some time teaching his ideas at the very university to which Hamlet wishes to return. It has been suggested by Frances Yates in Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition, that whilst lecturing at the university Bruno was party to forming a secret society of brethren known as the Giordanisti, perhaps the fore-runner of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood. That the name Rosencrantz looks like a corruption of the word rosenkrautz, (the 'n' replacing the 'u', which translates to Rosie-cross), and bearing in mind that the Quarto of 1604/05 spells the name Rosencraus; together with the name Guildenstern which translates as Gold-star, perhaps a reference to the jewish symbol of the gold star, which is in turn related to Saturn and indicates the Cabala, also suggests occult connections with Wittenberg[4].

I venture so far then to suggest that these facts would to some extent have been in the minds of Shakespeare's audience. To ignore the associations of Wittenberg would have been tantamount to disappointing an audience already primed for some element of the occult or the supernatural with the appearance of a ghost, the revelation that the usurped prince was a Saturnian Melancholic, and that same prince had connections with Wittenberg.

Bearing all this in mind we must review the scene between Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Hamlet with a new vision. For here Wittenberg students meet Wittenberg student in almost a head-on

clash of wills. We are confronted with Hamlet determined to conceal the truth about his 'lunacy' and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern equally determined to reveal that same truth.

In Act 2 scene 2 between lines 226-41, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Hamlet seem to have a bawdy conversation about Fortune, who ends up being branded a 'strumpet'. There is much more to this short exchange than is initially apparent. The exchange becomes most pointed when Guildenstern, who has already shown himself less capable of deceiving Hamlet than Rosencrantz, amplifies Hamlet's suggestion that they (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern) 'live about her (Fortune's) waist, or in the middle of her favours?' (2.2.231-2) with 'Faith, her privates we.' (2.2.233). Hamlet sees this as an opportunity for a bawdy pun, 'In the secret parts of Fortune? O, most true! She is a strumpet.' (2.2.234-5), but this punning on 'privates' and 'secret parts' can represent something else. 'Privates' relating not only to the sexual organs of Fortune but to the rank perhaps that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold in Fortune's service, whilst 'secret parts' could equally be a reference to a secret society. If reviewed in this new light it seems that this conversation hints at the involvement of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as initiates, in a society, perhaps secret, related to Fortune. Their lowly rank first being suggestion by Guildenstern's reference to 'privates', and later to be confirmed by Hamlet's treatment of them whilst trying to establish their reasons for visiting Denmark.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern present themselves to Hamlet as friends and in the name of friendship. They do not present themselves as servants, but Hamlet clearly sees them as inferior to himself and suggests that servants is exactly what they are, even if unlike any of his other servants:

> Not so much. I will not sort you with the rest of my servants. ... Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks. But I thank you. And sure dear friends, my thanks are too dear a half-penny. (2.2.267-74)

These are insulting words to address to friends, but not so insulting to address to servants who serve an unscrupulous master. Perhaps the most important point that Hamlet makes here is that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are of a lower rank than himself. He does not pull rank with Horatio, but accepts him as an equal, indeed it is most unlike Hamlet to pull rank at all. A further indication that Hamlet is far from interested in social rank is in his relationship with Ophelia. If he had any plans for marriage we must accept his declaration at Ophelia's grave that Ophelia was the woman he would have married. Gertrude shares this vision, but Polonius and Laertes both see Ophelia's rank as beneath Hamlet's and as an impediment to marriage. As a consequence they believe he is trifling with her affections. Hamlet's words and actions do not support this attitude.

In Hamlet we have a prince who gives his affections freely, regardless of rank, providing he feels he is amongst those who return that affection. Clearly Hamlet does not see Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as fulfilling the role of friendship regardless of their claims. In this of course he is quite correct, for in acting for Claudius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are rather Hamlet's enemies than friends. Further, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have hired themselves out to Claudius and in this context they become servants of the court. The players also hire themselves out, but Hamlet's attitude is markedly different to them. He tells Polonius to treat the players well and even this instruction is given without belittling Polonius, who Hamlet has much reason to belittle: 'Good my lord, will you see the players bestowed? ... Let them be well used, for they are the abstract and

brief chronicle of the time ... The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty.' (2.2.520-30). It may be then that the rank that Hamlet pulls, and obviously refers to, although seeming to relate to the court at Elsinor relates rather to Rosencrantz's and Guildenstern's rank as privates in the service of Fortune. The position of privates of Fortune in the angelic hierarchies would be markedly debased and inferior to the position that equates with the Thrones. A position which, as an 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholic, Hamlet may hold.

That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern should be so easily bought by Claudius to both spy on Hamlet, and effect a change in him by any means at their disposal, denigrates them on both a moral and on an occult scale. The magus or initiate who could be bought, or whose motivation was material gain for himself was considered to be of the 'black' side of the art, and highly undesirable company for any one of 'angelic' inspiration. Such 'black' characters would be at odds with the harmony of the universe and the natural order, and would try by an 'evil' manipulation of the natural order to bring about a change in that order. After the play, 'The Murder of Gonzago', Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are shown to be such characters. Challenged by Hamlet to play the recorders, they decline the challenge, Guildenstern again reveals the truth: 'But these cannot I command to, any utterance of harmony. I have not the skill.' (3.2.369-70). In The Merchant of Venice Lorenzo states quite clearly the renaissance attitude to man, music and harmony:

> The man that hath no music in himself,
> Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils,
> The motion of his spirit are dull as night,
> And his affections dark as Erebus:
> Let no such man be trusted: (5.1.83-88)

Hamlet's seemingly unfair or unkind treatment of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is based then on his own knowledge that derives from his 'prophetic soul' more than external circumstance, but external circumstance, like Guildenstern's admission about harmony, serve only to reinforce Hamlet's belief and justify his discourteous behaviour.

As if to reinforce the idea that we are following occult thinking on the 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholic, which derives from Giorgi, Pico, Agrippa and Durer, Shakespeare introduces two important points of reference into the first conversation between Hamlet, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. The first point is in relation to Hamlet's supposed madness. He tells Rosencrantz and Guildenstern:

> My uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived ...
> I am but mad north-north-west. When the wind is
> southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.
> (2.2.374-8)

The note in the Penguin edition of Hamlet to line 377 makes more sense of these words than that in the Arden edition. The Arden editor (Harold Jenkins) suggests that a southerly wind would be more suitable to sanity in a melancholic, quoting a form of treatment which can probably be found in Burton. Whilst Spencer sees this as a cryptic remark which can be paraphrased with further reference to the points of the compass:

> I am only a very little off compass - one point
> ($22\frac{1}{2}$) out of sixteen (360). (p.258)

This reference to compasses and further measurement is most apposite for a Saturnian Melancholic, whose ability with numbers and measuring instruments adds to his powers. If we refer to Durer's engraving of 'Melencolia 1' it will be noted that measuring instruments and making implements litter the fore-ground, whilst a magic square of Jupiter - of specially placed numbers - is seen in the background above and behind the head of the seated melancholic. It seems to me that

Hamlet's 'I know a hawk from a handsaw' is an extension of this idea, and although he is undoubtedly saying he can distinguish one thing from another, I see little reason to agree with Spencer in that the handsaw is a 'hernshaw', but rather think that the handsaw is a handsaw, and a hawk a plaster's board. Referring again to the Saturnian Melancholic as seen in 'Melencolia 1', we see that in the foreground of the picture there are nails, a plane, calipers and a handsaw, whilst on the melancholic's lap is an implement very like a compass. The engraving is positively linked with carpenters tools and measuring instruments. It seems to me that Shakespeare is trying to draw our attention here to the similarities in Hamlet's state of mind and Durer's engraving. If Shakespeare's intention is not so precise as to refer to Durer's engraving, he is at least trying to convey what he can of the 'inspired' melancholic to his audience.

Prior to the introduction of the compass/handsaw elements Hamlet talks of the excellence of the world that means nothing to him, and the excellence of man that fails to delight him. His words on man are well known, but they are important enough for my argument to quote them here:

> What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god: the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals! And yet to me what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me - (2.2.303-9)

What Hamlet says here bears a marked similarity to the Egyptian Genesis, which tallies well with 'The Asclepius' on man as the magnum miraculum (with which Pico della Mirandola was to open his 'Oration on the Dignity of Man'):

> What a great miracle is man, O Asclepius, a being worthy of reverence and honour. For he passes into the nature of a god as though he were himself a god; he has

> familiarity with the race of demons, knowing that he is issued from the same origin; he despises that part of his nature which is only human, for he has put his hope in the divinity of the other part.[5]

Hamlet's 'What a piece of work is man' parallels in meaning 'What a great miracle is man', and in the notes to the Penguin edition Spencer reads 'piece of work' as masterpiece. The remainder of what Hamlet says suggests the essence of Pico's Oration. Linking man with angels (Hamlet) and demons (Pico), but the angel/demon division is not one of opposites, they are both supernatural forces and it seems that Agrippa refers to lower demons, higher demons, and in fact was referring to a kind of angel. The 'higher demons' that guide the Saturnian Melancholic being the 'cherub', which is noted as being of the angelic hierarchy. There is a reference in both extracts linking man and his origins to God, but more in a gnostic sense than in the Genesis sense. Another parallel exists in the spiritual quality of man, Pico's man, like Hamlet, is not delighted by the physical but 'despises that part of his nature which is only human'.

It seems then that Shakespeare attempts to colour our perception of Hamlet with some of Pico's lofty ideals, which in itself is an attempt to elevate Hamlet past the mere physicality of the court at Elsinor, and to associate him with the 'man as magus' ideal that Pico propounded in his 'Oration on the Dignity of Man'. The Egyptian Genesis depicts 'Man as Magus' who lost much power with his fall, but it was felt that this power could be regained as could the original position of man on the angelic hierarchy. Pico saw man as a natural magus who 'unites virtues in heaven with those on earth.'[6]

Pico's 'Oration on the Dignity of Man':

> was to echo and re-echo throughout the Renaissance, and it is, indeed, the great charter of Renaissance Magic, of the new type of magic introduced by Ficino and completed by Pico.[7]

It seems to me then that Hamlet's 'what a piece of work is man' is one of these Renaissance echoes of Pico's Oration perhaps even directly derived from it. In that Pico's assessment of Saturn was in part responsible for the idea of the 'inspired melancholic' and that Hamlet, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are all students at Wittenberg where Bruno taught, a link is made with Renaissance magic. This indicates that Shakespeare is pointing at 'Renaissance magic, of the new type of magic', and the Hermetic tradition as having some special relevance to Hamlet. In having Hamlet say 'man delights not me' he parallels 'he despises that part of his nature which is only human, for he has put his hope in the divinity of the other part.' and indicates the potential spiritual elevation available to Hamlet. The parallels between Pico and Hamlet imply that Shakespeare is referring not only to Pico's oration but also to the underlying philosophy from which Pico drew and propounded, namely that man could be seen as a natural-magus, and his powers lost as the result of the fall could be reclaimed. If we see Hamlet as an 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholic then it follows, by virtue of the endowments of the 'inspired' melancholic, that we can see Hamlet in a position approaching that of the natural-magus, simply because the range of the powers of one equate with the range of powers of the other.

It is in no way strange that Hamlet should warn Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (Fortune's privates) of his own powers both here and in the compass and the handsaw episode. Hamlet is well on his way up the ladder of the angelic hierarchies, equating as an inspired melancholic with the Thrones, whilst they reside firmly at the very bottom, barely on the first rung, being only privates or initiates.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and Claudius, remain undeterred by, if they have understood, Hamlet's power and prophetic soul. As

Claudius becomes more resolute in his determination to free himself from Hamlet's presence and the unspoken accusations that his behaviour expresses, so Hamlet's 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholy becomes more pronounced, reaching an all time high in knowledge and expression at Claudius' plan to pack him off to England in the dubious company of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Once again Hamlet is not supplied with information by an informer, and yet he is not only aware of the planned journey, but knows that the trip does not bode well, he tells Gertrude:

> I must to England, You know that? ...
> There's letters sealed, and my two school-fellows,
> Whom I will trust as I will adders fanged,
> They bear the mandate. They must sweep my way
> And marshal me to knavery. Let it work.
> For 'tis the sport to have the engineer
> Hoist with his own petar; and't shall go hard
> But I will delve one yard below their mines
> And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most sweet
> When in one line two crafts directly meet.
> (3.4.201-11)

These words indicate not only knowledge of the plan for the journey, and Claudius' sealed letters which Hamlet later discovers, but also included in this speech is an accurate prophecy of the fate that will befall Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. They will be 'hoist on their own petar', whilst the line about two crafts seems to refer to two opposing forces or crafts, and this does not imply two plans. Hamlet's words suggest a clash, perhaps not unlike the clash of wills that has already taken place between himself and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. In that the speech has originally referred to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and the part they will play in marshalling Hamlet to knavery, and it would seem that Hamlet's 'craft', his inspired melancholia, represents the opposite extreme to their craft, whatever that may be. Quite clearly we must see Hamlet as the master of one craft, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern if not the

masters at least as the servants of the master of the opposing craft. Essentially the plan to marshall Hamlet to knavery is Claudius' plan and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern only serve him in this.

As Hamlet departs from Denmark his parting words irrevocably confirm him as the 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholic. Claudius tells Hamlet that he must go to England. He implies falsely that the murder of Polonius is the reason. Hamlet has already illustrated his knowledge of this plan, but to Claudius he feigns ignorance. In believing Hamlet to be ignorant of the contents of the sealed letters Claudius allows himself a moment to gloat over his seeming victory and answers Hamlet's 'Good' with a not-so-cryptic comment he believes will defeat Hamlet's wit: 'So it is, if thou knowest our purposes'. (4.3.49) Hamlet is more pointed and cryptic than Claudius, perhaps to Claudius it sounds like more of the 'antic disposition' he has become familiar with. It is in fact a sound confirmation of Hamlet's prophetic insight and his 'inspired' state. With his 'I see a cherub that sees them' (4.3.50) Hamlet indicates the cherub that Milton writes of in 'Il Penseroso', when he asks 'divinest Melancholy' that brings 'prophetic strain' to

> first, and chiefest, with thee bring
> Him that yon soars on golden wing, ...
> The Cherub Contemplation.

Hamlet indicates the cherub behind the seated and 'inspired' melancholic in Durer's engraving which indicates the next level up on the angelic hierarchies. If the 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholic must progress up through the supernatural world, the sephiroth, it must be done through the chain of being to the next rank on that chain, the Cherubim. Hamlet sees and communicates with the cherub, the cherub sees all. The cherub is connected by Giorgi, Pico, Agrippa, Durer and Milton with the 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholic.

Once on board the ship with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Hamlet's prophetic soul does not desert him. He is saved from completing the journey to England by the encounter with the pirates, which is an external element beyond his control, but perhaps not beyond his supernatural vision. His discovery and alteration of the letters comes just in time to ensure the execution of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Recounting the episode, he tells Horatio:

> Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting
> That would not let me sleep ... Rashly,
> And praised by rashness for it - let us know
> Our indiscretions sometimes serve us well
> When our deep plots do pall, and that should learn us
> There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we will - ...
> My sea-gown scarfed about me, in the dark
> Groped I to find out them, had my desire,
> Fingered their packet, and in fine withdrew
> To mine own room again, making so bold,
> My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
> Their grand commission; (5.2.4-18)

Hamlet indicates to Horatio that something in his heart had prevented him from sleeping, here we are back in the realms of undefinable feelings that stem from a 'prophetic soul' that give this unrealized knowing. Guided only by this feeling and inspired knowing, prompted by fear, and not by rational thought, Hamlet discovers and alters the commission. His feelings then have prompted him to take direct action to safeguard his own life and dispense with those that threaten it.

Hamlet's prophetic wisdom appears to desert him in the last act of the play. He is the victim of the plot between Claudius and Laertes which causes his death. In fact it is Hamlet's insight and philosophy that cost him his life not his lack of understanding of the villainy of Claudius and Laertes. Revealing his thoughts to Horatio he makes it clear he does not altogether feel easy about the duel. His dislike has nothing to do with his ability or his

inability with a rapier, he believes he can win a fair fight with Laertes, he tells Horatio:

> I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart. But it is no matter ... It is but foolery. But it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble woman. ... We defy augury. There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come. If it be not to come, it will be now. If it be not now, yet it will come. The readiness is all. Since no man knows of aught he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be. (5.2.205-18)

Even now Hamlet's 'prophetic soul' has not deserted him, he knows in his heart that something is wrong, but in believing that 'The readiness is all', and that there is a 'special providence in the fall of a sparrow' he decides to 'defy augury' and accept the challenge and permit that 'divinity' which 'shapes our ends', to take control of the situation. Hamlet relinquishes the responsibility for his own life seeing it as only a part in the great plan of things. This suggests that he believes there is a great plan, and that he has some part to play and that is all, his personal ambition and self-protection foresake him leaving him with a wider view and perspective.

Hamlet's attitude then suggests a distanced perspective resembling, if not absolutely, then loosely, a kind of fatalism. An acceptance of the Divine Order which implies a great or universal plan. This would imply that Hamlet's attitude to the 'divinity that shapes our ends', has metamorphosed to acquiescence, he has given up all attempts to 'rough-hew' his own course. This new view point is manifested in relation to Claudius and the call from the ghost to avenge. After his return from his sea journey Hamlet no longer talks of a personal revenge but rather of an impersonal divine or moral justice. His plans are no longer firmly rooted in the personal. Gone are the recriminations against inaction, gone the accusations that Claudius killed his father, gone the personal desire to see Claudius burn in

Hell, gone is the personal vendetta. In the place of the personal chaos and dilemma is a clear and detached statement of fact:

> He that hath killed my King and whored my mother,
> Popped in between th'election and my hopes,
> Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
> And with such cozenage - is't not perfect conscience
> To quite him with this arm? And is't not to be damned
> to let this canker of our nature come
> In further evil? (5.2.63-70)

Hamlet and conscience are one. He is prepared to proceed as the scourge of heaven, if it is possible, in the 'interim' he will act, eradicate the evil that Claudius is, and mete out a justifiable punishment for the evil he has perpetrated. Hamlet sees himself in a role that represents the powers of good in their struggle against the powers of evil. This presents a similar situation to the sentiments he has expressed after mistakenly killing Polonius, when he says:

> For this same lord,
> I do repent. But heaven hath pleased it so,
> To punish me with this, and this with me,
> That I must be their scourge and minister.
> (3.4.173-76)

Here he has seen himself as the scourge of heaven, which role he again claims for himself in relation to Claudius. In adopting this attitude Hamlet no longer thinks of the demand by the Ghost as a burden, rather he indicates that he (Hamlet) represents a higher moral order, which will see an end to infectious evil. This implies a knowledge of this higher order as does 'there's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we may.' This knowledge of a higher order, of a divinity, is another confirmation that Hamlet is an 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholic. More than that it indicates the level that Hamlet has come to operate on by the time of his death. To further explain this point I turn to Agrippa and to the manuscript of <u>De Occulta Philosophia</u> (1510), the translation of which is to be found in <u>Saturn and Melancholy</u>.

> The 'humour melancholius', when it takes fire and glows, generates the frenzy (furor) which leads us to wisdom and revelation, especially when it is combined with a heavenly influence, above all with that of Saturn, ... Aristotle says in the Problemata that through melancholy some men have become divine beings, foretelling the future ... this humour melancholius has such power that they say it attracts certain demons into our bodies, through whose presence and activity men fall into ecstacies and pronounce many wonderful things ... This occurs in three different forms corresponding to the threefold capacity of our souls, namely the imagination (imaginatio), the rational (ratio), and the mental (mens). For when set free by the humour melancholius, the soul is fully concentrated in the imagination, and it immediately becomes a habitation for the lower demons, from whom it often receives wonderful instruction in the manual arts; thus we see a quite unskilled man suddenly become a painter or an architect ... if the demons of this species reveal the future to us, they show us matters related to natural catastrophes and disasters, ... But when the soul is fully concentrated in the reason, it becomes the home of the middle demons; thereby it attains knowledge of natural and human things; thus we see a man suddenly become a philosopher, a physician, or an orator; and of future events they show us what concerns the overthrow of kingdoms and the return of epochs, ... But when the soul soars completely to the intellect it becomes the home of the higher demons, from whom it learns the secrets of divine matters, as for instance the law of God, the angel hierarchy, and that which pertains to the knowledge of eternal things and the soul's salvation; of future events they show us for instance approaching prodigies, wonders, a prophet to come, or the emergence of a new religion.[8]

We learn from Agrippa's manuscript of the frenzy or furor, the presence of demons which cause the melancholic to fall into an ecstasy and pronounce wonderful things. Each level of ecstasy gives access to different kinds of ability and information depending on whether the imaginatio, the ratio or the mens is affected.

We have seen the frenzy or furor, the ecstasy into which Hamlet falls, and it is difficult to draw the line between his 'antic disposition' and this furor, but quite clearly there is a line to be drawn. Hamlet announces his intention to effect an 'antic disposition' at the start of the play, whilst in the closing scene he pleads to bouts of madness, telling Laertes:

> I have done you wrong.
> But pardon't, ... You must needs have heard
> How I am punished with a sore distraction.
> What I have done
> That might your nature, honour and exception
> Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness
> Was't Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet.
> If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
> And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,
> Then Hamlet does it not. Hamlet denies it.
> Who does it then? His madness. (5.2.220-31)

The furor of which Agrippa writes suggests an ecstasy with a loss of control on the part of the affected individual. Hamlet here clearly claims a similar loss of control. His furor, then, is marked by his own lack of control, whilst his 'antic disposition', which in essence is acting, must be within his control. Hamlet delineates what he considers to be good acting to the First Player, his words imply absolute control on the part of the actor and he underlines the need to avoid extravagant behaviour:

> Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue. But if you mouth it as many of our players do, I had as lief the town crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hands. But use all gently. For in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness ... Be not too tame neither. But let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature. For anything so o'erdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. (3.2.1-24)

Quite clearly Hamlet sees acting as a device by which the actor can hold the mirror up to nature. Even passion must be tempered with a smoothness that comes from temperance, he condemns the show of extremes. The actor must remain in control of the part he plays and the situation he creates, neither must be allowed to over-ride the part, which must be subtle and modest. Thus when Hamlet himself

seeks to put on an antic disposition, in essence acting, we are able to measure that antic disposition by Hamlet's own rules for acting. Essentially, a temperance and control reflecting the flaws in nature would equate with the feigned madness, while passion, ecstasy, and lack of control would all equate with the furor. Thus Hamlet's quick wit, loaded with cryptic remarks that mystify whilst they magnify, and reflect the flawed natures of Polonius, Claudius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, are all part of this acting, even some of Hamlet's dealings with Ophelia and Gertrude can be seen as fulfilling this role. But there are times when Hamlet is not in control. Perhaps the most obvious are summarized by saying they are the times when Hamlet either threatens to attack, or does attack another character in the play. His threat to 'make a ghost of him' (1.4.85) who stops him from following the ghost would fit this category, Horatio's words suggest as much: 'He waxes desperate with imagination' (1.4.87). These words suggest that Hamlet is not in control of himself and his passions, and may even indicate with the first stage of Hamlet's inspired melancholia, the stage that affects the imagination and indicates inspiration from the 'lower demons'.

Following the play, after the interchange with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern about the recorders, Hamlet, left alone on the stage, seems to be under the influence of something almost demonic. In a speech that sounds as if it has come from Macbeth or Richard III he says:

> 'Tis now the very witching time of night,
> When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
> Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood
> And do such bitter business as the world quake to look on.
> (3.2.395-99)

Directly after these blood-curdling thoughts Hamlet is given the opportunity to slay Claudius, but is concerned that Claudius should not gain a place in heaven and so defers the execution, seeming

briefly to regain control. Having forgotten his thoughts of 'hot-blood', he makes his way past the kneeling Claudius to his mother's chamber. Within twenty five lines he has drawn his sword and slain Polonius, an act lacking both control and thought. He says he thought he had killed Polonius' better, implying Claudius, but Claudius has been left on his knees trying to pray. Hamlet has acted in a momentary abberation, in a furor of passion. When questioned by Gertrude about the deed he can only reply that he does not know what he has done or who he has killed (3.4.26-27). It is to this frenzied attack on Polonius that Hamlet refers when he speaks to Laertes of his madness. It is from this act that all the wrongs against Laertes and his immediate family proceed.

The inhabitants of the court at Elsinore have no 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholic guide-lines to aid them in assessing Hamlet's madness and the only clues available to them lie in Hamlet's cryptic comments, which they are unable to decipher. To them the antic disposition and the melancholic furor are one and the same thing, lunacy, consequently they fall to patronizing Hamlet. The result shows them to be hopelessly inadequate in dealing with his cryptic comments, his inspired perception, and biting wit. In these scenes Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Polonius, Claudius and the posturing Osrik all fall foul of Hamlet. He retains control of the situation, manoeuvering the subject matter of any conversation at will to suit his own purposes. This is the antic disposition that even Polonius recognises as having 'method in't'.

Perhaps only in the nunnery scene with Ophelia and at her burial do the edges become blurred, and doubts arise about the antic disposition or the melancholic furor. The nunnery scene is a direct result of Polonius' decision to lose Ophelia to Hamlet, and Hamlet

is aware of the plan. It is possible that, even knowing that there are eavesdroppers close by, Hamlet cannot completely control the situation, perhaps because of genuine feelings for Ophelia. In this scene with Ophelia he demonstrates again his knowledge of the plan. Just as he has previously harped upon the subject of Ophelia with Polonius, now he harps upon the subject of Polonius with Ophelia, questioning her about his whereabouts, and not missing the opportunity to threaten Claudius. As D. G. James has pointed out in The Dream of Learning, Hamlet has very good reason to be disappointed with Ophelia, and this disappointment may account for the confusion between madness and antic disposition.

In demonstrating his knowledge of the plot and not missing the opportunity to threaten Claudius, Hamlet seems to remain in control of the situation. This would suggest his antic disposition, but his nunnery ravings and accusations against Ophelia and the ferocity of these accusations suggest the opposite, the melancholics furor. It is as if the reins of power have temporarily slipped from his grasp.

In Ophelia, Shakespeare demonstrates another kind of madness, not melancholic, not antic disposition, not uncontrollable passion, but a genuine case brought about by the two-fold grief of losing her over-protective father and her potential husband, who slays that father. Ophelia's madness, pointed perhaps in her distribution of flowers, severs the link between herself and the world. She seems unaware of the external world surrounding her and she retreats to an internal world of her own. Her inability to comprehend the external circumstances that surround her lead to her death. She drowns, singing and oblivious, without any struggle for life. Ophelia's madness distances her from external reality, she becomes less and less aware of the characters inhabiting her world, whilst Hamlet's

madness, his 'inspired' melancholia, makes him more aware of the characters who inhabit his world. Indeed his awareness is so heightened that he knows of their plots and stratagems. Hamlet's inspired melancholia does not cloud the external world in which he lives, but makes it possible for him to pierce all levels of show and arrive at an understanding of the internal worlds of the characters surrounding him.

This is not to say that Hamlet proceeds unerringly throughout the action of the play, guided by an infallible perception. Only after the mention of the Cherub can we say that Hamlet is truly guided by infallible perception, having at last reached the third stage of Saturnian Melancholia as detailed by Agrippa and desired by Milton. Up to this point Hamlet makes at least one terrible blunder, the murder of Polonius, whilst the description of his appearance in Ophelia's closet suggests an affinity with the hell that the ghost has temporarily fled. Indeed Ophelia's description is fitting for a person temporarily fled from hell:

> My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
> Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced,
> No hat upon his head, his stockings fouled,
> Ungartered, and down-gyved to his ankle,
> Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,
> And with a look so piteous in purport
> As if he had been loosed out of hell
> To speak horrors - he comes before me ...
> At last, a little shaking of mine arm
> And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
> He raised a sigh so piteous and profound
> As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
> And end his being. (2.1.77-96)

The Ghost and not Hamlet has been loosed out of hell, Ophelia's description of Hamlet's state of disarray, linking Hamlet with hell, (which his own 'hot-blood' speech and desire to see Claudius burn in hell seem to confirm) suggests that if Hamlet is 'inspired' by any 'demons' at all they are the lower demons and not the cherub which inspires his vision at 4.3.50. This would seem to imply then that

Hamlet's inspiration changes between his entry into Ophelia's closet and his departure for England. Thus Hamlet manifests at least two different kinds of inspiration.

There are three levels of inspiration to be considered in relation to melancholia, imaginatio, ratio, and mens. The first stage of inspired melancholia resides in the imagination, and may perhaps be seen as related to Horatio's comments when Hamlet first encounters the ghost. This 'imagination' may relate to Hamlet's 'feelings', imaginings or 'inspired knowings', which prove to be correct. The second stage seems most relevant to Hamlet's behaviour before he sees the cherub, this gives a 'knowledge of natural and human things; thus we see a man suddenly become a philosopher'. The knowledge of the cherub indicates that Hamlet is conversant with the angelic hierarchies, the cherub being the next level up afther the Thrones that the inspired melancholic equates with. This acknowledgement indicates the third stage, as does Hamlet's spiritual outlook after his return from the sea journey, suggesting that he is conversant with a divine plan, because 'when the soul soars completely to the intellect it ... learns the secrets of divine matters, as for instance the law of God, the angel hierarchy, and that which pertains to the knowledge of things and the soul's salvation.'

It would seem then that Shakespeare has dramatised the three stages. The first stage is that period of imagination and knowing, surrounding the appearance of the ghost. From Hamlet's encounter with the ghost and his exclaimed 'O my prophetic soul!', his actions, which are based on his 'inspired knowings', become more and more assured. His dealings with Polonius over the plan to lose Ophelia to him; his confrontation of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern with the

reason for their visit; his harping on about Polonius to Ophelia; his illustrated knowledge about his trip to England; this assured behaviour and inspired knowing all indicate the second stage of inspiration. Whilst, as I have noted, Hamlet's reference to the cherub before leaving for England, together with his new, less personal, philosophy upon his return, indicate the third stage of inspiration. Shakespeare has dramatised areas of inspiration which seem to overlap, to contain three kinds of inspiration. In this context then perhaps we should pay attention to Hamlet's own doubts and concerns about the ghost and his resulting procrastination while he struggles to understand the nature of the ghost, and the source of his own inspiration. This represents a very real problem. The melancholic was susceptible to inspiration from a variety of sources, the inspired Saturnian melancholic, doubly susceptible. Knowing whether to resist or obey this inspiration is essential to the welfare of Hamlet's soul, and Hamlet can move forward with total confidence only after he has seen the cherub, when it is beyond doubt that the inspiration he receives is of an angelic nature. Once Hamlet has returned from England, having attained the third and highest level of inspiration, his motivation to slay Claudius is no less than before. What has changed is his attitude to the task ahead, no longer personal or avenging, and with no further frenzied outbreaks. Hamlet undertakes, in an almost orderly fashion, to execute Claudius if the opportunity should arise, as the scourge of Heaven rather than as a blood-thirsty avenger prompted onwards by a ghost, baying for revenge from Hell.

Thus we see Hamlet move from his original Saturnian Melancholia, when he 'waxes desperate with imagination', when he is linked to Hell and the demonic by both Ophelia's description and his own words, through a period of second sight and inspired perception guiding him

through the plots and intrigues laid by Claudius, Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

For our more comprehensive understanding of Hamlet's 'antic disposition' our understanding of the melancholic's furor has been essential, making it relatively simple for us to distinguish between the cool control of the actor and the heated ravings of the furor.

Hamlet's 'what a piece of work is man' links him firmly with Pico and the Hermetic tradition and his potential role as a natural magus, but although all this contributes considerably to our understanding of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and Wittenberg, and a possible Bruno connection, this part of Shakespeare's concealed plot still holds much that is enigmatic.

Bearing all this in mind we can see that Hamlet's expressed concern of demonic possession is a very real problem, not merely procrastination. Hamlet passes through this worrying phase and saves his soul, but his perception of a higher order is not enough to save his life. Wilson Knight says that 'Hamlet is not flesh and blood, he is spirit of penetrating intellect ... He has seen the truth, not alone of Denmark but of humanity, of the Universe'[9]. Indeed it is perhaps his perception of himself as a part of a universal plan that contributes to his death, purging all that is poisoned and cankered in Denmark in the last frantic moments of his life, nominating as his successor Fortinbras, the only man whose behaviour suggests a warrior-king, who is perhaps the most natural successor to the previous warrior-king, old Hamlet. Wilson Knight sees this as Hamlet's chief role, he says Hamlet is commanded to 'heal, to cleanse, to create harmony.'[10].

And so the play ends, the opening fears of the night watch, that Fortinbras will take the kingship as his own are fully realized.

The result of a duel fought thirty years previously has been reversed, the combatants both dead, only one heir survives. (This is perhaps the 'return of epochs' that Agrippa suggests is a part of the melancholic's vision.) In the interim, murder, intrigue, and incest have held sway, and it has taken until the very last moments of Hamlet's life to rid Denmark of the ignoble Claudius. Whether a less 'inspired' man could have toppled Claudius from power and cleansed the state of Denmark, whilst becoming an impersonal scourge of heaven and remaining blameless, is hard to say, but it is certain that Hamlet would not have survived so far without his inspiration and Cherub to guide him. He is only safe when Claudius doubts his knowledge and intent. As soon as Claudius is sure that Hamlet somehow knows the truth, he acts. But it is as difficult for Claudius to murder Hamlet at the court of Elsinor as it is for Hamlet to murder Claudius.

True to our original impression of him, Claudius delegates, firstly to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, but they are not up to Hamlet's standards - he is warned and thus armed. Again Claudius delegates, this time to Laertes, but in case Laertes should fail, Claudius too will take precautions. The poisoned drink kills Gertrude and is partially responsible for killing Claudius, whilst the poisoned rapier kills Laertes and Hamlet, and is partially responsible for the death of Claudius. So Claudius and Laertes are like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern 'hoist on their own petar'.

It is almost inconceivable that anybody should manage to avoid the number of plots and intrigues laid against their life as Hamlet does. At the end of the play we are left with the knowledge that he knew all was not well with the duel and somehow it threatened his safety. Even then his death could have been avoided, had he listened

to his innermost promptings. Hamlet actually chooses death, or tantamount to chooses it. His choice has not been of the same nature as Timon's, but rather he gives up the effort of staying alive and having to continually outwit Claudius. As an inspired melancholic of the highest order, Hamlet has glimpsed the universal truth, and as such as ascended to the level of the Thrones, thus equating with a natural magus. Undoubtedly these abilities would make him an awesome monarch, but having reached the most elevated form of the 'inspired' melancholic, and thus a natural magus, there is no real scope or motivation for personal development. Having glimpsed a universal truth in spiritual matters, and fulfilled his task, Hamlet's only course would be to follow the path of Prospero in learning to manipulate these powers. Hamlet cannot relinquish them as does Prospero, they are a part and parcel of himself, he cannot become uninspired, and thus cannot live as merely human in a human, mortal and flawed world. Being unable to move back, Hamlet must move forward on his own course. That course demands the end of his physical life or promises spiritual danger if he tries to utilize his powers in the way Prospero does. In this context Hamlet's 'inspired' melancholia, his ability to be a natural magus, is almost a contributing factor to his death. Timon's role, as alchemist, alchemical-magus, positively demands his death. Hamlet's as a natural magus more or less inspires it.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 5 SATURNIAN MELANCHOLIA

1. Daniel Banes, The Provocative Merchant of Venice.
2. Frances Yates, The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age, p.34.
3. Frances Yates, The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age, p.34 and Giorgi, De Harmoni Mundi, which Yates cites (1.4.iv-v).
4. Frances Yates, The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age, p.23.
5. Frances Yates, Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition, p.28.
6. Frances Yates, Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition, p.88.
7. Frances Yates, Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition, p.88.
8. Agrippa, De Occulta Philosophia trans. Klibansky, Panofsky & Saxl Saturn and Melancholy, pp.355-7.
9. Wilson Knight, The Wheel of Fire, p.38.
10. Wilson Knight, The Wheel of Fire, p.20.

CHAPTER 6 THE MAGUS

In the preceding chapters I have suggested that Timon, Hamlet and Prospero could be seen to be magi. It may seem inappropriate to suggest that such disparate characters may be grouped together under a common title, but each in his own way fulfils the criteria of the magus.

The basis of their common-ground is in the austere life-styles each assumes, either by choice or by the circumstances in which they find themselves. Prospero on his island is divorced from the courtly opulence that a Duke in normal circumstances would expect. His insistence upon the continued chastity of Ferdinand and Miranda, until they can be properly married, is an extension of this austerity. The exile of Cupid and Venus from the conjured masque together with the words of the conjured goddesses emphasise this point, should we misunderstand or fail to notice the pointed omission.

Timon departs from Athens and his life-style undergoes a most dramatic and radical change. By choice, he moves from opulence, greed, and wealth to a threadbare existence where he prays for a 'root'. His new attitude comes as a reaction to the attitudes and appetites of his fellow Athenians. With his discovery of gold Timon has the financial resources to return to Athens and its dissolute life-style, but his new heart-felt morality makes this impossible to contemplate or to undertake, even in the cause of putting his gold into circulation in Athens.

Hamlet does not physically withdraw from the court at Elsinore, but his attitude, inspired melancholia, and furor places a divide between himself and the rest of the court. His attack on Ophelia in the nunnery scene; his disgust with the marriage of Gertrude and

Claudius; his admission of his own flaws and repulsion with the physical world all mark his withdrawal.

Thus Timon, Hamlet, and Prospero all represent one particular notion of the magus, and this notion is primarily the 'good', austere, and holy where physical abstinence is a major feature.

The ability of the magus to tame or control his own physical human nature and appetites implies, because of the microcosm/macrocosm philosophy, a control over nature. We are all probably cognizant with the contradictory notion of the would-be magus, who by the over-indulgence of his own physical nature, hopes to plumb its depths, and thus understand and utilize its power. This understanding again because of the microcosm/macrocosm philosophy was also thought to give power over nature.

The best examples we have of renaissance magi lie in the realms of history and not myth, other than that all history is myth. The men considered by their contemporaries to fulfil the necessary criteria of magi, numbered amongst their brotherhood, Hermes Trismegistus, Pico, Ficino, Cornelius Agrippa, Giordano Bruno and John Dee. The writings and teachings of previous magi were consulted, refined and expanded upon. Thus the notions and body of literature to be consulted expanded and evolved.

For Shakespeare and his contempiraries, the concept of the magus who could scale the ladder to the stars and beyond, was not a grand fiction. Rather with the imprisonment of Bruno, Agrippa, Dee, and Kelley, the execution of Bruno, and the mob which rioted against Dee, it became more a grand fact. It was a concept to be feared or contemplated but not negated.

The magus was not merely a repository of esoteric knowledge and extensive learning. He knew how to put this knowledge to practical

use. The overwhelming problem of public image that confronted the would-be-magus or demi-god, resided in the origin of his power. This arose in part from the Christian belief that the serpent had been the source of both knowledge and evil in Eden and thus any further pretension to knowledge and power involved the practitioner in some kind of pact with serpentine supernatural forces. It was accepted that these supernatural forces were both 'good' and 'bad', but it was generally thought that power was granted by the forces of evil. In this context the magus was considered a challenger to the power of God rather than an erudite scholar partaking of the nature of that same power which, in terms of Gnosticism, was his birthright. Thus a dilemma confronted the would-be magus: if he wished to reach the elevated level of the angelic hierarchies, and elude contamination by the forces of evil, he must pursue, and be seen by his contemporaries to pursue, an exemplary life-style untouched by the corruption of the flesh, the world, or the devil.

As I have already noted, the source of the power and motivation of the man involved with this supernatural power was the crux of the matter. It was thought that the powers of good would resist manipulation in the realm of self-centered self-interest, whilst the powers of evil would lend themselves to such a role, in an attempt to win more souls for Satan. Thus the alchemist, who was a magus in that he was able to use the powers of nature and supernature to transmute lead to gold, was viewed with great suspicion. Even a desire to create the philosopher's stone, because of the immense powers that were thought to be attached to its possession, could be considered in a derogatory light as reference to Ben Jonson's The Alchemist will illustrate. The essence of all worry surrounding the magus lay in the morality of the origin and use of his power.

If man were to aspire to possess god-like and almost absolute power, then man must possess a god-like outlook.

The negative aspects of the would-be magus are dramatised by Marlowe in Dr Faustus. Faustus says that he aspires to be a demi-god, and his ambition for power seems to reside in the possession of the power itself. To this end Faustus is prepared to sell his soul for all perpetuity. He signs his soul over to the devil, and with his newly granted abilities proceeds on a path of decline, pandering to petty self-interest on his own behalf, and on the behalf of others who are no more visionary than himself. He utilizes his position of demi-god to play simple-minded and practical jokes on a Pope and to provide grapes for a pregnant woman. His power proceeded from a source of evil, which permits him to take a short-cut and may equally be seen to contribute to his ultimate downfall in that he did not have the qualities necessary to deal with such a situation.

Dr Faustus exemplifies all that terrified the Elizabethans in connection with occult philosophy. The direct reference to Agrippa, followed by Faustus' bond with Lucifer, and then his downfall culminating in the discovery of his mutilated body and the attached horrors of perpetual torment in Hell, fulfilled the expectations attending such subjects. To be fair to Marlowe, he does not suggest that once Faustus had started his path downward he was damned. There is a presence of good in the play which Faustus could reach for, if he were prepared to renounce Lucifer and his pact and accept the consequences. Faustus seems caught between superior powers of good and evil. In attempting to reach for and gain these powers for himself, he over-reaches his own ability. Whether it is a moral, an intellectual, or even a spiritual ability may be debated. Being unable to manipulate these powers for himself, he is himself

manipulated by them. He can never make them act on his behalf; marriage, in that it relates to the sacraments, is forbidden, as indeed is everything relating to the power opposing evil. Faustus is trapped in subservience whichever road he treads, his only real choice is in which master he will choose to serve. He may deal with the supernatural in the sphere of Mephistophilis and Lucifer, but his dealings are never from a position of power or equality. Faustus takes on more than he can handle with tragic consequences. Dr Faustus is the portrait of a dabbler, not the portrait of a magus. Faustus' dilemma represents man's vulnerability and inadequacy when dealing with the supernatural forces surrounding him, particularly those forces that are seen as malign and associated with evil.

Hamlet's understanding that evil spirits and devils can assume the shape of angels, and walk as the ghosts of the loved and departed, is a central worry when he considers the demands of the ghost. Knowing that his melancholia makes him prone to spiritual invasion, he expresses the concern which Faustus should have both understood and expressed. Like Faustus Hamlet is a student of Wittenburg University. Hamlet expresses a determination not to allow the devil to entrap him, or to allow a similar fate to befall him. The major difference between the attitude of Faustus and Hamlet resides in Faustus' hopes to equal a god, and thus to resist and manipulate supernatural power to his own advantage. Hamlet asks for no power, is aware of the pitfalls of any such supernatural power and only slowly discovers that he has some kind of supernatural vision and, with the cherub, some form of protection. Hamlet expresses the fear that Faustus personifies, his wary attitude is no more than good sense under the circumstances, but nevertheless he is endowed with supernatural powers and his final philosophic stance shows he has

risen to a role of spirituality and self disinterest that is required of any magus, natural or learned. Faustus is never seen to manifest such a philosophic or disinterested role. At no point in the play does Faustus think in any terms other than the self. He is unable to distance himself from the particular and partake of the universal. Marlowe's play acknowledges the powers of the supernatural but he portrays man as too puny to deal with or handle them, even a man of the intellectual stature of Dr Faustus.

Ben Jonson too was interested in the supposed pursuit of esoteric knowledge that thinly veils self-interest. In The Alchemist the powers of the supernatural do not entangle and gull man. Instead it is greedy and avaricious man who gulls equally greedy men, and who would in turn have the power to gull others. Jonson portrays, in a rather abstracted way, a chain of reaction that parodies the alchemical chain of reaction. The alchemist of Jonson's play is just one link in a chain of greed and self-interest. The play does not set out to dramatize or illustrate the higher aims of alchemy, or the spiritual rigours or the enlightenment which the truly self-disinterested alchemist was thought to rise to. Rather, it is a dramatisation of the lowest level to which alchemy and those involved with it could sink, merely another method which a money-hungry charlatan could, or would, employ in order to capitalize upon that almost universal characteristic, human greed. The alchemist of Jonson's play is no more lofty than Faustus, both operate from extremes of self-interest whether that self-interest is one of materialistic gain for Subtle and company, or ego food for Faustus. Neither character operates for the universal good. Neither play suggests a place or function for the characters concerned which might mediate toward any real universal harmony or higher order of morality.

Such a function or theme is possible, there are plays which focus upon a more disinterested and universal viewpoint, but these plays represent the negative side of the would-be magus and alchemist. They illustrate both the horror and disrepute with which such practices had come to be viewed. They deal with the degrading effect of man upon the lofty and high ideals of the abstract. While other plays hint at 'good' and 'bad' supernatural power, three of Shakespeare's plays, The Tempest, Timon of Athens, and Hamlet deal directly with the alternative visions of the different magi. In The Tempest he portrays the all-powerful magus, in Hamlet he portrays the Saturnian Melancholic and connected themes, the inspired 'natural' magus fulfilling to some degree Pico's vision of 'man as magus', while in Timon of Athens he focusses upon the alchemist. Whatever external form Timon's power takes it will, in the end, act for the best interest of the society of Athens. All he suffers and inflicts is done in the name of a higher moral order and for the universal good.

It is noticeable that Timon's change in attitude and wealth is accompanied by a change of circumstance. His life in the wood outside the city is marked by a frugal diet of 'water' and 'root'. Gone is the over-indulgence and over-opulence of his former days. The degree of austerity and isolation that is Timon's new regime, is not called for merely by his reduced circumstances, or his fall from accompanying power. It is not external circumstance dictating his new stance but internal circumstance. Timon's austerity and frugal ways are an extension of his state of mind, but they are also allied to the period of frugal austerity that the magus must go through before he can hope to conquer nature through the 'holy' path. In their own ways, both Hamlet and Prospero go through an equivalent negation of the physical and over-indulgent habits of their former

lives. Having returned to Denmark from Wittenberg, Hamlet seems to disapprove of the drunken practices of the Danish court, and on numerous occasions he states his disinterest in the physical, 'the earth seems to me a sterile promontory ... This most excellent canopy, ... - Why it appeareth nothing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.' (2.2.298-303). Prospero, removed from all the pomp and circumstance of courtly life, has no real choice in the matter and his demands for chastity in the relationship between Ferdinand and Miranda conforms to the vision of the 'holy' magi. Hamlet too is obsessed with chastity, his 'nunnery' attack on Ophelia and his demands that Gertrude refrain from any sexual activity with Claudius illustrate this. Timon in his isolated circumstances, within and without Athenian society, is noticeably celibate.

The true magus is able to utilize and harness the powers of nature to bring about a change in nature itself. The alchemical magus motivated by self-interest, the acquisition of personal wealth and power, was adjudged immoral or bad. Timon's actions superficially indicate a considerable degree of self-interest, he seems to desire that those who have militated against him should suffer the hate he wishes on them. In homeopathic medicine derived from Paracelsus, an application of the poison that afflicts the body and causes disease, is used as an effective cure. This is the nature of Timon's medicine, by an application of the Athenian poison in the form of the discovered gold, he effects the cure which his generosity, love and philanthropic behaviour could not effect, indeed which his philanthropic behaviour made more remote.

Thus, in the question of Timon as a Magus, our understanding of his character, his morality, and his steadfastness of purpose, are delineated to some extent by the outcome of his actions; the

transmutation of Athens, the purging away of all that is corrupt in society, by a purging of the symbolic leaders of that society, and the replacing of that regime with the leadership of the honourable Alcibiades.

That Timon's alchemical powers are used to redeem the base metal of Athenian society for a greater and universal good, reveals Timon to be an example of the notional 'good' magus. As the alchemical redeemer of Athens Timon is linked with the spiritual redeemer of man, Christ. This link surfaces more than once in the play, particularly in the case of the 'last supper' of Timon's brotherhood. The magus, by the use of his power and knowledge, strives for a position parallel to that of a god. In initiating a redemption of Athenian society by alchemical means, Timon can be seen to occupy a parallel position to that of Christ.

Prospero's use of power also raises serious questions. His treatment of Ariel and Caliban as servants shows him to be a hard task master. His treatment of Ferdinand seems needlessly unkind, whilst his attitude toward the three conspirators, Caliban, Trinculo, and Stephano, suggests that he and Ariel take a degree of pleasure in their sufferings.

Prospero's delight at the potency of his spell inflicting punishment and madness upon Alonso and the other guilty men also hints at a perverse pleasure in their sufferings. Just as Timon may seem to act from disillusion and misanthropy, so Prospero may be seen to act in spiteful revenge or malice, using his immense powers only to satisfy the needs of his ego. The vision that indicts either Timon or Prospero as petty minded or self-interested, has failed to note the broader concepts. Both men have a mission to redeem a corrupt society. By different means they strive to remove the

corruption endemic in the society and initiate a reformed society built on more enduring values. Hamlet also finds himself with such a task. He must topple Claudius from power and avenge his father's murder, making way for the fitter king in whom past quarrels will be resolved. Such a theme, relating in all three cases to a universal good, requires the intercession and action of man who is more than mortal. The task is on a supernatural scale, the redemption of kingdoms, and only men with supernatural powers are capable of such.

In Timon's world, and with his method, death is a constructive part of the cycle. Death clears the old and corrupt, and makes a place for the new society. On Prospero's island death could be a simple remedy, if he were content to annihilate the opposition, there would be no need of his show of power. But it is not Prospero's plan to kill his old enemies and thus become contaminated with their blood. He requires another kind of end, the end of a system whereby the Antonio's of this world can wield such power because of the greed and jealousy of others. The ideals of Shakespeare's magi then diametrically oppose the ideals of Jonson's alchemist. Shakespeare's magi set about reforming the flaws of man that Jonson's alchemist feeds upon. Without removing anything from the grasp of Alonso, who has become a feudal overlord to Milan, Prospero safely replaces Miranda in her rightful position. Just as he has told Miranda that he has done all for her sake, so he acts. His sometimes musical soul-cleansing of Alonso follows upon a symbolic baptism, initiated by Ferdinand. This precedes Ariel's announcement, in alchemical terms, that Alonso is 'sea changed' and contributes to the safety of Miranda while preparing the way for the rest of Prospero's plan.

The love-match between Ferdinand and Miranda is the most important single element of Prospero's plan. If it is possible for him to tie

Ferdinand and Miranda together, irrevocably, by the bonds of love, then Prospero's plan can proceed. His apparently paradoxical behaviour in relation to the love between Ferdinand and Miranda bears this out.

The success of Prospero's plan is brought about by his mastery of the supernatural. He has the aid of Ariel and his wonderful assortment of tricks, and he is guided as to the time and possibility of success by the stars and some higher order. Prospero is guided by an external source much as Hamlet is. The difference is that Prospero can correctly read the signs and, having read them, acts accordingly, dismissing nothing as the forebodings of a woman. When Prospero renounces his power, Shakespeare has him list the startling number of supernatural devices he has at his command. The list is daunting, and includes much that we would not expect the 'good' or 'holy' magus to have dealing with. However when we see the way in which Prospero uses that power, if any of it is bad, then he almost negates that 'badness' by his ability to utilize it for the universal good.

Hamlet, like other revenge tragedies, details the removal of a corrupt system and its replacement with a new and uncorrupted system. It is rarely a part of this convention that the chief protagonist or hero should live to be the basis of this new order. It is often the case that any such hero would himself become contaminated by the very nature of the task he must perform. Hamlet could have been the exception, had he escaped Laertes' poison rapier. In his attempts to overthrow Claudius, Hamlet does not resort to massive blood baths. At the end of the play when such a blood-bath has taken place, it has not been as a result of any plot or action on the part of Hamlet. Rather it has resulted from apparent inactivity

on his part, and is the direct result of a double plot against his life by Claudius. Hamlet, in needing to establish the genuineness of the ghost and its accusations, reveals himself to Claudius, and from that point of revelation both know that the other knows. The play, 'The Murder of Gonzago' - called by Hamlet 'The Mouse Trap', is the start of a game of cat and mouse between Claudius and Hamlet. In the process of this game the innocent and guilty perish alike. Polonius is the first and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are the last before the final scene. Hamlet is undoubtedly directly and indirectly responsible for the deaths of those caught up in the game, but his degree of responsibility is shared by Claudius whose own plans and stratagems have been the reason for Hamlet's initial involvement.

Hamlet, rather than degenerate into a revenger with blood-lust and overwhelming personal ambition, evolves into an 'inspired' Saturnian Melancholic, experiencing visions of the cherub of the angelic hierarchies. After his return from the sea-journey Hamlet's view of Denmark, Claudius, and his mission, has become very nearly impersonal. He no longer talks of the murder of his father but of the murder of his king. He no longer talks of personal revenge but of the eradication of the evil that Claudius represents.

However, even Hamlet's 'inspired' status does not enable him to fulfil his mission and remain alive. This, it would seem, is the result of two issues. First is Hamlet's new found philosophy; believing that there is 'a Providence in the fall of a sparrow' he adopts a fatalistic attitude and gives way to the 'Divinity' which 'shapes our ends rough-hew them how we may.', but in adopting this new philosophy he intentionally subdues the warnings of his heart and mind, the warnings that are a part of inspiration. It is also noticeable that Hamlet's 'inspired' condition does not put immense

power in his hands. His link to the angelic hierarchies makes inspiration available to him through his feelings, but does not give a catalogue of abilities such as Prospero commands. Hamlet can receive but not transmit.

The outcome of Hamlet's behaviour is that Fortinbras takes the throne. He does this at the express wish to Hamlet. It has been suggested by Michael Bogdanov in the Channel 4 TV Workshop 'Shakespeare Lives', that Fortinbras is no more than an opportunist lurking on the edges of the play, and Elsinor, with a practised army waiting for an opportunity to take Denmark. At the opening of the play we note that the night-watch talk of the death of King Fortinbras, and Hamlet's victory. King Hamlet walks in the armour he wore thirty years previously. Old Hamlet and Old Fortinbras were similar kings, both were prepared to risk their lives in pursuit of land or perhaps an ideal. We see young Fortinbras mirror this code. Claudius, like the spider at the centre of his web, has agents, spies, and others he is prepared to risk or sacrifice to his own ends. Hamlet is a thinker, almost a philosopher, who may be prepared to risk his life for what he considers right, but does not convey the impression of the warrior king, the sort of king Old Hamlet was and that young Fortinbras will be.

In clearing the ground for Fortinbras and giving him his dying voice, Hamlet's activities have permitted a king, one who will resolve old arguments between Norway and Denmark. A king to form one united empire where once there were two warring nations, to take the throne. Furthermore, the man who will rule over this empire is directly descended (philosophically) from the two previous rulers. Fortinbras, more than Hamlet, observes the same mode of behaviour and statesmanship as did his own father and Old Hamlet. His creation as king thus returns the order that is already accepted as best, the

tradition of leadership temporarily interrupted by the intervention of Claudius. In this way a return to completeness is brought to Denmark, indeed not only a return to completeness, but also the promise of peace and harmony with an old enemy.

Prospero, Timon and Hamlet can be seen to work for the universal good, all three play a pivotal role in establishing kingdoms that promise greater peace and harmony than those they replace. As magi of differing kinds, they use the power available to them as best they can, to bring about the establishment of a better society at the end of the plays than was present at the start. In this context, then, they must be seen as 'good' or 'holy'. Particularly so, since in the process of the establishment of these new empires, all that has been presented by each particular drama as corrupt is purged away or rendered impotent by their actions.

The austerity of the life styles of all three, together with their withdrawn, or even disgusted in the case of Timon and Hamlet, attitude to the material and sensual delights of society, further indicates this point.

The relationship between God, or the gods, and all three varieties of magi is stressed. Perhaps the most overtly Christian is Hamlet. Hamlet appeals to the 'good' angels to defend him and there are direct references to either Hell or Purgatory. Hamlet's power gives him vision, he can see past the everyday, but little, apart from his human power, will influence the outcome of things. As an inspired Saturnian Melancholic, Hamlet has had this condition thrust upon him, with no opportunity, time, or perhaps inclination to develop, refine, or sharpen these powers. His references to 'a divinity', his spiritual outlook, his vision of himself as a scourge of Heaven, all reinforce his link with God. His attitude to suicide suggests this is a Christian God.

Timon too talks of a higher hierarchy, but he appeals to the 'gods' in plural, and his mode of treatment for the correction of the flaws of society, the annihilation of all that does not fit with his ideal, is very ruthless for a Christian God to be a party to. It is however possible to see Timon as a redeemer whose behaviour parallels that of Christ, and in this way Timon becomes directly linked to Christ and through Him to a Christian God.

Prospero's insight and his opportunity to make his powers work for him also come from an ambiguous source. Although Providence, Divinity and Fate all have a place in Prospero's world, as they do with Hamlet, it is never overtly stressed that there is a Christian God behind them. Prospero's use of Ariel, music and the other pagan or apparently demonic practices that he lists, do not help to suggest a Christian God or a truly Christian magus, however it is clear that although Prospero may reign like a god on this island, he is not the ultimate in power.

The numerology involved in The Tempest with the symbolism of the Christian power number, three, conveys the implicit Christian message. The mock baptism initiated by Ferdinand, and the renewed men and clothes, further substantiates this point.

In these plays we are presented with two kinds of magi from Christian worlds, and a third from a Greek world that in some ways parallels the redemption of mankind by Christ. In all three plays the figure of Christ, or God, or both, has a part to play, and none of these magi are at odds with this deity or its power. There is no suggestion that they vie with God for power, rather all three are in league with the 'good' powers, they apply to them for aid and guidance and serve them.

In none of these plays is evil triumphant. The power of good

is always triumphant as a universal harmony descends. In the cases of Timon and Hamlet their lives are a part of the price. For Shakespeare it would seem that the magus and his powers is less a subject for ridicule than it was for Marlowe or Jonson. Shakespeare's heroes may fall victim to the immense powers of the universe, but they seem to do so knowingly and willingly, unsentimental about relinquishing the physical world with which they have become disenchanted.

Shakespeare's dramatisation of this and associated themes, in comparison with Marlowe or Jonson, reveals a more profound vision. He is less skeptical, and perhaps more capable of coming to terms with the abstract qualities that such themes require and possess. Shakespeare's portraits of the magus express an optimism where Marlowe's and Jonson's seem to suggest pessimism and disillusionment. Whether Shakespeare believed all he wrote is not the point in question, what it seems to me is that he treated such subjects with a degree of reverence and depth of vision and sensitivity. His magi are true magi, they are neither money-hungry dupers, nor are they ego-centred. They neither use, nor even try to use their powers for personal gain or self-aggrandisement. Hamlet and Timon perish, and Prospero's thoughts will henceforth be of death.

Shakespeare's magi partake of, or believe in, a divine vision implying immortality in the creation of a new improved order, completely unlike the immortality threatening Faustus. The characters of Jonson and Marlowe face the known with trepidation and horror, while Shakespeare's magi can face even the unknown having fulfilled the codes of honour and practice expected of their exalted station. In this context Shakespeare's magi are lofty in behaviour, expectations and aspirations. They represent, even in

death, the 'holy' magus, in tune with nature and supernature, they accept, rather than confront or resist these higher powers.

Shakespeare chooses to depict the magi as men prepared to renounce the physical world in the interests of that physical world, and thus places them in opposition to the ego-centered, degraded characters depicted by Jonson and Marlowe who endorsed contemporary popular thought. Jonson's characters can only hope to prosper in the physical world and Faustus fears death in the knowledge that he is inevitably, irrevocably and eternally damned to Hell. In portraying Timon, Hamlet and Prospero as he has done, Shakespeare does not deny the faults of man but refutes the implication that all men are wholly bad and can only be further corrupted by contact with supernatural powers and agents. His magi can rise above the particular and become at one with the universal. Life in the physical world holds no further promise and life in the spiritual and celestial world, at one with the universe, holds no threat.

CONCLUSION

In the Introduction I suggest that Shakespeare saw the role of the actor/playwright as a reflection, or an image, of the times in which he lived. In essence holding a mirror up to nature, reflecting back to his own time, and to us nearly four hundred years later, an image or a series of images giving us a fragmentary vision of the life and philosophy of that time. With reference to near contemporaries who were literary figures, artists and philosophers such as Spenser, Milton, Jonson, Marlowe, Bacon and Durer, I have suggested that the religious-philosophical debate that included the hermetic tradition or occult philosophy, is a part of this time and reflected vision.

In the earlier chapters I have sought to explore and suggest both the general and specific ways in which Shakespeare has utilized some elements of this religious-philosophical debate in his dramatic attempts to hold the mirror up to nature and supernature. There have been times when I found myself referring to, or considering relevant works of Ben Jonson, Christopher Marlowe, John Milton and Edmund Spenser, all of whom also employed this philosophy, either as an undercurrent, or as the integral core from which the rest of the work sprang. Sometimes as an illustrative device within which to say something about the flaws of man and society of that time, or man's unenviable lot in the larger plan of things.

That it is possible to use this philosophy as both a central core, and an outer frame of reference, illustrates its flexibility, catholic appeal, and in some ways subjective application. The methods by which renaissance writers and artists have employed this philosophy contrasts them not only with one another, but with Shakespeare himself.

Shakespeare's words 'comparison is odious' ring true to this day but I feel it will be productive in this instance to do the 'odious' thing. Comparing different perspectives and utilizations of the philosophy will give us some idea of the more general view, providing a backdrop against which to measure Shakespeare's involvement and treatment. Any such comparison is only possible because of the immense amount of work undertaken by the dedicated few, amongst whom Hieatt, Fowler, Yates, Nicholl, Saxl, Klibansky, Panofsky and Banes deserve special mention.

Ben Jonson's Eastward Ho!, The Alchemist and the masque Mercury Vindicated from the Alchemist at Court, illustrate a knowledge of alchemical theory. In general terms Jonson's approach is to use this alchemical theory to expose the flaws of human nature and society. He does not use human nature to illustrate a positive alchemical transmutation of man, matter or society. Subtle is not used to illustrate a man who hopes to gain divine knowledge by the successful production of the philosopher's stone, neither is he portrayed as even being capable of transmuting 'base' metals into gold. His inflated promises to patrons and clients, play upon the very vices that Subtle himself illustrates, avarice and greed. Although there are many references to alchemical theory and procedures in the speeches of the play, the action of the play itself does not seem to mimic the process of transmutation as does Shakespeare's Timon of Athens. Shakespeare has used the alchemical process to shape the structure of his play, whilst Ben Jonson seems to have used it as an external point of reference to illustrate the integral theme of human greed. That Timon is portrayed as a misanthropist, repelled by an avaricious and corrupt society, does not allow society to escape the censure that Jonson's play levels, but rather its point

of emphasis is in reference to Timon's ill-usage and rejection by this society. Ben Jonson's play ends on a note suggesting that human nature is base, and that there is small hope of transcending it or its baser impulses. There is little or no suggestion that these flaws are purged away, but rather that being 'caught out' is the major error, and that this is punishable. Shakespeare's Timon of Athens ends on an ambiguous and very different note. His hero has disappeared, it is presumed he has died and somehow managed to bury himself. All that remains is a stone, bearing an enigmatic epitaph. The society that induced Timon's misanthropy has undergone radical 'physik', it has been purged, and a new order captained by Alcibiades is established. The ending of Timon of Athens holds out hope for the future of Athens, in this it is optimistic, whilst Ben Jonson's conclusion although perhaps not pessimistic is at least cynical. Shakespeare's Timon of Athens is a 'black' drama, in some productions the second half of the play has proved as hard for the audience to endure as it is for Timon, but even in this point it is totally in tune with alchemical theory and practice, it is positive in its promise. Jonson's more light-hearted approach, if equally appalled by the flaws in man's make-up, holds out no immediate hope for a remedy or 'physic' that will correct those flaws and make way for a more enlightened and redeemed society. Jonson's alchemist succeeds in nothing, Shakespeare's transmutes society itself to more closely resemble the brotherhood of which Timon talks at the outset of the play. In this then Shakespeare's use suggests the positive aspects of alchemy. Of all the characters in his play Timon is the one with whom we are invited to sympathise and relate, add to this Shakespeare's over-all dramatic structure in Timon of Athens and we cannot help but see that his use of alchemical imagery and theory

is of a much greater dimension that Jonson's, and his results more positive. The result, in an alchemical context, is that Shakespeare's approach is more positive than Jonson's. The audience endures the nigredo phase which, like some of Samuel Beckett's plays, is painful to endure. Shakespeare has included the audience in the process of transmutation as was the aim of the alchemical parable. I have quoted Nicholl on this point in my chapter on Alchemy. In this way Shakespeare illustrates the higher level and aspiration of alchemy whilst Jonson is less lofty.

In Dr Faustus Christopher Marlowe depicts a man of great intellectual ability brought low by superior supernatural powers. Faustus, in striving for the role of demi-god, foresakes God in order to gain power from Lucifer. Once the pact is signed Faustus seems to consider himself lost to the powers of evil, his attempt to gain supernatural powers places him in a powerless position. Marlowe's play implies that the role of demi-god can only be achieved through a pact with the superior forces of darkness, and that man cannot aspire to this level through the powers of light. Faustus' petty behaviour once he has signed the pact and acquired the powers he sought, degenerates to the level of elaborate and theatrically staged school-boy pranks. He is now farther from the position of a demi-god than before he embarked on his quest for such a position. Marlowe's play, it seems to me, suggests that the position of a morally qualified demi-god is impossible. He further seems to imply that man is but a puny creature who will be outwitted and out-manoeuvered by the powers of evil. If he tries to transcend his human nature to partake of the powers that relate to the supernatural, he will be held in the chains of that human nature with no hope of elevation. If he decides to follow the powers of light there is no

hope of elevation, because the view of such an elevation is as 'evil' pertaining to the devil, and thus no holy alternative is available. Thus Marlowe's play implies that only through pacts with the devil is supernatural power available, and then it is only the spectre of power.

Shakespeare has depicted more than one magus, Cerimon in Pericles, and Prospero in The Tempest, probably equating most nearly with Faustus. Both Cerimon and Prospero, like Faustus, have spent much time in study, and although Prospero voices no aspiration to be a demi-god, his rulership of the island puts him in such a position. Cerimon, however, does employ this term in relation to his knowledge and practices. It is interesting that neither Cerimon nor Prospero seem at risk from the powers of darkness because of any pact they might have made to gain any such power. Indeed Prospero's aversion to anything linked with the dark powers or evil is amply illustrated in his treatment of Ferdinand, Miranda, and Caliban, and in his references to Sycorax, and his continued insistence on chastity from Ferdinand and Miranda, and his demands for repentance from the original plotters against his dukedom. Faustus wishes to use any supernatural powers he might have to gain personal prestige and power. Any feelings that Prospero may be similarly flawed are dispelled by the end of the play. Cerimon is renowned for doing good and Prospero brings about a happy resolution to his particular task, redressing, without bloodshed, the disturbed balance in his particular microcosm. He does not do this only for himself or his daughter but, in that her relationship with Ferdinand is the beginnings of an empire recalling the Golden Age of Eden before man's fall, he is instrumental in bringing a special peace and harmony, mimicking that of the macrocosm, to the two kingdoms that are a

microcosm. Thus Prospero brings about good of almost universal magnitude.

Shakespeare seems to suggest it is possible for man to transcend his nature, and to do so without the question of pacts with the devil. That is not to say that Shakespeare ignores the powers of the devil and evil. Prospero's aversion to all that seems to represent this face acknowledges its power, even if its practitioners are not as capable as himself. Hamlet's procrastination and worry over the ghost's place of origin also reflects this point. Shakespeare seems to suggest that the power of 'good' is triumphant whilst Marlowe clearly represents the opposite viewpoint. Shakespeare's approach to the magus is benign. Marlowe's hero proves to be a shallow fool. Shakespeare's Prospero proves to be a learned and apt opponent of the powers of evil loosed in the world. Marlowe's Dr Faustus illustrates the prevalent renaissance fears and negative aspects of the occult whilst Shakespeare's represents a more positive approach, suggesting a link with the gnostic tradition and the hermetic theories of the day. In these plays Shakespeare suggests the highest level of aspiration within the gnostic-hermetic-occult philosophy - Pico's ideal of 'man as magus'.

Shakespeare's portrayal of the magus, like his portrayal of the alchemist, is hopeful and positive. Prospero's plan and power are an integral element of The Tempest, just as alchemical theory is a structural device and thus integral to Timon of Athens. Shakespeare's dramatisation of the more abstract concepts of themes related to the renaissance-hermetic tradition such as Numerology, Orphic Music, the New Eden concept, Alchemy and Saturnian Melancholia, all go to illustrate his wide area of knowledge in this field, whilst in Hamlet his specific handling of Saturnian

Melancholia and reference to the cherub, illustrate, together with the specific knowledge illustrated in Timon of Athens, the surprising degree of depth of this knowledge.

Despite the research that has been undertaken in relation to renaissance literature and drama and its links with the occult/ hermetic philosophy of the time, the need for further research is at once apparent. Particularly in the cases of Marlowe, Jonson, Milton, and Shakespeare himself. Any remarks that I have made in point of comparison are made advisedly knowing my own research and that of most others in this area is little more than sketchy.

I am unable to say how or where Shakespeare became aware of the renaissance-hermetic tradition. Numbered amongst his friends and acquaintances in court circles were others who were known to be knowledgable on the subject, and it is almost as difficult to say categorically where or how they came across such knowledge. In the case of Shakespeare I am able only to point at his work and cite it as the evidence which says that he did not only become aware but extremely knowledgeable on the subject. His knowledge, his sympathetic handling, and the dramatic resolution of his plays, all suggest more than the superficial magpie approach to knowledge pervading the court, dramatic and artistic air of that time. This leads one to suspect much but able to prove little that does not reside in the texts of his plays. To go further than this is to speculate.

Nevertheless, I hope that the preceding pages illustrate and suggest some degree of Shakespeare's intellectual involvement with the renaissance-hermetic tradition. They may be helpful in throwing another light on his plays and the time in which he lived, tempting others to look at the plays and poems with another perspective.

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