ENERGEIA

WINTER, 1984

COVER:
Self-Portrait
by Kaethe Kollwirz (1867-1945).
1924, Charcoal.

INSIDE PRINT:
La Disputa Del Sacramento
by Raphael (1483-1520). 1509-1510, Frescoe.

Photo courtesy of Vatican Museum, Vatican City, Italy.

ENERGEIA: The activity in which anything is fully itself.

ἡ...νοῦ ενέργεια ζωή...(Aristotle's Metaphysics, 1072b)

Energeia is a non-profit student magazine with an in-house circulation to the students, faculty, alumni, and staff of St. John's College, Annapolis and Santa Fe. Energeia is published thrice yearly, in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. The Fall issue is reserved for the student work of the previous school year which has been selected by the Prize Committee for public recognition. For the Winter and Spring issues the Energeia staff welcomes submissions from all members of the community--essays, poems, stories, original math proofs, lab projects, drawings, and the like.

Note: A brief description of the author accompanies all work not by current St. John's students. Please include some such statement along with your submission. Thank you.

CONTENTS

After The First Death There Is No Other

Caroline Allen

The harm that went before / I took, and it was great" (903-4)

Agamemnon opens with an agreed-upon sign and then a kind of silence. The watchman waits on the roof for a beacon that has been ten years in showing--the sign of Troy's capture. When it finally appears, he sends word to Clytemnestra, and rejoices for a moment, but says, "an ox stands upon my tongue." This gives us a better sense of the strength of his feeling than anything else could have done. Clytemnestra, too, when she receives the news, will be silent for a long time.

The old men of the chorus arrive, and, the beacon reminding them of the past that gives it its content, they remember the cause and beginning of the Trojan War. It is a song with that particular sadness of reminiscence. Their first metaphor is one of revenge for lost children (49-54), one which will become peculiarly appropriate. Before the mystery of indiscriminate death for both good and evil people, and of misery for everyone caused by so few, they can only conclude: "It goes as it goes / now. The end will be destiny" (67-8). Aged man is "a dream that falters in daylight" (82).

Clytemnestra is apparently busy among the altars; the old men turn to her, hoping for comfort: "...speak. Be healer to this perplexity" (97-99). The "perplexity" they feel is primarily over the meaning of the beacon, but also, and not less importantly, it is the perplexity they suffer as they try to understand the past. She gives them no answer; they return to the past: there was a portent of Agamemnon and Menelaus, two "kings of birds" which tore open and ate a pregnant hare. The birds which in the previous song avenged their own offspring, now destroy another's. The seer interprets this to mean that Troy will indeed fall to the Greeks, but now he is afraid that Artemis is angered at the manner in which the sign was given. The portent will be taken not simply as sign, but as a cause in itself. What it will be cause of we do not yet know, but the congenital terror of the Atreidae seems to gather itself up once more, remembering "the child who will be avenged" (155).

The old men, before they can bring themselves to go on with the story, call on Zeus for some understanding which they never receive. As if somehow to justify what is so inexplicable, they say that understanding comes through suffering. Even grace from the daimones is violent to men (180).

Now they tell of how the ships were becalmed at Aulis, the armies angered. According to the seer, the only way to placate Artemis, so that the ships can leave, was for Agamemnon to kill his daughter Iphigeneia, for the eagle himself to kill his own offspring. For the sake of the revenge of Troy, Agamemnon agrees, though he agonizes over the choice. Once it is made, however, he changes horribly (anagnos, anieros), becoming an Atreid quite in line with the family's violent tradition.

He orders his men to hold Iphigeneia silent, so that she cannot utter any curse against him. But she is trying to utter another kind of speech, her love's persuasion, not hate. In total silence the action takes place. Even the old men cannot

Caroline Allen graduated from the Annapolis campus in '79. She currently lives in Mendocino, California. All quotes in her paper are from Richard Lattimore's translation of Aeschylus' Oresteia.

bring themselves to speak of it. Once more, to convince themselves and us, they say, "those only learn to suffer" (250) as if in some way this all had to be. It is clear they have not really faced Iphigeneia's death, that they cannot.

Clytemnestra has heard all this, and to some extent, the chorus is probably speaking her thoughts. She too will be remembering all the events at the beginning of the war that has now ended. Whatever her thoughts about Iphigeneia's story, she too hopes that from this night a blessing day will be born (264-5). She tells the old men about the capture of Troy, but they are doubtful. To convince them she recreates the beacon's transmission from Mount Ida to Argos, as if she were watching it. Still watching, as it were, she sees the destruction of Troy, the chaos, the murders, the violation of the temples. She knows her man, and what she is imagining is indeed happening. Her cry "o let there be no fresh wrong done!" (374) is not hypocritical, though she herself plans a wrong; she is momentarily caught by the horror and inevitability of the last ten years and their culmination.

The chorus joins in her prayer, but clearly do not think, as she does, of how Agamemnon might be acting. The just man will be upheld, the unjust brought low. But then they begin to think of the people's misery, and are afraid that Agamemnon may have to suffer, not for anything he did to the Trojan people, but for what he inflicted on his own people. To this mood of apprehension, the Herald enters.

He announces Agamemnon's return and the defilement of the altars of Troy almost in the same breath. The Herald is boasting of this. The old men hint at something wrong in the house, presumably Aegisthus's presence, and the Herald admits that his tidings are not of unmixed joy. The war was terrible, but at least they have the glory, and can forget now.

Clytemnestra now speaks in a series of incredible ironies, where every word can be interpreted to be true, but in an opposite sense to the expected one: her joy at Agamemnon's homecoming, of her faithfulness. It was she who understood the meaning of the beacons, only she who trusted her understanding. Now she dismisses the Herald--she does not need to hear the story, she'll hear it from Agamemnon--though she knows she will never hear it, for she will kill him first. But we have seen how much she knows already. She leaves.

Though the Herald is reluctant to speak of bad things, and thereby bring evil into this happy day (636-7), he admits some more bad news--Menelaus is lost. How could one woman be the instrument of so much evil? the old men sing.

Agamemnon enters with Cassandra in tow. The old men greet him rather ambivalently at first--they are careful not to give undue praise. They admit that at first they were angry at Agamemnon for warring with Troy merely for Helen's sake--but now that they actually see him, they forget their anger and remember their love for him.

Agamemnon seems to hear none of their uneasiness. First he thanks the gods for their cooperation with him (!), and boasts of how he has ruined Troy. He sounds almost petulant as he complains about his comrades-at-arms. Clytemnestra greets him in a curious and strongly-felt speech. First she talks about how difficult it is for a wife to live at home with her husband at war, hearing every rumor about him, a prey to the worst kind of uncertainty. Here as in the speech about the beacons the vividness of her imagination is amazingly compelling, and so her speech moves us in spite of our knowledge of the murder she is about to commit. In addition, it is not unreasonable to think that this was how she really felt before Iphigeneia was killed. Then she explains that Orestes is not present because of these very fears she suffered.

> For me: the running springs that were my tears have dried
> utterly up, nor left one drop within. I keep
> the pain upon my eyes where late at night I wept
> over the beacons long ago set for your sake,
> untended left forever. In the midst of dreams
> the whisper that a gnat's thin wings could winnow broke

> my sleep apart. I thought I saw you suffer wounds
> more than the time that slept with me could ever hold. (887-94)

It is consonant with Clytemnestra's character that, even when she has to lie, she tells the truth in some sense. If her tears have dried, it is because she no longer loves Agamemnon and misses him, instead hates him, and has even ceased to cry for Iphigeneia. If she dreamed of Agamemnon's death, it was more as a plan than as a fear. Now her "suffering is past," she can act. She orders her maidens to spread out a rich purple carpet for Agamemnon to walk on. It is, for Clytemnestra, the symbol of his blood guilt, and shows the path by which Justice leads him to his death.

Agamemnon is weak: though at first he is afraid of outraging the gods (rather a hypocritical piety after his sacrileges in Troy), he does not withstand Clytemnestra. She insists that he act like what he is, a king; in effect, she is demanding that he be responsible for himself. He boasts in speech--how different is that from stepping on the carpet? It is when she appeals to his sense of superiority, however, that he yields. Clytemnestra answers his fears with defiance (958-9) commenting that in the days when she wanted to bring him home alive, she would have done more than this to accomplish it. Agamemnon is capable of speaking only in platitudes, in echoes of proverbs. Clytemnestra counters this with her knowledge of the present, her experience. Again, her concrete imagination triumphs over other characters' abstraction. Agamemnon passes into the house, the center of his blood-curse. We never see him again.

The Chorus sing of their fear of past horror. What they are most afraid of is the very thing they do not understand: the past's acting in the present. The fear they cannot identify is of the curse. They hope that if a man be well-intentioned, he will never be ruined utterly, but then they remember the finality of death, before which even Zeus is powerless, and then they are sure of nothing.

Clytemnestra orders Cassandra into the house, but Cassandra ignores her. The Queen recognizes that Cassandra is lost in "her own wild thought"--the Queen too is lost in her own. Perhaps it is at this moment that Clytemnestra determines to kill Cassandra as well as Agamemnon. She goes into the house.

Now Cassandra speaks--screams rather. She is lost in a prophetic vision: she sees the furies of the house, and Clytemnestra's murder. Her prophecies are not understood, so she explains the first: she has seen the furies of an ancient blood-guilt hanging over the house of Atreus.

This the old men understand, and they wonder at her. She tells then how Apollo made her his prophetess because of his love for her, and how, because she broke her word to him, she was never believed again. Just as the old men assure her that they do believe her, she is caught up in another vision, this time of Thyestes's children murdered, and again of Clytemnestra. Once more, the old men understand her vision of the past, but not of the future. Cassandra describes her own approaching death; again, they do not understand. Speech has failed.

One effect of this long delay between Agamemnon's disappearance and his murder is that most of our sympathy is for Cassandra. This is strengthened by her last exchange with the Chorus: they praise her courage and say it is noble to die so bravely; she counters with "Alas for you, father and for your lordly sons" (1305). In her reply we are reminded, not only of the transgressions of Paris and Agamemnon, but of the entirely inexplicable necessity of death and the heroism of man before it. Cassandra asks one thing before she dies, that Agamemnon's avengers will remember her as well. The pathos of her death is thereby unalloyed, for no one, not even Apollo, will remember her in the action to come.

The old men are singing of man's unquenchable thirst for glory when Agamemnon is struck down. The men of the Chorus dissolve in confusion, are incapable of acting. Before they can decide on anything, Clytemnestra appears over the bodies.

What follows is a kind of trial, in which Clytemnestra answers the old men's every charge, not so much with self-justification, although there is that, as with

utter defiance. I will have more to say later about this episode; for the moment, I will point out that Clytemnestra shows the pointlessness of the Chorus' threats of exile or death. She goes on to counter their lamentations for Agamemnon with a very bitter dirge for Iphigeneia. Now the old men perceive the Atreus curse in operation: they see the line of bargain with the household Fury; we must wonder if she can really appease the Fury, put the curse to sleep, or if she has really become part of it herself.

Aegisthus enters and for the first time we hear the entire story of the curse of the Atreides: Atreus, to revenge himself on his brother Thyestes, killed and served up Thyestes's children to their father, who ate them. When Thyestes discovered the truth, he cursed Atreus and fled, with the one surviving child, Aegisthus. It is this curse which the characters generally feel to be operating on them.

Aegisthus, with his boasting and lying, his cruel threats, seems completely despicable, the more so as we compare his defensive hot temper with Clytemnestra's coolness. Just as Aegisthus and the old men are coming to blows, Clytemnestra intervenes. Reminding Aegisthus that what they hope for is no more bloodshed, she shows herself sincere in this hope. Though the old men are spared, and Clytemnestra plans to bring order to the house, Aegisthus's threats reinforce the ominous ending. Blood will cry out for more blood, the Fury will never depart.

Who acts, shall endure (313)

The second play, The Libation Bearers, opens at Agamemnon's tomb. Orestes has returned with his friend Pylades to Argos; he leaves a lock of hair as a token of himself at the grave. While there, he sees a group of women, the Chorus of Libation Bearers, approaching the tomb, and recognizes his sister Electra among them. He hides.

Electra has come at her mother's order, to make propitiating libations on Agamemnon's grave. This libation is absolutely key; for instead of propitiating and quieting Agamemnon's ghost, Electra and Orestes will use the occasion to call upon the ghost as an avenging spirit. Electra does not know how to make the offering, because she and Clytemnestra mean such entirely different things by it. Clytemnestra has avenged once; now she is suffering from the perversion of life that her murder entailed. Electra has never yet acted in this way; hers is a call to action, not to rest.

The women advise her to pray for herself and Orestes, and for the coming of some avenger. There is some question for Electra as to whether this is right--the first sign of the hesitancy proponderating throughout the play. She makes the prayer, not to the gods, but to her father, asking him for the return of Orestes, in a sense the return of himself.

As the women are also praying for an avenger, Electra finds Orestes' lock of hair, and recognizes it. Then she finds his footprints, recognizes these too. Euripides was to ridicule this scene as completely far-fetched in his Electra, but the point is to express the power of the blood-kinship. There would not be the power there is in this family if blood did not speak to blood in this way. Electra recreated Orestes, in a way, parallel to the way Agamemnon's spirit is called back to power.

Orestes reveals himself to her. Together they pray to Zeus: their prayer is for the salvation of the line, in them. Orestes tells us that Apollo is on his side, in fact has even ordered Orestes to kill Aegisthus and Clytemnestra. In a rather ambiguous passage, he says that Apollo told him that if he does not kill Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, his father's furies will punish him, Orestes. The question cannot help but come up: if we believe in furies "brought to fulfillment from (the) father's blood" (284), why then have these furies not attacked Clytemnestra? It seems there is some question in Orestes' mind as well (297), but he sets

it aside; regardless of any compulsion from Apollo, "here is work that must be done." Not the least of this is the need to end his exile, to become a true member of the house, and a king.

Electra, Orestes and the Libation Bearers turn once again to the father, in prayer and lamentation. This is a summoning, a calling up of subterranean powers. One reason Orestes is hunted by furies when Clytemnestra is not is because Clytemnestra asked no help in the murder, called on no gods before it was done. Orestes and Electra waken the furies in this prayer, waken them to avenge Agamemnon, but because they are Atreidae and cursed, the furies will turn against them as well. The feeling mounts; Orestes commits himself completely (438). As the tension builds and finds expression in the stichomythia, Orestes is aware of the moral ambiguity of the situation: "Ares ('warstrength' is Lattimore's translation) shall collide with Ares, right with right" (881). And in the chorus's lyricism we hear the supernatural forces gathering: "The day of doom has waited long. / They call for it. It may come." (464-5)

The women tell Orestes of the dream Clytemnestra has had: she gave birth to a snake, nursed it, and it drew blood from her breast. Though this dream is prophetic, it is also a vision of Clytemnestra's present state. She has murdered, struck against her children, through the man who was their father, and her fertility, motherhood, is now perverted. She is the snake-mother, a snake herself. The dream is a true sign of Clytemnestra's realization that the deal with the Atreid fury has not been successful, and that by acting as party to the curse, she has succumbed to it herself.

Orestes interprets the prophecy: "I turn snake to kill her." This interpretation is striking because Clytemnestra is so often identified as a snake. Orestes's dream divination begins a change in him. In many ways he becomes very like his mother, with her strength of resolution. This identification with the mother will be crucial in the conflict between them. When she killed Agamemnon, Clytemnestra had no sense that she was destroying herself. Orestes' suffering even as he kills his mother is based on his sense of kinship, the union of their selves.

There follows the planning of the murder, a kind of false rehearsal. Orestes does not anticipate meeting Clytemnestra first, and speaks only of killing Aegisthus, though it is Clytemnestra who is the actual murderer. He does not confront her death, does not prepare himself for it, as he does for Aegisthus's. The murder to come he dedicates to the Atreides' fury, "never starved for blood." He and Electra leave for the palace.

The chorus of women sing of fearsome things bred in the earth, and of "the female force, the desperate love" (599-600). They recount stories of women who murdered their sons, their fathers and their husbands. But "Destiny hammers out the sword" (647) of vengence, a child.

Orestes and Pylades are received at the palace. Orestes asks to speak to Aegisthus; instead, Clytemnestra comes out. What we never find out is whether or not she recognizes Orestes. Either alternative is plausible. She sends word to Aegisthus to go with his men to meet Orestes (769), and this might indicate that she recognizes Orestes, but does not want the household to know. On the other hand, she has presumably not seen Orestes for fifteen years, so it would not be surprising if she did not recognize him. I think the ambiguity is probably intentional. At any rate, Clytemnestra seems not to recognize Orestes, who invents--apparently on the spur of the moment--a story: he has come to inform the parents that Orestes is dead. He asks again to see Aegisthus. Clytemnestra bursts into laments. Once again the curse has struck the house of Atreus. She leaves.

The chorus of women wonder how to help Orestes, when Cilissa, his old nurse, comes out lamenting his death, and the constant misfortune of her household. She is going to summon Aegisthus and his followers. The women tell her to bring Aegisthus alone; then they intimate to her that Orestes is actually not dead. They pray to

Zeus: "let the old murder breed no more"; to Apollo and Hermes, they pray for Orestes' success, another invocation of the gathering powers.

Aegisthus enters, oddly un-delighted by the "death" of Orestes. He is also not sure the report is true, ironically enough. He goes back to question the messenger/Orestes, and a few moments later we hear his dying cry. The women withdraw in terror. One of Aegisthus' followers emerges, trying to reach Clytemnestra. "I tell you, he is alive and killing the dead" (886). She immediately understands, and whatever remorse she may have felt about a dead Orestes, it is quenched at the thought of an avenging Orestes. To the last she will try to defend herself--"so far gone are we in this wretched fight" (891).

Orestes faces her, tells her Aegisthus is dead. Clytemnestra confronts Orestes directly with the fact of her motherhood, and succeeds so far in giving him pause that Pylades must remind him of Apollo's command. Against the gathering of gods and furies invoked behind Orestes, Clytemnestra opposes only herself, her birth-giving and her mortality. Only fighting in this way could possibly succeed, opposing death with life, and it has always been Clytemnestra's way to oppose as directly as possible, but when she now presents herself as mother, as life-giver, she lays claim to something that is no longer hers, and the attempt must fail. Surely Clytemnestra even knows this--her own dreams have told her so.

She does not give up, however, first pleading, then threatening. So strong is she that the face-off degenerates into an exchange of arguments and blame. The verbal opposition between mother and son becomes more and more removed from the situation. As if to force it, Clytemnestra reminds Orestes of his intention: "I think, child, that you mean to kill you mother" (922). Orestes' response, "It will be you who kill yourself, it will not be I", encompasses many levels of meaning: She kills herself by forcing the issue; she destroyed herself when she killed Agamemnon; she, as the bearer of her own murderer, is herself responsible for her death; Orestes has become her in order to kill her. Now all is truly decided. Clytemnestra, who has faced death before, seems more sad than fearful. She reminding Orestes of who he really is, he reminding her of her crime against him, they enter the house. Clytemnestra is silent when she dies.

Now that the vengeance is accomplished, the women, the libation bearers, are moved enough to pity the dead couple. But they are happy that the "chain of bloodlettings" is ended. Here, and in their entire song, we know them to be deceived, just as Clytemnestra was deceived. There is no peace yet.

I will discuss the scene that follows in greater detail later on. Orestes reveals the bodies, and the robe that Clytemnestra used to kill Agamemnon. He proclaims his deed, just as his mother did hers, but then begins to wonder about his right. He begins to realize what lies ahead for him. At this moment, the Furies appear, to him alone. The women of the chorus think he is going mad. In agony: "You cannot see them, but I see them. I am driven / from this place. I can stay here no longer" (1061-2). Orestes leaves the stage. Now even the chorus knows nothing is over, that the "chain of bloodlettings" cannot be broken.

Swung to the red act drives the fury within your brain...(Ag. 1427)

The two murders in the first two plays of the Oresteia are murders of revenge. Both take place in the character of the avenger--alastor, in fact, both avengers are furies. It is necessary to examine the condition of the avenger which makes this act possible.

The first and most accessible consideration is the avenger's name for himself --alastor--the unforgetting one. Both Clytemnestra and Orestes are moved first of all by the memory of a death. The strength of this memory is seen in the way they can recreate in speech events at which they were not present: several times, as if

obsessed by the details; Clytemnestra, who does not often speak what is in her heart, is spoken for by the old men at the beginning of the Agamemnon, and her bitter comment:

> It must be Iphigeneia
> his child, who else,
> shall greet her father by the whirling stream
> and the ferry of tears
> to close him in her arms and kiss him. (1555-9)

attests to the vividness with which she remembers Iphigeneia's death. Both characters' speeches after they commit their murders relate entirely to the earlier murders. That Clytemnestra and Orestes should be so caught up with deaths some years distant only heightens our sense of them as characters irrevocably bound to what is past, to memory. The preeminence of the alastor in the two plays finds a dramatic embodiment in the murders hidden behind the doors, murders which affect us not by being seen but by being spoken, like the murders in the past which are not seen but nevertheless are somehow present.

This kind of identification of the self as a fury grows from the experience of death as a direct and compelling loss. A death cannot be forgotten when everything in your own life reminds you of it--when the death deprives you. As the irrevocable loss, death is therefore the most unacceptable kind of loss, since it is most painful and therefore most compelling to action, and at the same time, all action against it is futile. The person confronting the death is robbed of a final cause in any kind of action. The only case in which there seems to be a possibility of acting against the death is when a murder has been committed. Here, death itself is embodied in the murderer, its cause, and a murder for revenge assuages the avenger's loss by at least combatting it.

The need to take revenge is not a need to "see justice done," no matter how the avenger may defend his action in this manner. No one would take revenge for someone they didn't know, for whom they have no intense feelings. The character of the act, premeditated and yet recognizably an act "of passion," precludes this. Therefore, it cannot be considered that the act is in any way separate, for the avenger, from the people involved. In this same line of thought, it is clear that the identity of the person who is avenged is more important than that of the person for whom vengeance is taken.

If revenge can be seen to be founded on an experience of death as loss, what must the relation be between the avenger and the one whose death is avenged? The answer to this reveals one of the revenge murder's most common characteristics: revenge is a family affair. It is when the avenger and the one avenged are related by blood, preferably in the same family nucleus, that there exists the required intensity of feeling to commit a revenge murder. (Avenging a friend is avenging a second self.) When the avenger and the one avenged are related by blood, two things can contribute to this intensity: the proximity of people in the same family means that their interrelations go on at the deepest level in their souls, and can most affect their reason, and even where this proximity does not exist (as is the case with Agamemnon and Orestes), a blow at your blood relation is a blow at yourself, because the knowledge of shared blood gives a sense of unity which does not otherwise exist. It is clear that both Clytemnestra and Orestes feel that they have been struck at personally by the murders of Iphigeneia and Agamemnon: Clytemnestra calls her child, "my pain grown into love" (Ag. 1417); Orestes and Electra are most moved in their prayers by the thought of themselves as their father's children and at his life beyond death. There is a kind of confusion of selves in the family: individual rights conflict with one another, and just where the parent ends and the child begins is not always easy to determine. So it is within the family that death will be the most direct loss.

In the "purest" revenge, that is, the one most intensely and compellingly felt, both the one avenged and the one on whom vengeance is taken are blood relations, for

in this case the power of the avenger's original love for the one he kills gives strength to the need to kill him, and also strengthens the feeling of love for and loss of the one being avenged. The love it is not hard to imagine Clytemnestra once feeling for Agamemnon translates into a most powerful hatred when he kills their child, the more so since Iphigeneia's murder strikes not only against Clytemnestra, but against her love as well. For Orestes, the exceptional horror of Agamemnon's death is that his mother could kill the father of her own son.

As we become aware of the peculiarly family-oriented nature of revenge, it is easier to take in another aspect of it: the avenger feels compelled to do what he does. The real patron spirit of revenge is ananke, not dike. When you are struck at you must defend yourself. When the self is threatened, and the source of the threat is someone you can act against, you must act in order to live with yourself. In Clytemnestra's murder of Agamemnon, this necessity has the shape of the family fury dancing on the roof, the Atreides curse which she took on by marrying an Atreid and bearing Atreidea children; for Orestes, compulsion comes in the shape of Apollo, who threatens him with the furies' devastation. Clytemnestra and Orestes think the necessity is outside them; it is not, it is part of their ancestry. The necessity is felt, rather than completely recognized; it is in the blood, not the mind.

So it is also the unspeakableness of death that can lead you to take revenge. Language is a vehicle, and what can be put into words can somehow be sent, put away, from yourself, and so you can be free of it. But it seems impossible to contain and dispell death like this, when you face it in the way described above. Moreover, you are entirely alone in this confusion of selves, an impingement of the dead person's self-hood on your own, but whatever confusion you suffer between yourself, the living, and the dead, you face death with no others but the dead for company. Unable to speak, to free yourself, you act. When a reachable cause for death can be seen you act against that cause, in an attempt to end the confrontation.

We see revenge implicating the family: a confrontation so profound as to bring about a revenge murder can happen only when the feeling between the avenger and the one avenged is this deep to begin with. And the need for revenge is entirely compelling when the murderer, the original cause of the death, is also family, also a part of yourself, because this expresses the knowledge that, after the confrontation, death is in you somehow, that is, acknowledged, felt, granted reality, and the blow struck against death is now self-destructive as well as self-defensive. If what is suffered cannot become what is learned, it is incarnated in action. But the confronting death cannot be "learned," cannot be worked into any kind of an account; instead you recreate it.

There seems to be no adequate language for death, no vehicle of expression with which to encompass it. Clytemnestra and Orestes face something unspeakable, unknowable, when they imagine the deaths of Iphigeneia and Agamemnon, and they face it alone. Clytemnestra is silent or dissembling before she takes revenge--we can imagine ten years of wordless brooding, imagining, reliving, nightmares. Orestes says:

> "Father, o my dread father, what thing
> can I say, can I accomplish
> ...to mark
> and reach you there in your chamber
> with light that will match your dark? (L.B. 315-9)

And when he first sees the Furies, the incarnation of the revenge murder, he is incapable of communicating to the chorus of women the horror of what he sees.

You are appropriately speechless when truly confronted for the first time with death. (This is especially true for Aeschylus, who seldom makes death more fathomable by giving it a personality, calling it a god or a daimon.) This kind of confrontation happens seldom, if at all, and, if it ever happens more than once, it is never with the same force as it had the first time. This "true confrontation" is what happens when you have nowhere else to look but at death, when the death is so

close to you that you feel the existence and inevitability of your own death, when the death creates such a loss that you feel part of you really to have died. The death shatters the world, literally, into what makes you feel alive and what reminds you of death. It cuts you off from the past, irrevocably, a past which you must then protect in memory (you become an alastor), and it leaves you suspended in an unimaginable future. Truly confronting death, you look into the soul of darkness, the inexplicable, the unspeakable.

Both Clytemnestra and Orestes suffer this confrontation, and this can be seen in the two "trial" scenes of the first two plays. Both Clytemnestra and Orestes exult over the bodies, and completely reject any pity for the ones they have slain. Both are far removed from anything anyone around them can say; they are quite unaffected. Lost in their very evocative, "poetic" speech, they are never so far away, so alone and so lyrical as when they recount their murders, and remember those they have avenged.

There are some important differences. Clytemnestra is silent about Iphigeneia before the murder of Agamemnon; Orestes tries to speak of Agamemnon's death. Clytemnestra is "tried" by others; Orestes must justify his act to himself. Orestes suffers from seeing his mother dead, as Clytemnestra did not suffer from Agamemnon's death--this is the course of the eloquence and the note of sadness in Orestes' speeches. In a way, he has to now take vengeance on himself, as he suffers anew, looking on Clytemnestra dead, the confrontation with death. Clytemnestra does not re-confront death when she looks on Agamemnon--she has faced it completely before, in imagination. Last and not least, Orestes goes through a moment of hesitation, of re-consideration, that Clytemnestra presumably did not. This moment of decision brings in a possibility of choice that was not evident in the first play, and that we hardly would expect here, since Orestes acts also under Apollo's compulsion. The compulsion towards revenge is then brought into a clearer light by this juxtaposition with the choosing of revenge.

> ...signed clear in the splash of / blood over your eyes (Ag. 1429)

It seems that to take revenge resolves a situation for the avenger, relieves him of the burden death has laid on him. But the act of revenge throws you into the heart of a terrible paradox: by striking a blow against death, you only give it more credence. You have to strike back at the death that is a blow against yourself, but to strike back only acknowledges the death's power over you.

This paradox is the phenomenal flesh of an opposition of contradictories which stretches before you in the confrontation with death. The contradiction lies essentially in this: It is one's own death one faces, and is required to take in, in imagination; it is the interruption, the ceasing, of yourself as you now exist for yourself; this imagining is demanded by the confrontation, and yet is impossible. Descartes found the assurance of existence in self-consciousness: je pense (that is, I am aware of myself thinking), donc je suis. We (and Aeschylus) could find it in this way: I know I am alive, because when I imagine myself dead, the world does not appear on the same terms as it does right now. This is not really a conclusive argument. It cannot be. Your aliveness and your death together are like a transcendental illusion; your mind goes back and forth from one side to the other and cannot stop shifting, can only become aware of each side's equal power and contradictoriness. If you were never to see death, you might never know it existed, and often when you are aware of it, it is not a complete awareness; it is a limited one which permits you to ignore it. Only such a confrontation as an avenger suffers is vivid enough, powerful enough, to precipitate you into this contradiction.

Lying on top of it, closer to the surface, as it were, is a parallel contradiction, one bound to the first one. You almost always have the sense of yourself as being freely self-determined. No matter how often you tell yourself that, not only is everything in the hands of fate, the moira, but you yourself are not even

free of your own past, the hope wells up continually that it is your own self that determines your phenomenal future, that every decision is determinant. It is doom that one has to speak of, convince oneself of. Freedom is the more deeply-rooted belief. The belief in your freedom is more likely to lead you into self-deception, than the belief in your fatedness (as with Oedipus).

The chorus of old men in the Agamemnon give a fine example of this. No sooner do they mourn necessity than they say, in effect: yet I cannot believe that right action is meaningless. They turn from the inexplicable doom of the Trojan war to the meaning of the beacon. The pathos of this lies in the fact that the hope of self-determination is so continually battered in the course of the play--we see that curse everywhere.

The fundamental challenge to your belief in your freedom comes from the awareness of death. You thought you controlled your destiny--someone can cut you down like an animal, and never even know how alive you really were. (Orestes agonizes over the dehumanizing nature of the trap his mother set for Agamemnon.) In addition, after the confrontation with death, the attempt to protect the lost past results, as we have seen, in an abrogation of freedom. You thought you were free--now, challenged by death, your imagination presents you with a new picture: of every step, every seeming choice in your life taking you a step closer to your death; of your every struggle only weaving you more tightly into the net. This is different from reminding yourself that there is much acting in the world that is outside you; this is a real picture, a reality of the imagination.

The avenger decides to accept death, believe in it, and act against it. He decides to accept compulsion, and be compelled (to take revenge). He has to react towards the contradiction in some way, because he suffers so much from it, and besides, "to act is to endure." Yet, with a contradiction of this order, a transcendental illusion, deciding for one side or the other is not a real solution. Before the avenger decides, both death and life, compulsion and freedom, exist equally for him. Now all is death, all is compulsion, those are the realities, even though the heart knows they are false. Saddest of all, the mind and heart cannot surrender totally to the decision. The very presence of the one contrary suggests the other. Thought turns itself, over and over again, from the one into the other, and though the avenger's life is not committed to one side of the contradiction, it never really goes away. You acted in order to suffer no longer from the contradiction; now you discover that even after acting you suffer.

This is the opposition we find in the Agamemnon and the Libation Bearers; more shaded, harder to penetrate, more ambiguously drawn in the former; in full light, high relief, in the latter. Bearing this (the contradiction) in mind, it is clear why the sympathy for Agamemnon expressed by the old men after his death is so overpowered by the vividness and clarity of Clytemnestra's speech. She faced no contradiction after this death, this was no confrontation for her--that came when Iphigeneia was killed. Before, she did not (could not) speak of Iphigeneia's death; now she is powerfully eloquent. (I feel that one could almost rest the entire case for Clytemnestra on the extraordinary power of lines 1552-9, holding love, hatred, bitterness, exaltation and the most incredible determination not to regret, all in so brief a space.) It is not until the Libation Bearers, when we see what Orestes suffers when he thinks of his father's death, that sympathy or sadness for Agamemnon becomes at all prominent in the trilogy's mechanism. In the Agamemnon, the poetry is much more involved with the curse and with Clytemnestra 's criminality.

Clytemnestra and Orestes decide to take revenge, suffering from death's contradiction as they do. It is their imagination that makes them suffer, and makes them endure to suffer. When they defend their acts of revenge, it is always by referring to the former aliveness of the one they avenged. Iphigeneia and Agamemnon were alive in the past, are alive in memory, yet now they are, forever, dead. It is the power of their imagination that makes it plausible to conceive of Clytemnestra and Orestes as facing death in this way--it is imagination which keeps the death real

and constantly before them. In this context, Orestes' similarity to Clytemnestra important. As remarked earlier, they both haye the power to describe, with great clarity, events at which they were not present. For Orestes, this is surely an inheritance from Clytemnestra . It makes his murder of her even more awesome, that he must kill her who is the source of so much of his power and at the same time the efficient and material cause of his suffering (material cause because she gives him the wherewithal to suffer).

And so the Libation Bearers ends with the pending appearance of the Furies, the embodiment of death and necessity. Nothing is resolved; we are as if hung in a net of perplexity. We can at least breathe at the end of Agamemnon; at the end of the Libation Bearers it seems that nothing is possible. The curse will go on and on, from curse to act to curse to act, forever. In the characters of Clytemnestra and Orestes we have experienced death twice, more crucially and stupefyingly each time: we can never be the same again.

the power and the terror of our music (309)

The Eumenides opens in Delphi, at the oracle of Apollo, where Pythia enters the god's chamber and finds Orestes, suppliant, and the Furies asleep there. The Furies are horrible in appearance, and blast whatever they come near. Pythia calls on Apollo.

Apollo enters, and reassures Orestes that he will continue to give him protection, but tells the suppliant that he must go to Pallas Athene's temple, where he will be judged by ones "whose words have magic in their figures," that is, the power Apollo does not have, to free Orestes from the Furies (and the curse). Apollo and Orestes depart for Athens.

The ghost of Clytemnestra appears, driving the sleeping Furies to waken and chase Orestes. Finally they do, and discover that Orestes has escaped. Enraged, they cry out against Apollo, and warn that the "cursed suppliant...shall feel against his head / another murderer rising out of the same seed." (176-7). The murderer "from the same seed" makes it clear that the curse referred to is Thyestes' curse, and that it still is operative. It is the Furies now who suffer from Clytemnestra's death as did Orestes from Agamemnon's.

The first argument between the Furies and Apollo does not accomplish much more than abuse. Both sides state their case; the Furies claim their right, and duty even, to avenge Clytemnestra; Apollo rejects them completely as not even belonging any more among the new, Olympian gods. The Furies leave to hunt down Orestes, Apollo to accompany him.

The scene changes to Athene's temple in Athens, where Orestes asks Athene for a trial. He is now purified of the murder-blood, but not yet free of the Atreides curse. The Furies are hard on his tracks; he calls on Athene for her protection. The Furies sing a binding song, a song of holding "the memory of evil" (384). They are agents of Destiny, goddesses which even Zeus may disdain but cannot overrule. They

> have chosen overthrow
> of houses, where the Battlegod
> grown within strikes near and dear
> down. (353-9, 366-8)

They are the goddesses pertaining to family curse, the murder perpetuated via blood-kinship.

Athene enters, in response to Orestes' prayer. She insists on hearing both sides of the dispute, and not only must she hear both sides, but both sides must speak to hear each other, question and answer each other, so that each claim can be weighed, not just alone, but in respect to the other. Otherwise, there is only half

the argument (428). The Furies agree to grant her the power to choose between claims.

What Athene chooses is not to choose at all, but to convene a tribunal to give the dilemma more consideration. The Furies warn that much will be lost if they are overthrown: they are a terror to some, but to many, the victims, they are a comfort. Moreover, "there are times when fear is good" (517). It keeps men from going to extremes.

The trial begins. The Furies present their case first. For them, all that is required is to establish the fact the Orestes did kill Clytemnestra; their vengeance will fall on Orestes just as effect follows upon cause. Apollo is able to show that this kind of thinking leads to a confusion of conflicting right, and to the perpetuation, not resolution, of the blood-guilt, but he is unable to counter the Furies' arguments completely. The Furies force him to admit that, since even Zeus cannot restore life, murder, even for revenge, is criminal. He is forced to employ an argument which I think is meant to make us uncomfortable: he claims that the mother does not share real blood-kinship with her child. He points to Athene as "proof" (?) of this, but he himself had earlier claimed that the Furies could not use gods as examples, since gods are not the same as men. The Furies' case is frightening; Apollo's is specious.

Athene announces that should there be a tie vote, she will break it in Orestes' favor. She admits that she usually supports the man rather than the woman, but unlike Apollo, she does not try to ground this in natural fact. She admits it to be her own partiality.

The votes are even; Orestes "has escaped the charge of blood" (752). He thanks Athene, promises friendship between Argos and Athens, and goes home, no longer an exile.

The Furies must be placated; they threaten to destroy the land and its inhabitants. In their grief at their overthrow, they hear nothing, they repeat themselves. Athene comforts them: they have not been beaten or dishonored, for the trial was a free choice, not a rejection of the Furies. She acknowledges a need her city has of them: they are older than she, and have therefore a wisdom she does not; they have a power, the power to make men afraid, that would be good to have in the city. Calling on Persuasion, she asks them to stay in the city, where they will be honored as patronesses. Finally they hear her and are persuaded. Together they pray, the Furies for birth and peaceful life, Athene for fear and respect of the law. A new chorus forms, with women from the city, and a procession in purple robes escorts the Furies/Eumenides to their new home underground. "Zeus the all-seeing met with destiny to confirm" this new peace (1045-6).

Home, home, o high, o aspiring / Daughters of Night... (Eu. 1033)

Revenge has failed as a means of resolving the contradiction presented by death. What other means are there to deal with an unavoidable dilemma? If the two contradictories can somehow be seen together as mutually necessary, albeit contradictory, the contradiction will not be dissolved, but it can be lived with. Death will not be any less real; you can never be the person you were before the confrontation, but you will not have to decide for one side or lose the other. The question of who is most guilty in the Oresteia, Agamemnon, Clytemnestra or Orestes, is one we will cease to ask, since it has been made clear that the various judgments as to culpability have only brought death to the principals. To see past "cause and effect" like this, to unite death and life, is obviously going to require language. It is in this context that the new language of the Eumenides, that of persuasion, will be important.

But first, let us consider the dramatic movement of the Eumenides, to see if this notion of union is justified. The easy thing, reading the Oresteia, is to

notice either the brute force of the inexplicable, constantly acting on people, or the great "triumph of reason" at the end. In the first case, one fails to notice that, through the trial's agency, Orestes is really made free of the past, and the curse is no longer internal to him; in the second case, one fails to see that the triumph for Athene is not Orestes' acquittal, but succeeding at persuading the Furies, as Eumenides to stay in her city--now there is a much greater force for prosperity than the law by itself could be. Clearly the great transition is not simply from blind dike to godlike mercy. There is no grace here. There is no forgiveness, only acquittal. There is not even that for Clytemnestra, yet Orestes is perhaps as culpable as she. How have things changed?

The Eumenides' final prayer must be considered together with Athene's. They are not praying just for life, but for ordered life, one in which a proper balance is attained. The Eumenides pray for the fields to be fertile: we know that the ground is made fertile by the dead matter in it, that life must die before new life comes. The Eumenides pray for no death "before its time." While they pray for the land, its fertility, and that there be no civil war, no self-destruction, Athene is reminding us that there will be evil people to be punished, and that the Furies/Eumenides are not simply "kindly ones" but also judges, and "difficult to soften". In the weight of the poetry we find both death and life.

The "transformation" of the Furies is not a complete change from one state to another. It is not said that they change their horrible looks; they do not change from blind animal forces into embodiments of reason. They go underground; it is their relation to us that has changed. Like Clytemnestra, they are the snake-mother, giving birth to death, perpetuating it in the world; now their birth-giving nature is not changed but turned towards life as well.

Again, if the Furies speak for the past, and Apollo for the future, what we have here is not so much a choice between them, but a choice to be free of them both. The choice is Athene's gift, for she is concerned with the here-and-now, and she alone is not bound up with time, being ageless, having sprung full-grown from the brain of Zeus. She alone is not conditioned by either past or future. When all we had was revenge, we were compelled by the past. Now we are free of it, but we do not forget. If memory necessitates actions, we now give up that memory to law, which has itself the capacity to cause, and so we have possibility, where before we had only the contradiction of will and freedom. The jury gives a tie vote: Apollo and the Furies are both still with us. Somehow we must have both, memory and prophecy, in the city.

So we must be aware that Aeschylus sees salvation, whether for Orestes, Clytemnestra or Cassandra, only in the union of dark and light, the profound and the immediate. It is not a compromise, nor is it simply an acceptance of good and evil as linked, hard to distinguish, in human life. An inadequate way of putting it is to say that you can't see light without dark, nor dark without light. This is inadequate because it puts the basis for the union in human perception, and I suspect Aeschylus has in mind a union extending further than the human mind. The union, in which Aeschylus strives to include us, by means of the drama, is ineffable. The question of how this union can be communicated will help us understand why the Oresteia had to be a drama in poetry.

This problem of the unspeakable leads us back to an earlier point: the confrontation with death was, in the Agamemnon and the Libation Bearers, of surpassing force, because there was no language with which to give it distance. The imagination continued to present you with a terrible awareness, which could not be spoken and thereby controlled. To strike against that which thus forced itself on you became a compelling consideration. If, somehow, a language could be found to express the death and the confrontation with it, the memory would cease to be a cause.

That somehow this happens in the Eumenides is clear. The Furies are tormented by memory. Their very function, avenging, is not-forgetting. As long as death

cannot be spoken, it cannot in any way be forgotten. The law is enough to save Orestes, to help us live with the contradiction of death, but by itself it cannot free us from the goad of compulsion wielded by our loss. For the Furies, a loss has been made good: in return for not being able to avenge Clytemnestra, in return for her life, they are given a new life, that of Athens. But this is not what will always happen with us. The loss remains, the memory remains, but the power of memory to compel will compel us differently: towards a reaffirmation of life, rather than a despairing acceptance of death. The Eumenides underground get their power from their dark (and by this I mean un-rational) nature, just as Clytemnestra gets hers from her powerful imagination; now the forcefulness of feeling is turned towards the living. It is as if the power of unspeakable death is used in the cause of unfathomable life; instead of trying to put death into words, we counter it by evoking life, in our language. If we could be-speak death, we could send it away from us. Instead we bring life closer to us, by be-speaking life. The death stays in us, but it is underground: giving us its power without perpetuating it.

singing follow all our footsteps (Eu. 1047)

We have seen the resolution taking place in the Eumenides to depend on accomplishing two things: unifying a contradiction and expressing something unspeakable. It remains to consider how this can happen. I will try to show that, in the Oresteia, it is by means of two special capacities of language: for being metaphorical, and for being persuasive.

Metaphor in the poetry of Aeschylus (and, I think, in poetry in general, but let that pass) has more power than its existence as a part of speech would suggest. Its name, from metaphero, to carry along, makes it sound a lot like language in general: a vehicle for a content in thought. But a metaphor is really a vehicle for two contents; the immediate content--the one suggested by the words themselves--and the metaphorical content--the content that is somehow carried along by the immediate one. The metaphorical content is one which is expressed without ever being directly spoken.

One tends to think that the second content, the metaphorical one, is simply grasped by the understanding by means of analogy. I think this is not the case, at least not in Aeschylean metaphor, partly for the simple reason that the analogies in the Oresteia generally degenerate into a confusion of mingled causes and misrepresentations, whereas the metaphors themselves, no matter how often used and radically re-used, always give clear, vivid images, that speak very succinctly.

I am going to be radical and claim that what happens is a very special kind of recognition, not a Kantian comparison of a representation with a concept that yields a judgment about that representation, but a recognition tied wholly to the imagination. Imagination is a part of the soul which is immediate to both the external world and the mind, acting on both. That which is grasped by the imagination is also thereby grasped by the mind, but not necessarily according to the mind's mechanism. It could be a "grasping" on the level of a sensory perception, with that kind of immediacy. The metaphor, too, would be causal language, in a way: instead of deducing from it the metaphorical content, it (the metaphor) would "inform" you of the metaphorical content, causing that content to arise in the imagination.

To the objection that metaphors, as symbols, simply cannot be causal, not even in Aeschylus, I can only ask: what about portents? which are clearly symbolic and just as clearly, in the Oresteia, tied causally to the events they portend.

The metaphor, which carries a meaning without ever speaking it, can enable us to speak the unspeakable. However it succeeds in conveying the unspoken sense, we have all had the experience that it often does. I suspect it is a slightly divine thing, metaphor, divine in the same manner as Delphic prophecies, and that it is the use of metaphor that gives poetry its powers of enlightenment and delusion. Be that as it

may, metaphor's blessing is that it can be used to give language access to regions where it heretofore had no possibility of penetrating, to provide a middle ground between the immediate and the abstract; its danger turns out to be that it acts (or can act) causally. I will try to show this by an examination of three extraordinary metaphors in the first two plays.

The first is the one which, one way or another, causes Iphigeneia's death: that of the eagles devouring the hare. According to the seer, its metaphorical sense is that Agamemnon and Menelaus will capture Troy. But the metaphor does not convey its message and then get forgotten--it angers Artemis. I reiterate: the incredible thing, the ultimately disastrous thing, is that it is not the metaphor's meaning, but the metaphor itself, its immediate content, that angers Artemis (we are going on Calchas' word here, just as Agamemnon does--it's all we have), and so is eventually part of the mechanism resulting in Iphigeneia's death.

The second example of a metaphor's acting causally is the whole episode of the carpet. Here too, though the meaning of the carpet is, for Clytemnestra symbolic, though she does not kill Agamemnon because he stepped on the carpet, he, and we, the audience, react to the metaphor's first content, its immediate content. In fact, Agamemnon is unaware of the metaphorical content (except, perhaps, for a vague feeling that there is more here than meets the eye). Though the carpet says for Clytemnestra what she cannot say aloud, namely, that Agamemnon's path is a bloody one, and though its greatest importance is therefore as a metaphor, still, it participates by itself in the action, as the bath of Agamemnon's doom.

From the eagle portent (said to be sent by Zeus) to that of Clytemnestra's carpet, we have a movement towards the abstract. The last metaphor to be considered, Clytemnestra's dream, is even more so, and has a more abstract power over its perceivers. The dream reveals something about Clytemnestra but it is taken by the characters to be prophetic. This alone raise the question of causality--prophecies often seem to be causal, as in the case of Oedipus. And the dream has caused Clytemnestra to send the libation bearers to Agamemnon's grave. But it also acts on Orestes through his imagination: as has been remarked, he begins a change. His reaction to the dream is, "I turn snake to kill her," and this is what happens. Here the entire action of the episode--dream, recounting of it, and reaction--has taken place solely in the regions of thought, yet the power of the dream-portent is no less than that of the eagles, or the carpet.

Let me give two more pieces of evidence that words are felt by the characters of the Oresteia, and, I think, by Aeschylus himself, to have the power of acting as causes. When Iphigeneia is about to be killed, she is gagged so that she may not speak a curse against her murderers. When the Herald arrives, he is most reluctant to speak of the storm that scattered the Argive ships, because "it is not well to stain the blessing of this day with speech of evil weight."

In a play, (as opposed to mime) where language is really what gives the possibility of action, all language will have the power of invocation/evocation, but in the Oresteia, certain characters' language is more powerful than others'. The chorus is at times empowered to call up an action for the purpose of narration, but it is always only a narrative power. Cassandra's speech has an obvious power, but it is not clear whether it is really hers, or Apollo's. Agamemnon seems capable of speaking only in platitudes, "by the book," that is, in concepts. It is Clytemnestra and Orestes, the avengers, who are able to make events live again in their speech, and for whom events are never entirely past as long as they are caught in their imaginations. So it is the same faculty which makes them suffer most from the deaths they must avenge that makes them most deadly. The power of words to be causal is also derived from the imagination.

Let me now turn to the other capacity of language, that for persuasion. The persuasion we see in the Oresteia is found only in the Eumenides, and it is only Athene who uses it. Persuasion often has an element of coercion, but in the Eumenides this is carefully abjured. Athene goes so far as to mention that she can

use Zeus' thunderbolts, but she refrains from dwelling upon this, instead converting the Furies' lamentation with a picture of what their position will be if they will not curse Athens. It is by re-iterating their power to choose, by acknowledging their importance, and the control they, not she, have over their future, that Athene convinces the Furies to become "kindly" ones. There is nothing in the first two plays like this; even the exchange in which Clytemnestra is trying to dissuade Orestes from killing her is really no more than each antagonist stating his right and cause.

The persuasion in the Eumenides, then, relies fundamentally on the notion of choice. If there were no choice, there would be no persuasion. Further, the persuasion itself contains, as part of its appeal, an iteration of the existence of choice: "I will try to persuade you because I will not (may not) compel you." We have to say then, odd though it may seem, that the language of persuasion is not causal. Its whole premise lies in the fact that between compulsion and freedom there is action which is neither compelled nor gratuitous, illuminated by reason and speech. The existence of persuasion indicates the existence of possibility.

And the existence of possibility indicates the capacity for change. Here again is something new. We can deflect compulsion; we can placate the Furies, thereby changing destiny, for the Furies are the agents of destiny. But this change is only made possible by acknowledging that the Furies do have power, and that we cannot make their power cease, even if we can oppose it (with thunderbolts). It is by recognizing and not denying the Furies' power to cause death that Athene is effective in changing them.

The existence of possibility, indicated by the use of persuasion, is a new resolution of the contradiction of freedom and compulsion, fitting the description given earlier. The resolution of the contradiction of life and death is contained in the particular choice Athene presents the Furies: not between life and death, but between being spirits of death and being spirits of life and death. The Furies/Eumenides who will continue to have their power of doom (a double-edged doom, of both good and bad), become the power behind the law, the union in the face of death that binds up a community.

That thing in the community that speaks in the language of persuasion is law, which has the power to compel, and yet in order to be law, does not compel, but leaves the subject free.

We find, in the Oresteia, a form for the reaction to the confrontation with death; Thyestes' curse. At every death, the curse is invoked. The characters who avenge feel themselves to be compelled--the curse is the center of the compulsion. The curse in turn takes the form of the Furies, and it is their transformation that finally negates the curse. The curse is the memory of the past, it is the blow struck against death, which nevertheless perpetuates it. It perpetuates the will of the one who spoke it past his death--but by so enduring, it obviates the will of his descendents, his future selves and by enduring past the speaker's death, it ceases to be a power belonging to his will, to his self-determination, and it destroys, curses the speaker himself. The curse is revenge itself.

After Thyestes uttered the curse on the Atreidae, he took no other revenge. This is crucial: something which belongs to action, which essentially is an action, has been turned into language. It is the unperformed action which enabled the curse to be pronounced, and it is the fact that the curse does not belong in language which gives it its power to cause, for it turns itself back into an action, over and over again, and after every new revenge murder, it is re-invoked, re-spoken by the avenger. It is they who perpetuate the curse.

The curse then is language acting causally, and acting to perpetuate the contradiction of death and life, freedom and will. It is a perversion of metaphor, acting causally without in any way really relieving one of death, and a perversion of persuasion, acting through the avengers' own imagination, compelling the willingness

to be compelled. It cannot be opposed, for to oppose it makes it stronger. It must be transformed.

Persuasion transforms it and metaphor makes of the power to curse a power to bless. The Furies' binding-song turns into a prayer; it is still poetry, but now a song of deliverance. The Furies' power to destroy becomes the power that "gives content to" lawfulness, the power that unites life and death, freedom and compulsion, into a community.

The Oresteia puts the unspeakable into language. It suffers us to view death, and saves us from it, because it confronts us in poetry, in metaphor, and in this way, the death that is never seen except in speech, yet is made real to us, can be carried away by the same vehicle that brought it so terrifyingly near. This could only happen in poetry. The Oresteia persuades us that in a community, other people are metaphors for ourselves and so we can affect each other without acting as causes. This could only happen in drama. The Oresteia joins death to life--the distant, inpenetrable and threatening, to the immediate, inpenetrable and sustaining. It joins life to death--the unspeakable, the mouseios, to the source of law and therefore of continuity.

Deep with the first dead lies London's daughter
Robed in the long friend,
The grains beyond age, the dark veins of her mother,
Secret by the unmourning water
Of the riding Thames.
After the first death, there is no other.
(A Refusal to Mourn the Death,
by Fire, of a Child in London,
Dylan Thomas)

The Power of the Likely Story

Peter Kalkavage

I would like to speak with you this evening about Plato's Timaeus as a whole. I will not go into any great depth about anything. I will simply talk to you about what things the dialogue invites us to consider. I hope this lecture will serve as an introduction to your reading of this altogether strange book.

The Timaeus is the Platonic story of return. It is about a homecoming of a very special and complex nature. In the Republic, you recall, Socrates attempts to found a just city in speech. As the conversation goes on, Socrates' task of praising justice becomes transformed into his praise of philosophy. Socrates exhorts Glaucon--and us indirectly--to lift our gaze away from sensed beauties to intellected beauties, away from becoming and towards the precise realm of being (Rep. VI, 518c 4-22). In the Timaeus, Plato takes us back to the world of becoming, to everything this world implies--our bodies and all their actions and sufferings, the visible heaven and its motions, the structure of the four elements and their transmutations, also the realm of political action and political history. The theme of the Timaeus is the so-called "real world." The theme is also our inevitable membership in and fascination for this world. Strangely enough, this "real world" with which we think we are so familiar is presented in an extraordinary way. It is presented through the power of ~yths or stories. As readers of the Timaeus, we are faced with several great questions. These are (1) What is the structure and purpose of the world of becoming? (2) What in particular is our place within this world? and (3) What can we learn from the myths of the Timaeus about these pressing questions?

The high-point of the dialogue is the famous likely story of Timaeus, the eikos mythos. This myth portrays and imitates the work it took to bring a cosmos into being. It is a story that mixes the nature of artful production with the nature of begetting. Like Socrates' effort in the Republic, the likely story tells of how a regime is founded. But the Timaeus does not begin with the question of the cosmos. It begins with the question of the best political order. The likely story does not stand alone. A dramatic prologue, concerned for the most part with political questions, precedes the likely story and gives it its place. Before taking up the likely story, then, we must look briefly at this prologue.

A casual glance at the men who meet Socrates at the start of the dialogue shows us that the Timaeus is about worldliness. It is a cosmopolitan dialogue. Critias is the Athenian aristocrat who studied with the sophists, wrote his own poetry, and became one of the thirty tyrants. Hermocrates is the famous Sicilian statesman and orator we meet in Thucydides' history. As for Timaeus, here is what Socrates says about him: "Timaeus here, being from Locri, the best- regulated city in Italy, who is inferior to nobody in these parts in substance and class, has managed the greatest offices and honors in his city; moreover, he has in my opinion come to the peak of all philosophy." In deed and in thought, Timaeus is a man of the world(Tim. 20a1-5). He combines the study of natural order--especially the order of the heavens--with the

Mr. Kalkavage is a tutor in Annapolis. He delivered this lecture, intended to be an introduction to the Timaeus, to the January Freshmen in the summer of '83.

political life.

The central image that governs the Timaeus is the feasting of Socrates. Yesterday Socrates played the host to Timaeus, Critias, Hermocrates, and some unnamed fourth. These men had asked Socrates what his views were about the best political order, and Socrates gratified them. Today the tables are turned. The former guests become hosts who must now, in the interests of justice, pay Socrates back with a feast of logos. They must give Socrates his rightful guest-gift. This provocative image of feasting Socrates goes along with an extremely important fact about the dialogue--Socrates does not cross-question anybody or inquire into anything. Instead he remains silent while his hosts entertain him with long speeches. The Timaeus presents us with a most uncharacteristic Socrates, a dressed-up Socrates who minds his own business and silently listens. If the task in most of the other dialogues is to penetrate Socrates' ironic questioning, the task here is to understand his silent receptivity. What is it, one wonders, that fills Socrates' silence?

But Socrates is not completely silent. He provides a disturbingly incomplete summary of the Republic and then announces the task he has imposed on his hosts. Socrates states this task in a two-fold way--in the form of a desire and of an image. Like someone who beholds beautiful animals somewhere and desires to see them move and strive with one another, Socrates beholds the city he has founded and desires to see it engaged in what he calls a fitting war, a polemos prepon(19b3-20c3).

Socrates' desire is the reason why the action of the Timaeus takes place. This desire is not easy to understand and raises a number of difficult questions. Why is it right to compare the just city of the Republic to a beautiful animal? Even if it is true that the vision of a beautiful living thing begets in us the desire to see that thing move, why must the motion take the form of warfare? What in us, exactly, is gratified by such a vision, such a war-movie? Although it is difficult to understand the true basis of Socrates' desire, this desire introduces a central theme for the dialogue as a whole. It points to the desire to go beyond order simply to an actual living order, to go beyond mere speech to the world of deeds. Socrates' desire is the invitation to think together orderliness, life, and war.

Critias has just the story to gratify Socrates, a story about an Athens grown young and beautiful. This Athens, according to Critias, is Socrates' own just city brought to life. Once upon a time, this young Athens fought and defeated the insolent Atlanteans when they tried to enslave the world. Critias says his account is no mere myth--like Socrates' speech the day before--but is "true in every way" (20d7-31, 26c7d3).

Critias' story about Solon's trip to Egypt is about far more than Athens' heroic past. It is also about the cosmic cycle of birth and death, the circle of time which governs all men and cities. Not altogether unlike Timaeus' story of circular motion, the story of Critias tells about the periodic births and deaths of great civilizations, about how what a civilization calls progress is in fact recollection, recovery from the last destruction. Critias' story thus is an account of the eternal look, the eidos, of cosmic history.

There are two things I want to mention about Critias' story. The first is that the Egyptians are important for the stories of both Critias and Timaeus. When we first meet Solon in the story, he is showing off his memory. He tells the priests stories about what he considers to be the oldest things. He even tries to count the number of years ago all these things happened. But Solon is corrected by an extremely old priest. "Solon, Solon," the priest says, "you Greeks are always children. . . you are young in soul, every one of you"(22b4-8). The priest proceeds to show Solon how old everything is in the Egyptian city, how everything has been frozen in time, kept changeless through long-standing customs. Egypt is the land of conscientiousness. It is a land where the rulers are priests, scientists and historians all rolled into one. In its political structure, the Egyptian city is a bad likeness of the just city in the Republic. It is something of a joke. The

Egyptian archives are loaded with stories about the past, stories of great deeds and cosmic annihilations. But the Egyptian city itself experiences no real change and has no history. This city seems to be that part of the cosmos that possesses stability, order, memory, and scientific accuracy--all these things without life and passion. The Egyptian city is a dead soul writ large.

The second thing I want to mention about Critias' story has to do with the history of cities, especially Athens' history, and the circle of time. Critias tells us about the Atlanteans' fall from their once god-like condition. But he does not point out how deeply relevant this lesson is for his present-day Athens. The insolent campaign of the Atlanteans surely reminds us of Athens' campaign in Sicily. We have Hermocrates in the dialogue to remind us of that event and its outcome. Closely related to the end of the war with Sparta is the overthrow of the democracy in Athens. Critias played a very large role in this violent event. In the Timaeus, Critias reaches back in memory for Athens' first and best condition. As I read his story, I think of men's attempts to reach back in time in deeds as well as in memory. I think of the historical Critias' attempt to revive the rule of the few. There is a great deal in the Timaeus to remind us of the fate of Athens. Perhaps no other dialogue (with the possible exception of the Menexenus) points more beyond and outside of its own mythos to the living deeds and speeches of history. If we say, then, that the Timaeus is about the cosmos, we must be careful that we refer to the entire realm of becoming. That means the realm of history as well as the order of nature. History and nature are put together in this dialogue. They constitute the two dimensions of what we mean by time.

Timaeus' likely story, like the story of the Egyptian priest tells Solon, is about the cosmic order which gives life and death to all things within it. It is about the temporal space in which men, gods, and cities have their being. Critias gives Timaeus a place in the feasting of Socrates. Since Timaeus is the most astronomical of all of them, he must generate the cosmos down to the birth of human nature. At this point, Critias will take over and give human nature its political stamp (27a2-b6). But Timaeus may have designs of his own quite apart from Critias' attempt to glorify young Athens. To see what these designs might be, we must look at the likely story in its own terms.

Timaeus' story is about the founding of the cosmic regime. Timaeus reaches back, much farther back than the memories of either Critias or the Egyptian priest can go, to the truly first and oldest things, to the true archai. A divine craftsman or demiurge is the hero of this story. The world comes to be out of this god's intelligent and generous nature. The god is not a grudging god. He wants all things to be like himself as far as this is possible.

But the work of making a cosmos is also the gratification of a desire. Timaeus' story gratifies the desire Socrates had--and which we ourselves might have--to see a beautiful non-moving structure brought to life. The demiurge gazes upon this intelligible structure, this eidos of the world, and crafts a living image of it. The cosmic order also has a medicinal or curing function. It corrects and tunes a previous condition of disorder and noise. In its being as Timaeus says "not at peace," the pre-existing chaos resembles a city plagued by faction, a city out of tune with itself. For this reason, Socrates seems to be right when he calls the likely story a nomos, that is, a law and a song(Tim. 29d4-6).

There are two matters of terminology I would like to address before I attempt to lead you through Timaeus' speech. The first matter has to do with the word kosmos. The second is about that all-important phrase, eikos mythos, "likely story."

To get a sense of the word kosmos, we must remember this word's association with beautiful arrangements of all kinds and with moral splendor. If a man is kosmios, he acts and speaks in a fitting way on all occasions. Aristotle speaks of great-souledness, megalapsychia, as a kind of kosmos of the moral virtues. (Nic. Eth. IV,iii,1124a1-2). And Homer tells us in the second book of the Iliad that the

loud-mouth Thersites knew within his heart many words but not according to a kosmos. He is ou kata kosmon, that is, indecent(Iliad II,214). Kosmos, then, means a great deal more than the order of the physical universe. It points to the fact that human beings are in love with ornament and display. At the same time, kosmos implies the virtues connected with orderliness and decency.

In its dramatic form, the Timaeus imitates the various meanings of this rich word kosmos. Plato gives our imaginations a sort of parody of this fondness in us for what is showy and beautifully arranged. The guest-gift Socrates is supposed to receive certainly seems to be "just right." His hosts are perfectly suited (so we are told) to play the part of philosopher-statesmen. Critias' story is just the thing for Socrates' desire and for the current Athenian holiday as well. Timaeus is just the man to give a speech about the cosmos. Socrates has even dressed up for the occasion. He refers to himself as kekosmemenos(Tim.20c2). Of course, the absence of the fourth host is a haunting omission from the dialogue's own kosmos. It is curious that Plato's most formal, most artificial dialogue should also contain this emphatic absence, that the Timaeus should begin with an embarrassment.

The sense of the phrase "likely story" is related to what I have been saying about the word kosmos. Timaeus gives two reasons why an account of becoming must take the form of a likely story. The first is that the cosmos itself has a likely mode of being. It is an image. But Timaeus gives a second reason. He addresses Socrates by name and reminds him that we have a human nature. It is fitting for us, says Timaeus, to accept the likely story and not to search beyond it. As Timaeus reminds us, the likely story belongs not to the region of Socratic inquiry but to the region of trust, pistis. Timaeus makes his point with the language of proportionality. Being, he says, is to becoming as truth is to trust(Tim.29c3).

The likely story is geared to our humanness and receptivity. It is addressed not so much to our inquisitive selves but moreso to our very human selves who must at some point stop searching and take a stand. The likely story is addressed to our spiritedness and not to a detached intellect. It furnishes us with a kind of shield of moving images in which we may safely place our trust. The story is largely about scientific matters--matters of physics, astronomy, and physiology. But it does not intend to speak to that Egyptian part of the soul that craves objectivity and factual accounts. If we take the likely story on its own terms, we come to see that "likely" does not mean "merely probable," that "story" does not mean "merely a myth." In its very strangeness, the likely story has a peculiar form of power. Timaeus reminds us at one point that we must guard this power, this dynamis(48d1-4).

What does this power consist in? One of the great feats of the likely story is its ability to give us an image of things in their wholeness. Nothing in Timaeus' story is cut off, abstracted from the life of the whole - not even death or disease. Everything has place and therefore meaning. Even body, in its structure and motion, is permeated with the meaningful constructions of arithmetic and geometry. Another power lies in the way Timaeus presents the various sciences. All the sciences, especially music and astronomy, are closely connected by Timaeus with the good of the cosmos and the good of man. These sciences are shown to be moral as well as intellectual disciplines.

But the greatest power of the likely story lies in its overall presentation of orderliness. A world-order is not something we can take for granted if we are at all moved by Timaeus' speech. The world is the result of an extraordinary effort. The demiurge must at one point force Same and Other together in order to make the music of the heavens. And the star-gods must wrestle with the great problem of joining the best in us to the worst if we are to have birth at all. It is true that Timaeus wishes to construct the best possible world in speech. But he fulfills this goal through the meeting and overcoming of obstacles, obstacles which exist not just because the gods are not smart enough or powerful enough but because of the nature of things. The greatest power of the likely story consists in this ability to show us

what we are up against whenever we speak and act within the world of becoming. If the story offers us a shield, a form of human safety, it seeks no less to expose us to the difficulties and risks within this world. Let us return now to the story itself.

The cosmos comes into being in this way--the demiurge decides that his product will be the best and most beautiful only if it possesses intelligence, nous. But since intelligence cannot be placed directly in the body, god puts intelligence in the soul and the soul in the body(Tim.30 b1-c1). When Timaeus goes on to build the soul of all things, what he constructs is the life of the intellect. The soul is manifested in the circuitry of the heavenly motions. These outwardly appearing motions Timaeus identifies with the inner acts of thinking. They are the circles of Same and Other. The heavens, then, provide human beings with a magnificent and trusty image of the innermost self. Since our truest and intelligent selves for Timaeus originate in the stars, we may say that thinking--especially astronomical thinking--is the human soul's homecoming.

Cosmos is a being in whom we see an image of ourselves. Like us the cosmos has body, soul, and intellect. But unlike us, it is a whole and not a part. As the whole of all partial beings such as ourselves and the cosmos is not in need of anything. It is a rotating sphere. It needs no hands or feet. It suffers neither disease nor old age. It is its own best friend. The soul of the cosmos is furthermore eternally active, always touching the whole of being and becoming and always engaged in giving accounts. It is fitting that Timaeus would call such a being a "happy god"(Tim.34b8). With such a life as the cosmos enjoys, it is no wonder that our human good should consist in imitating this god.

One point of great importance is the fact that the cosmos eternally gives accounts of itself to itself. Logos in this way becomes a life-giving feature of the whole, and our reflective activity is given its higher purpose. Men can give accounts because account-giving goes on eternally though in silence. When a human being gives an account, he taps and retrieves this silent eternal logos. He gives it voice. The fact that human beings think and speak is not a matter of indifference to the nature of things. Timaeus urges us to accept, to trust in a world which is fulfilled in its being only in the act of its being known and spoken about. The cosmic logos has its fruition in the human logos. Unless some human beings inquire into nature's secrets, the cosmos will not be a "happy god."

Looked at as a whole, the likely story is downward in direction. It takes us on a journey from a changeless paradigm to a living cosmos. Once we are within this cosmos, we travel from the star-gods to man and from man to the various kinds of beasts. These beasts, like the sexual distinction, come into being because the "first men" were either cowardly, unjust, or stupid. Education is the return to our first and best star-like condition. But within the likely story's downward journey, there is a radical break. Timaeus tells us that he left out the cause that most physicists are constantly talking about. He left out the work of ananke, necessity, the work of mindless bodily interaction. To remedy this lack, he says he must begin all over again.

Timaeus' second beginning is the most dramatic moment for the likely story. Earlier in his speech, Timaeus had been victimized by necessity, by what he calls "the form, the eidos, of the wandering cause." He constructed the body before the soul, thus perverting the natural order of first and second. He apologized by telling us that just as men's deeds are subject to what is chancy and random, so are their words (34b10-35a1). What Timaeus now uncovers is that it is wrong to speak ill of necessity. For although it wanders and produces irregular untrustworthy effects, this cause is necessary for the construction of the whole. The gods make our eyes primarily so that we might gaze at the heavens and learn decency from them. But they cannot make the eyes without giving them the actual power of seeing. Contrary to its being simply identical with chance and chaos, necessity must be enlisted as a

co-worker with intelligence in the making of a world. Cosmos, says Timaeus, was in fact generated out of the systasis--the standing-together and conflict--of intelligence and necessity(47e5-48a2).

What is it, then, that is finally responsible for the production of a cosmos? What holds together the purposeful cause of intelligence and the non-purposeful cause of necessity? Timaeus' answer is one that fits an account in the region of trust. It is an answer that also fits a statesman's view of the world. The bond between intelligence and necessity is none other than persuasion. Intelligence is said to have persuaded necessity to be guided, for the most part, by the intellect's good intentions(48a2-5). Necessity, we see, is not entirely mindless. Like the middle part of the soul Socrates speaks of in the Republic, necessity can be made to heed reason even though it does not possess reason.

Timaeus takes on a great number of very difficult questions in his long story of necessity. One such question is "what is a body?" But the greatest question in this part of the story, and the most provocative and difficult for the whole likely story is this--What is the nature of space? What is that in which and out of which the world of body and change makes its appearance? What is that fluid and exciting surface which causes the eidos of fire, for example, to be reflected? Timaeus calls this principle of apparency the receptacle, the hypodoche. It is, he says, the mother and wet-nurse of becoming(49a4-6).

The word hypodoche comes from the verb hypodechomai. Two senses of this word are of special importance for the Timaeus. The first is the sense of entertaining, being receptive to, strangers. The receptacle takes on form the way Socrates accepts his guest-gift and the way we are asked by Timaeus to accept the likely story. The second sense of hypodechomai is "to conceive or become pregnant." The receptacle is the place-giver of all things that come to be. It is their host. But it is also their life-giver. Space is not a void for Timaeus. Nor is it a merely passive medium. It is the original womb that gives appearance, motion, and life to the eide on which the demiurge gazes. Timaeus tells us a story about how god schematized space "by means of forms and numbers" (53a7-b5). He constructs the regular Platonic solids as the archetypes or perfect models of the four elements, fire, air, earth and water. But he reminds us that these geometrical objects have their home in a living order. He tells us that the pyramid for example is not only the element but also the seed of fire(56b3-6).

It is wrong, then, to speak of a god who forced his will on chaos. The receptacle is not merely the absence of order. It is rather the potential for form. The receptacle, prior to the god's ordering, is filled with the traces of the four elements (53b1-5). These embryonic elements belong in their own regions of space but are constantly fighting for power in each other's territory. The receptacle is the place of this battle, this ambitious and turbulent change of place. The mother of becoming is endowed with a shaking or vibrating motion. As the elements wander and lose their place, she attempts through this shaking motion to send them back home. As the receptacle jostles the elements, she herself is jostled.

Timaeus' account of the elements' interaction is filled with the language of cities at war. In the elemental strife, there are winners and losers, friends and enemies. The same thing is true about our bodily substances. At one point Timaeus tells us about the bad effects of bile on the whole body. If the body gets the upper hand, he says, bile will then be thrown out of the body "like fugitives out of a city in revolt"(85e2-86a2). Throughout the likely story, there are similar efforts to gratify Socrates' desire for a "fitting war." The war of elements is made fitting by Timaeus' enlistment of mathematics.

In Timaeus' story of the receptacle, place and change of place are inseparable. The regions or topoi of space are fixed. But one does not occupy a given place forever. Moreover, one cannot have place without holding on to one's place. In order to maintain our bodily health, for example, Timaeus says we must constantly be

on the move. We must set up internal vibrations in order to withstand the attacks of the external, alien world that seeks to destroy us. We must, he says, imitate the receptacle(88c7-89a1). The entire life of becoming depends on circulation, and this circulation in turn depends on the warring elements. Without the perceptual instability of the receptacle and her contents, there could be no life in the cosmos. It is a great mistake to think that the life of human beings or cities can ever have the permanence of a Socratic eidos. As Socrates reminds us in the Republic, even if the best city came into being, it would necessarily degenerate on account of unlucky marriages(546a1-547a5). The story Solon brought back from Egypt stresses this truth, the truth that the cosmos is the divine shaker of all civilizations. In the likely story, all things change place, souls as well as bodies. If a man lives a good life and imitates the motions of the heavens, he returns to his first and best condition as a star. If he fails to live such a life, he is reincarnated as a beast. All the animals, says Timaeus, keep passing into one another with the loss or gain of intelligence(Tim.92c1-3). Whenever anything in the world loses its place, the receptacle makes the necessary adjustments.

Because of the receptacle, human life is ruled by the mysterious power of place. It is important to our happiness that we have place. Also it is important that we sometimes give up a place, that we change place. Ambition is the desire for a high place in the world. In the Antigone Creon curses the man who holds anything dear in place of his fatherland. He says such a man is nowhere, oudamou (Antigone 182-3). Critias displays this political attachment to place by transforming the best city into Athens, by making much of his own family, and by referring to the festival at which the young become full-fledged members of the city. Timaeus' receptacle, along with its elemental powers, does more than furnish the demiurge with building material and tools. It is the power that constantly settles and unsettles human life.

After Timaeus tries to clarify the difficult and obscure eidos of space, he tells a story about the mathematical structures that space was persuaded to take on. He constructs four of the five regular solids (all but the dodecahedron) and assigns them to the four primary bodies--earth, air, fire, and water. Timaeus' mythical physics, his putting together Empedocles and Pythagoras, is stunningly imaginative and gratifying. It is the counterpart to the construction of the soul out of the musical ratios. Timaeus' story of body and change is only secondarily an attempt to account for the actual phenomena. Its primary goal is to transform the bodily into the non-bodily, into the intelligible. It seeks to persuade us that the world of body could be imagined as a world of mathematical objects in motion. The story gives the human intellect a home within the otherwise unfriendly region of body.

In the concluding portions of the likely story, Timaeus shows us how we were put together by the gods. There are three things I want to say about this part of the story. First, Timaeus builds us in such a way that our nature imitates the nature of the whole to which we belong. Second, our bodies are re-interpreted for us as the outward show of inner invisible truths about us. And third, our nature comes to be defined as the tension between intelligence and necessity I spoke about earlier. This tension now takes on a specific form. It is the tension between loving the intellect and loving life for its own sake. Timaeus will attempt to do justice to both these loves.

The section about our bodies is filled with stories that are both tragic and comic. One such story concerns the neck. The neck was invented because the gods had to join the best in us to the worst in the best possible way. They have to join the head's divine circuits to the mortal parts of the soul housed in our torso. The purpose of the neck is to join and to separate the god and the beast in us(Tim. 69d6-e3). The mouth too is defined by the cosmic dualism. It was made for the sake of the best and most beautiful stream of speech that flows out and the stream of nutrition that flows in(Tim.75d5-e5). The story of hair is another memorable moment. If the gods did not in some way protect the head, our lives would be in great danger.

But if they covered up the head with a great deal of flesh, we would become stupid and insensitive(Tim.75e5-76d3). Hair is the compromise between long life and intelligence. As such, like the mouth and the neck, it is a reminder of the riddle that makes us who we are. All the physiological stories Timaeus tells us are designed to show how the soul comes to be revealed through the nature of the body. Timaeus shows us how immensely difficult it is to make a whole human being. This story of divine making in turn shows how difficult it is to be a whole human being.

I have spoken very generally and very inconclusively about this amazing book. There is much that remains to be considered. The most important part of what remains does not have to do with the likely story's intricate puzzles. What we must wonder about finally is the likely story's silent listener. Has Socrates been gratified by the likely story? There is much in the story to indicate that he would be pleased with it. After all, Timaeus' speech does seem to gratify a desire Socrates had in his youth and which he speaks of in the Phaedo(Phaedo97b8-99d3). I mean the desire that the good be invoked as a cause of becoming.

Before we can understand Socrates' desire and possible gratification, we must beware of thinking that the likely story is the ultimate story for Plato. There are other stories in the dialogues, each one speaking in its own way about the cosmos and human place. I am thinking especially of the stories about the soul's topoi in the Phaedo and the Phaedrus. To a very great extent, Timaeus' story is about the virtues of lawfulness and moderation projected into the nature of the cosmos. It is about that necessary part of human and cosmic life that has to do with keeping one's place, with being just. The likely story is the sort of high-minded yet realistic speech one would expect from a man who was an astronomer and a great statesman. But let us remember. The recipient of the story is the erotic Socrates, a Socrates who asked to hear speeches because of his desirous nature, his love of gazing. In other dialogues, Socrates is feisty. He is a troublemaker. In the Timaeus, he is suspiciously well-behaved and kosmios. Socrates' desire, the true center of the Timaeus, confronts us with an important question--whether the likely story, for all its virtues and powers, is finally just to the nature of human desire, to the whole of human nature. I said at the beginning of this lecture that the Timaeus was the Platonic story of return. Is it a true and complete return to ourselves, a true homecoming? We have the silence of Socrates to remind us of this question.

Solitude In The *Confessions*

Ann-Marie Kamensky

Augustine thinks and prays, hopes and weeps, in solitude. It washes him in dank black and miraculous light; it is his prison and place of retreat; in it, he loathes himself and eventually, loves himself. It is in solitude that he writes his Confessions and sees the violent flow of his life; and, like a crystal prism, we can hold his solitude up to the sun, and gaze at the harshness, the beauty, and the despair of the Confessions through this single though varied ray.

What is solitude? It isn't weak, pitiable loneliness, nor is it simply a stagnant reflection on oneself. In the Confessions, solitude is active, for it is when Augustine despairs of communicating with the outer world that he turns inward and questions most piercingly. Unable to express himself to a deaf world, he questions and speaks to a silent, hidden God--but because of that very silence Augustine must attempt his own answers... hence, his solitude becomes an action of thought, questioning and answering.

As a young man, Augustine fought solitude, searching instead for the security he found in loving women, the companionship of a group of friends. Although he was in love with the very idea of love, he understood it solely as an exchange between people--solitude can be fearful abyss for the very young, void of a mother's or lover's careless caress, hence, Augustine embraced people without reserve. However, perhaps after he was led to theft, or disappointment from some relationship, Augustine began to twist away from people and turned towards the ideas of men. Love of changeable people became a passion for incorruptible truth.

Reading Cicero, teaching the art of rhetoric and living as a Manichee, Augustine experienced a growing sensitivity of self. In spite of the cold ring one might accuse a love of truth as having, no such callousing of emotions emerged in Augustine as he slowly drew away from the outer world in search of wisdom. Often, he ran in great washes of unutterable feeling, the black self-loathing swept by the rich red force of life, sometimes replaced by rare moments of extraordinary grace. Because those feelings could not be spoken, Augustine began to tap the deep wells of his being and found his own soul; he rejected the material explanations of good and evil the Manichees offered and began to examine his very capacity to wonder.

In turning to explore the mind of man, he saw the act of wonder as the greatness of the mystery that is man. Though Augustine may have seen fleeting images of the mind working as a whole, he could only speak of its parts. One part flowed so naturally throughout his writing he was suddenly struck by its presence: memory. Calling it the force of life, he seemed to regard memory as a self within the self, a powerful observer of the "now" to whom we listen as it speaks. Because the memory is limited to past experiences, it may seem strange to conclude, "This is the great force of life in living man, mortal though he is!", as Augustine does. But as he asks "What, then, am I, my God? What is my nature?", he sees knowledge, images of material things, emotions, and freedom to move from one to the other all contained in memory. The force of memory is not in escaping from the present into the past, but in recalling one's life and answering "What, then, am I, my God?"

Augustine is haunted by some memories, as by the grief of death, and in turn must struggle to recall others, as in the memories of his childhood. As he

confesses, he examines his memories and judges them as though through the eyes of God. Perhaps this helps to explain the tense, climbing tone of the book, for as Augustine re-lives his memories and his fully human errors he simultaneously judges them. Perhaps the "force" of memory becomes clearer in this context: because so much is revealed through recalling past actions and at the same time pronouncing present judgements on them, one can hardly avoid answering at least in part, "What am I?'.

Another part of the mind which Augustine explores is the part which learns...knowledge. His beliefs on the acquisition of knowledge seem contradictory but become clearer if one allows him two types of reference, that is, knowledge gained from the inner source of solitude and knowledge gained from such outer sources as science, rhetoric and drama. Although he prays fevently for some glimmer of truth, he harshly condemns the Platonists, Manichees and finally, his own students in their pursuit for knowledge, or "it is better for them to find you and leave the question unanswered than to find the answer without finding you", and refers to the Book of Wisdom, chapter 13:

> Excuse them, then, we may not;
> if their thoughts could reach far enough to
> form a judgement on the world about them,
> how is it, they found, on the way,
> no trace of Him who is Master of it?

But what does Augustine point towards to replace there outer sources? What kind of knowledge is gained from the source of active solitude, the prism we are looking through to understand the Confessions? More than once, Augustine refers to Job, who helps explain the reason for taking the mystical path of solitude towards knowledge rather than any other path. In a speech on "God's unfathomable wisdom" Job says:

> 9 Man sets his hand to the granite rock
> and lays bare the roots of the mountains;
> he cuts galleries in the rocks.
> and gems of every kind meet his eye;
> he dams up the sources of the streams
> and brings the hidden riches of the earth to light.
> But where can wisdom be found?
> And where is the source of understanding?
> No man knows the way to it;
> it is not found in the land of living men.
> 23 But God understands the way to it,
> he alone knows its source;
> for he can see to th ends of the earth
> and he surveys everything under heaven.
> 28 And he said to man:
> The fear of the Lord is wisdom,
> and to turn from evil is understanding. (Job 28)

Thus, as Augustine queries the stars, the mountains and the depths of the ocean -- "I asked the whole mass of the universe about my God, and it replied, 'I am not God, God is He who made me,'" -- he discovers that he must turn inwards. Rather than attaining wisdom by fearing the violence of Nature, or the immense distance of terrible stars, the deepest fear of the Lord comes from the attempt to know one's own thoughts and realizing no man knows fully the spirit within him. Taught by no teacher, found in no riches of the earth, solitude is the source of the fear of the Lord.

The *Bible* And The Human Heart

William O'Grady

"Create in me a pure heart" we hear in Psalm 51, traditionally associated with David after the prophet Nathan came to him because he had been with Bathsheba. I wish to talk about what these words addressed to God might mean, and about some of what the Bible teaches about the human heart. My reflections are organized into four parts: indications regarding the heart in Psalms 19, 51 and 73; circumcision of the heart as the heart of the Law; the suffering servant and the healing of the heart in Deutero-Isaiah; and the relation between time and the purgation of the heart in Dante's Purgatorio.

I.

Psalm 51 both asks God to create in me a pure heart and offers to God my own broken and contrite heart in confidence that He will find the offering an acceptable sacrifice. Why should one so greatly wish to have a pure heart, and why does the offering to God of one's own pain avail in the creation of such a heart?

To the first of these questions, the Psalms give two answers which particularly impress me. In Psalm 19, which begins "The heavens declare the glory of God" and passes without seam into praise of the sweetness of God's Law -- "sweeter than honey dripping from the comb" (as though nothing could be further from the Psalmist's mind than to distinguish between a natural creation and a human moral spiritual creation) -- the final petition addressed to God is that "the words of my mouth may always find favor in your presence, and the whisperings of my heart." One reason, I think, why one would wish greatly to have a pure heart, and even be willing to undergo suffering for the sake of having one, is that inescapably one must hear the whisperings of one's own heart, and no one could wish to listen all his days to vile whisperings -- whisperings of jealousy, resentment, anger, revenge, whether or not these issue forth into overt actions.

The beginning of Psalm 73 gives a second answer, compatible with the first. We hear: "The Lord is good to Israel; God gives good things to the pure in heart." As the Psalm unfolds we realize that these words do not mean what we might at first suppose. It is not that Israel is pure in heart and that God therefore gives her good things; nor that some portion of Israel is pure in heart and to that portion God gives good things. In general it is not as if God has two kinds of things to give, good things and bad things, and gives the one to one kind of human being and the other to another kind. Rather, God gives good things and nothing but good things to all human beings. But it is only the pure in heart who can experience the good things God gives to all human beings as good things, only the pure in heart who can experience the world as it truly is, only they who know what is happening. To become pure in heart, to submit to the purification of one's heart, is to come into touch with God's creation and with his always present ever contemporary action of creating.

Mr. O'Grady is a tutor in Annapolis. He delivered this lecture to the community in Annapolis on Good Friday of '83. Another lecture by Mr. O'Grady, Negation, Willing and the Places of the Soul, can be found in the Fall issue, '82.

To come into touch with God's creation requires, the Psalmist seems to tell us, that we ourselves submit to being created -- not merely to having been created, but to be being created right now. Thus "create in me a pure heart" seems to mean more than "cleanse or purge my heart." It seems to mean: continue to create my heart, create it in purity, shape it and reshape it until it is as you would have it be. Thus to offer the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart does not mean merely that, in quid pro quo fashion, however generously from God's side, his response to my sincere contrition is forgiveness and loving-kindness; but rather that in offering God my broken and contrite heart, in saying yes to the brokenness and tornness of my own heart I am saying yes to his creating of my heart, of me, his creating of me right now. It seems that it is not a matter of earning a pure heart as a reward by bearing one's pain in fortitude and gentleness; rather, to say yes to the creation in oneself of a heart whose whisperings are not vile and which can experience all that God gives as good -- as what it truly is -- is to say yes to the brokenness and contrition of the heart in process of creation: that is simply how hearts are created. Why this should be so I do not understand. Perhaps we can learn something -- not in the way of dispelling mystery but in the way of learning to face it more sensitively and discerningly -- but turning first to a few passages from Deuteronomy and then to certain words from Isaiah.

II.

For what I am trying to think about, the crucial passage in Deuteronomy is the one that speaks of circumcision of the heart. Since our current habit is to pass easily from law to legalism, any connection between law and our hearts seems strange to us. The matter becomes stranger still when we read (Deuteronomy 10:15) that it is because God himself has a heart and set his heart on our fathers, that there is such a thing as the Law. I think these words from Martin Buber about the meaning of the word "Torah," not rightly translated, he thinks, as "Law," will help us to make a beginning.

"In the Hebrew Bible, Torah does not mean law, but direction, instruction, information. Moreh means not lawgiver but teacher. God is repeatedly called this in Old Testament texts. 'Who is a teacher like him?' Job is asked, and Isaiah promises the future people of Zion: 'Thine eyes shall see thy Teacher' . . . The Torah of God is understood as God's instruction in his way, and therefore not as a separate object. It includes laws, and indeed laws are its most vigorous objectivizations, but the Torah itself is essentially not the law. A vestige of the actual speaking always adheres to the commanding word, the directing voice is always present or at least its sound is heard fading away."

Let us now hear about the circumcision of the heart: "Circumcise your heart then and be obstinate no longer, for the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great god, triumphant and terrible, never partial, never to be bribed. It is he who sees justice done for the orphan and the widow, who loves the stranger, and gives him food and clothing. Love the stranger then, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."

To begin to understand what the circumcision of the heart might be, let us consider the three verses preceding the words I just read: "And now Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you? Only this, to fear the Lord your God, to follow all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with your whole heart and your whole soul."

I wish to propose four things about this passage: that the order of the verbs -- fear, follow, love, serve -- is seriously meant; that fear of the Lord means, to begin with, a proper mistrust of the human heart -- that is, of my heart; that the passage from fear to love depends considerably on the right kind of use of and experience with our own power of imagination; and that one does not have a whole

heart or whole soul with which to love anything until one has set out on this way which God has made available to use.

As to my first claim: one must begin by fearing God -- whatever exactly this phrase may mean, at any rate it is not supposed that one should or could begin by loving Him. Then, out of fear or something like that, one attempts to follow his ways. And then, in the course of that attempt, one makes certain discoveries about what is possible in the world, about what is possible for oneself in relation to one's fellows. In reflecting on those discoveries -- and no amazing intellectual gifts are required for this reflection to lead where it ought -- one comes to see what the world is like, and becomes eager to love the maker of such a world; comes to see what one's own way of discovery is like, and becomes eager to love the maker of such a way of discovery. Following His ways from fear becomes serving Him from love, and in that passage one discovers what it is to have a whole heart and a whole soul.

I proposed earlier that an essential constituent of what is meant by "fear of the Lord" is a proper mistrust of the human heart. Let me read you another passage from Martin Buber, in which what I mean is said wonderfully:

"The doctrine can best be described as that of granting direction to the human heart. The heart of man -- this unformulated insight is at the basis of the doctrine -- is by nature without direction, its impulses whirl it around in all directions, and no direction which the individual gathers from his world stands firm, each one finally is only able to intensify the whirl of his heart; only in trust in God is there persistence: there is no true direction except to God. But the heart cannot receive this direction from the human spirit, but only from a life lived in the will of God. Hence the Torah has assigned to man actions agreeable to God, in the doing of which he learns to direct his heart to Him. According to this purpose of the Torah the decisive significance and value does not lie in the bulk of these actions in themselves but in the direction of the heart in them and through them."

I suggested that of decisive importance for the transition from fear to love is a certain kind of experience with imagination. To illustrate what I mean, let me cite this passage from Deuteronomy. "If you are making your fellow a loan on pledge, you are not to go into his house and seize the pledge, whatever it may be. You must stay outside and the man to whom you are making the loan shall bring the pledge out to you. And if the man is poor, you are not to go to bed with his pledge in your possession; you must return it to him at sunset so that he can sleep in his cloak and bless you; and it will be a good action on your part in the sight of the Lord your God. You are not to exploit the hired servant who is poor and destitute, whether he is one of your brothers or a stranger who lives in your towns. You must pay him his wage each day, not allowing the sun to set before you do, for he is poor and is anxious for it; otherwise he may appeal to the Lord against you, and it would be a sin for you."

Such laws as these seem to rest on the recognition that our making each other's lives miserable only infrequently stems from sheer malice or greed or vindictiveness. So often the injury we cause our fellows stems from inattention, from failure of imagination, unwillingness to bother to see. The "Law" gives us, among other things, practice in bothering to see, in paying attention, using our imagination, giving thought to what cannot immediately be seen. And once we have encountered our fellows in a truly attentive way, on whatever occasions, we cannot so easily -- cannot without knowing what we are doing, without knowing our right hand from our left -- act maliciously, greedily, or vindictively toward our fellows; since now they are for us real people, like ourselves.

Let me add one thought about the importance of a directed sequence for the attempt to obey the Law. I shall speak for a moment of the New Law, as the Gospel of Matthew presents it, that presentation beginning with Jesus' words: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law and the prophets. I have come not to abolish them, but to complete them." These words come at the beginning of the so-called Sermon on the

Mount, culminating, we are inclined to say, in the injunction to "turn the other cheek." Almost always we use this phrase with tongue in cheek, speaking knowingly of its impossibility, as if we knew that from experience.

Let us try for a moment to be more circumspect, or at least slower. Several points seem to me remarkable in Jesus' teaching in this place. First, "turn the other cheek" goes beyond "resist not evil." What is enjoined is not passivity, non-doing, but an action, an offer: offer now, at this moment, the other cheek as well. Second, a very specific reason is given: so that you will become children of your father who is in heaven, who makes his sun to shine upon the good and the bad, his rain to fall upon the honest and the dishonest. I think this means: Everything that is in being, including every human being, God wishes to be. (One offers the second cheek, after all, not to evil in general but to some human being.) As I offer my other cheek to the man or woman who struck me, I am saying and meaning to him or her not "won't you be ashamed of yourself and change your ways?"; not "I am so self-possessed as to be superior to this situation, hence unprovokable"; but rather "as my father in heaven wants you to be, so do I -- who am and want to be his child -- want you to be; and that wanting you to be goes deeper in me than my not wanting to be struck by you -- as to which I make no calculation or guess about your response."

But what I most want to say about this passage I can say more clearly and simply with regard to the passage that immediately follows it: "Love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you." The love one can have for one's enemy after praying for him -- that is, talking to God about him, on his behalf, for him; imagining his good, imagining him, and asking God for his good -- would be, it seems to me, vastly different, deeper, richer, more tender, more imaginative, more real, than the duty enjoined love which precedes and somehow originally motivates our praying for him.

III.

In the book of Deutero-Isaiah there seems to be announced a new way in God's dealing with man. In chapter 42 we hear of a servant of God "who does not cry out or shout aloud, or make his voice heard in the streets. He does not break the crushed reed nor quench the wavering flame." It seems that there will be a new inconspicuousness, gentleness, patience in God's dealing with man.

In chapters 52 and 53 it is powerfully impressed upon us that the servant is above all a suffering servant, and we hear the awesome words "in his wounds we are healed." I wish to make a suggestion about how we might begin to understand these words. I am not concerned to identify the suffering servant with Jesus of Nazareth, or with another individual human being who is still to come, or with Israel as a people. Rather, I am concerned to try to understand the suffering servant as an illuminating symbol of an ultimate human possibility, a symbol just as comprehensively pertinent as, say, the philosopher-king or the pagan hero. That is, I wish to ask: what would it be like for us to understand the deepest part of our own experience with ultimate reference to one of whom it is said "in his wounds we are healed."

I should also make clear that I have no theological theory of atonement to present. I find it disconcerting that these are usually couched in mechanical language -- a balance must be restored -- or in commercial metaphors -- a debt has been incurred and must be paid by someone especially qualified. I think that in those theories God is thought of as being mastered by necessities over which surely in truth he himself is master. In any case the text of Isaiah makes clear that we must look on as the one who is wounded suffers for us and that he must be willing that our healing should come through his being wounded. It is some human intelligibility rather than cosmic or theological intelligibility that we must hope to find. Above all, it seems important to try to understand what in us is most in need of being healed.

Let me offer what I can by making this simple beginning. About 2000 years ago the rabbi Hillel spoke these words: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if not now, when? And if I am only for myself, what am I?" The first two questions by themselves would seem to be merely rhetorical in a hard and cynical way: no one, as any fool knows, will be for me if I am not for myself. But when we hear the third question -- and if I am only for myself, what am I? -- we realize that the first questions, however shyly and mistrustfully, are genuine, even desperately hopeful questions. The questioner knows that everything would be different -- all sorts of extraordinary possibilities would have to be considered and maybe even tried out -- if only I could know that there is someone in the world who is for me, who cares about my being as deeply and strongly as I care about my being.

In the 13th century Duns Scotus, the follower of Aristotle and still more of St. Francis, wrote in his discussion of the human faculty of willing: Amo: Volo ut sis. I love you: I want you to be. And what if, loving you, wanting you to be as fully as you can be, I come to understand that what prevents you from being fully and freely is that you are so anxious for yourself, so fearful that unless you are forever busy being for yourself, not only will you incur all sorts of particular practical disadvantages, but finally you will not be at all, since there is no one else with such care for your being as would sustain and nourish it and thereby hold it in being.

Then would not the response of love be: I will be for you. I will be for you in a way that is unambiguously visible to you. I will be less, so that you can be more, not of course because we are competitors, you and I, for some limited amount of being, but precisely because the one thing that prevents you from coming fully into your own, from being all that you can be, is your fear that only your own self-assertion maintains and upholds you in being. It is that desperate preoccupation from which, above all, you need to be healed. And when you have been healed from that by beholding the willingness with which I accept my own diminution, my own being made, for your sake, less -- less free and easy, less graceful, less powerful, less joyful -- then you will begin to see that you can be for me too, that we were made for each other, that the center is neither in you nor in me but between us, among us all, and that deeper than the sorrow of crucifixion -- and I am thinking especially of its daily undramatic forms -- there is the joy of overcoming the two most shameful and finally deadly things for human beings, which are aloneness and unfruitfulness: "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies it brings forth much fruit."

IV.

I would like to say something finally about how hearts might become pure -- most especially, might become beautiful; and in what way purgation works -- especially: what is the relationship between the soul that has been purged and the times of its life.

In the 12th Canto of Dante's Purgatorio, the penitants receive a blessing from the angel of the terrace of the purgation of pride, the first and greatest of the sins to be purged. Hear Dante's description of the angel: "Towards us came the fair creature, clothed in white, and in his face he seemed like a trembling star at dawn."

It is, I think, for a middle-aged man such as Dante was when he wrote this passage, the deepest of sadnesses to be aware of how beautiful a creature of God can be -- is meant to be -- and that you are not beautiful, because you have made yourself not-beautiful. That one is nevertheless found acceptable by God is a very great thing, and in a way it is enough. But in a way it is not enough. One had wanted to be beautiful, to seem to someone else "in one's face like a trembling star at dawn." And one still wants that, if only there were a way.

Dante seems to say that there is a way, and that is because hearts are full of time and times. If that were not so, purgation would perhaps have to be thought of as being like sculpting, so that my heart through my actions and willings has come to have a certain shape, a certain look, on which the action of purgation must go to work as with a hammer and chisel, destroying and removing as much of what I have made myself into as necessary to reach a presentable shape, so that the great fear of the one purged is not so much the painfulness of the chiseling as it is that so little of me will be left that I won't any longer know what I mean when I say "I" -- even and precisely when I say "I love" or "I praise."

But on the very terrace of the purgation of pride Dante presents an altogether different image of how a beautiful heart -- now, a beautiful life -- can contain everything that I have in my life made my own. Dante speaks of an incomparable divine art able to produce "an image which was not silent" or "visible speech."

Thus we read (Canto 10) of Mary: "The angel who came to earth with the decree of the many-years-wept-for peace that opened heaven from its long interdict appeared before us so truly graven there in a gracious attitude that it did not seem a silent image. One would have sworn he heard 'Ave -- hail,' for she was imaged there who turned the key to open the supreme love, and in her bearing she had the word imprinted 'Ecce ancilla Dei' -- Behold the handmaid of the Lord."

And then the Emperor Trajan:

"Depicted there was the glorious deed of the Roman prince whose worth moved Gregory to his great victory -- I mean the emperor Trajan; and a poor widow was at his bridle in a posture of grief and in tears. The place about him seemed trampled and thronged with Knights and the eagles in gold above them moved visibly in the wind. The poor woman among all these seemed to say 'Lord, avenge me for my son that is dead, for whom I am stricken' and he to answer her 'Wait now till I return' and she 'My Lord' like one whose grief is urgent 'if thou return not?' and he 'He that is in my place will do it for thee' and she 'What shall another's goodness avail thee if thou art forgetful of thine own?'; he therefore 'Now take comfort, for I must fulfill my duty to you before I go. Justice requires it, and compassion bids me stay.' Dante concludes: "He [God] for whose sight nothing is ever new wrought this visible speech, new to us because it is not found here."

Now, I find two things in this passage very remarkable. The first is the notion of "visible speech" itself, of "an image that is not silent." For what God's art has accomplished is to bring together a visual image which as such gives wholeness and permanence, and speech as what is essentially temporal and transient. As St. Augustine tells us wonderfully: unless each syllable passes away to make room for the next, we would never hear the whole statement. And in Dante's imagination God has not merely fused the permanent and the transient, that which is whole all at once and that whose completeness requires sequence and hence passing away; but rather He, our Creator, has made us see that the whole and permanent image on which we can gaze without motion contains all of motion and time that was important. Nothing has been merely chiseled away, removed, destroyed to reach the final image.

The second remarkable thing is that although there is a very special beauty in the immediate, wholehearted and apparently uncomplicated response of Mary to her calling -- "Hail -- Behold the handmaid of the Lord" -- Trajan's recalcitrance, wrongheadedness and confusion seem to make an indispensable contribution to the loveliness of his own action of humility in finally dismounting -- getting off his high horse -- to do his simple duty. Surely, more humility was required of Trajan in the end than would have been required of him had he not collaborated with the widow in "creating a scene." In any event, although Mary's unfaltering humility is lovely indeed, it seems that Trajan in looking upon the image of his own action -- his own life -- could not simply regret his own recalcitrance and wrongheadedness. And could he not have seen in the image of himself -- the image of his heart as it finally contained his life -- something a little like "a trembling star at dawn"?

Let me close with another reflection about Trajan, who seems to be a very important figure for Dante, being encountered on the first terrace of the mount of purgation and again in the 20th Canto of Paradise. There, deep in the indescribable beauty and joy of Paradise, Dante is still troubled over the destiny of the virtuous pagans. He asks about them in the heaven of justice. He receives a dogmatic theological answer, but then is permitted to see the presence in paradise of two pagans: the Trojan Ripheus, an obscure figure from the Aeneid, said there to have been the most just of the Trojans; and the pagan emperor Trajan, who was (according to a legend in which surely Dante did not believe literally) brought back to life on account of the prayers of Pope Gregory who was moved by the story of his life. After returning to earth he was baptized and thereby made capable of redemption. I think the real point of the story lies elsewhere for Dante, and that it has much to do with how Dante understands pride.

For it must be that Trajan accepted his salvation not as granted to him as a being apart, in isolation from others, "considered in his own right" as we say, but rather as a link in a chain, a member in a sequence of human persons moving and being moved. For consider: there is the widow moved by love of her lost son, then Trajan moved by a mother's love; then an eyewitness moved by Trajan's humility and telling the story of that; then a chronicler being moved by the story to write it down; then Gregory being moved by what he read to pray for Trajan; and finally God being moved by Gregory's prayers.

In this sequence it is difficult to find praiseworthy initiatives; what seems praiseworthy, rather, is that each member be unwilling to allow a motion of love which began outside of himself or herself to end in himself or herself. Not to interrupt the motion of love through the world -- this seems to Dante to be the highest action of which the human heart is capable. And to me too.

Sonnet

Stephen Morse

What wonder man, a many mirrored task
From hands, star-crafting, sparrow-shaping small.
A middle art, with mind of size to ask
Stars questions, sparrow's answers take with all-
Embracing reason. He does not only see,
But sees beyond; mind breaks Earth's rope
And grasps grand God-reflect'd philosophy.
A seeming God, a veritable hope.

But well, real, self reflecting flaw
Distorts, bends, twists, corrupts, and smears
True virtue; mixes earth and mind, a raw
Wound festering on pride-yields-lust to tears.
For brittle glass, God, canvass in me place,
And paint with faith my heart in oils of grace.

The Actuality Of Symbolism In Raphael's *Disputa*

Pedro Martinez-Fraga

Buried in a lengthy essay by Leon Battista, an Italian scholar, we find the following observation:

> Raphael's search for perfect form is in effect a quest for absolute value, for him form does not have a representative nature, but rather a value of its essentials- a full and total representation of reality. Under the assumption that beauty itself already exists in nature, the artist can reveal it merely by choosing what is perfect and by composing with his choice of particular beauties the universal beauty which ancient and modern, outside time and experience.

I wish to take this general observation on the works of Raphael and examine how it may be applicable to the particular case of the "Disputa". "Universal beauty" would be immediately obvious to anyone willing to admire it, producing in all a favorable aesthetic impression. There is a parallel between the universal intelligibility of beauty and that of the scriptures. In the "Disputa" Raphael studies the manner in which the scriptures are revealed to all, and by way of form he displays a beauty, an aesthetic experience, that would lack all value if it were not equally representative for everyone. Art and theology are collapsed into one. By relying on his technique, together with geometrical constructions and many of the principles in Alberti's Della Pittura, Raphael uses art to universally unfold as an immediately obvious truth, the intimacy between light and darkness, revealed truth and human insufficiencies.

The whole of the "Disputa" is both heavenly and terrestrial, miracle and history, thus stressing the unity between dogma and human wisdom. Raphael invites us to discover this two-fold nature in his fresco by placing special attention on "composition" (the design of painting which the parts harmoniously fit together as a whole) which guides the eye through the istoria.

I shall divide my analysis of the painting into three parts. First, I shall trace the path which Raphael has constructed for the eye to follow by identifying the pattern of movements and the directions that are emphasized in the work; secondly, I shall discuss the istoria and attempt to reconcile it with the title "Disputa"; and lastly,I shall discuss how perspective and geometry are the underlying principles of beauty and theology in this fresco.

I.

> The body is said to have life when it has certain voluntary movements. It is said to be dead when the members no longer are able to carry on the function of life, that is, movement and feeling. Therefore the painter, wishing to express life in things, will make every part in motion- but in motion he will keep loveliness and grace.

Such is the case with the members of this fresco, particularly in the terrestrial realm. The figures at both ends of the painting are leaning forward (toward the viewer) and turning toward the center of the bottom half. I believe that the most eloquent example is found with the figure on the bottom left hand side of the fresco, on the right hand side of the viewer. His gestures place our eye on the path that is to be followed. The eye is moved to the right of the painting where there is an unidentified character pointing at Sixthus IV, who is dressed in a golden papal tiara and is looking in the general direction of the altar where the host sits on the monstrance. Hence it is the individual gestures that Alberti considers essential to the life of the painting which act as a whole to guide our attention to the monstrance. "A turned body, a thrust of the arm and the direction of a glance" are the sources of movement in this particular example. The vanishing point, located slightly below the host, lends cohesion and a sense of culmination to the earthly realm. Having arrived at the vanishing point, we find that Raphael uses what Alberti defines as the "most geometrical movements;" namely, those "which move upward into the air," to begin the transition from terrestrial to heavenly. In the "Disputa" an unidentified man stands on the left of the altar pointing to the heavens.

There is an ascending movement that begins with the gesture of this figure from which the eye travels along the vertical line that symmetrically divides the fresco. In this upward pull the heavenly figures that are the closest to the realm of human understanding are four putti, two on either side of the holy spirit, each holding one of the four gospels. From left to right we can read the first page of the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Sitting on a cloud suspended in midair above the four putti are Mary, Jesus and John the baptist. Jesus, the central figure in the fresco, sits slightly higher than the other two. Perhaps it would be useful to pause here and examine the resources that Raphael uses in showing Jesus as the central figure.

What the host is to the bottom part, so is Christ to the whole of the painting. The figure of Christ displaying his wounds is seated in the center of a golden circle that is in turn framed by winged putti. Raphael uses the luminosity both of the golden rays of the circle emanating from Jesus and of the color white to distinguish Jesus from God the Father who is situated above and behind Christ. Consequently it becomes clear how Raphael uses spatial arrangement and the reception of light to single Christ out from the three figures closest to him. What I interpret as being the three most important gestures of the fresco are also pointing toward Jesus. First, the unidentified figure to the left of the altar, followed by John the baptist, and lastly the third angel on the far left hand side of the heavens. The receding figures, angels and putti, surrounding Christ also emphasize his greatness.

By combining light and dark shaded colors in the composition of the cloudbanks, Raphael constructs a sense of depth and consequently produces a semi-circular movement that echoes the pattern of movement of the figures below, making the change in zones more fluid and tangible. Resorting to this blending of lights and shades to create the illusion of depth is yet another example of how the reception of light is used just as prescribed by Alberti in Book Two of Della Pittura. Hence Raphael can reproduce the movement while preserving the individual identities of both realms. In the heavens the truth is evident and known to all. In this higher domain the excitement generated by human curiosity and its manifestation through gestures would seem out of place.

Raphael's use of colors is always symbolically and technically in context. For example, hierarchy and divinity are represented by the use of gold. In the lower part the papal tiara, the altar and the monstrance are all colored with gold. In the upper sphere the rays of the holy spirit and its background are painted in gold, as are the rays emanating from Christ, and the sphere behind God the Father that is filled with putti "dantesquely disappearing into the heavens." Technically it is interesting how a color is never isolated, with the exception of white. Flanking Jesus are the colors red and blue on the robes of John the Baptist and Mary

respectively. Raphael lends context to the colors by repeating them symmetrically. Thus the red on John the baptist's robe is repeated on the third angel on his side of the fresco, and on Paul, who is the first figure from right to left on the opposite side of the fresco. The theme of red and blue is also found on the putti that outline the golden circle behind Jesus.

In this general outline of the pictoral movement we are able to recognize two prominent characteristics of Raphael's style; the counterposition of figures with violent and passive movements (particularly in the terrestrial realm), and the realization of space. Vasari explains how Raphael sought to realize space by emulating Bramante. "Lines become the development of restful curves, volumes alternate with open spaces in the same fashion that Bramante alternates solids with voids." Vasari's interpretation of the pictoral scheme relative to Bramante coincides in a clearly demonstrable way with the experience of the viewer. How are we to understand the interpretation which lead Vasari to call this fresco the "Disputa?" Let us examine the istoria in detail, and then proceed to draw a distinction between the message that the painting evokes, and the point of view that the artist suggests.

To understand the istoria we must first meet its members. On the lower left side of the painting are Sts. Ambrose and Augustine, both sitting and dressed as bishops. At the feet of St. Augustine is his book with the title City of God written prominently on its side. Standing behind him is St. Thomas Aquinas, Pope Innocent the third, and St. Bonaventura with the red hat and garment of a cardinal. Following St. Bonaventure stands Pope Sixtus the fourth, (the tallest figure in the painting together with a personage that could possibly be Francesco Maria de Rovre, balancing the figure of Sixtus on the opposite side), the uncle of Pope Julius the second. Dante's profile is seen behind Sixtus preceding Savanarola's. Raphael places Dante's profile, the symbol of light, behind Savanarola's which embodies both the darkness of his personal history, and that of his mystical theological interpretations. Dante shines and elucidates, Savanarola darkens and obscures.

On the side of the altar with his hands horizontally stretched toward the monstrance is St. Jerome. At his feet are two volumes. One volume contains the epistles, probably alluding to Paul's letter to the Corinthians in which he reiterates and interprets the last supper, adding the phrase "do this in memory of me." It is from this epistle and not the gospels that the priest reads when, in celebrating mass, he blesses the bread and the wine so that they become the body and the blood of Christ through the mystery of transubstantiation. The other volume is the Bible which St. Jerome translated. Sitting close to him in a papal tiara is St. Gregory with the facial features of Pope Julius the second but without his beard. The figure can be identified as St. Gregory because of his halo, and because the book which he wrote entitled On Morals rests in front of the papal sandles. Standing in back of him is a self-portrait. To the extreme right hand side of the fresco is a figure that may be Fra Angelico, the great painter of the previous century. Yet because of the aged features of his face some scholars, including Vasari, believe it can not be Fra Angelico, who died at the age of fifty. Instead, they believe the figure to be St. Anthony. Finally, on the railing with his body leaning forward and his head turned in the direction of the altar, is the unmistakable portrait of Bramante, Raphael's friend and paesano. Hence in this lower realm we find the four doctors of the church (Gregory, Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustine) with the unique expressions of enlightenment and inspiration. In the remaining members of the clergy we discover raised eyebrows, and expressions of inquiry. The clergy and doctors of the church are surrounded by common people who project an air of enthusiasm and humility. In their faces and gesticulation they reveal a thirst for understanding which can only be quenched by those who have been blessed by the holy spirit. Perhaps they too are blessed souls called by curiosity but not chosen by God to understand the mysteries of faith.

Alberti explains how "the soul is delighted by all copiousness and variety. For this reason copiousness and variety delight in painting. I say that an istoria is most copious in which their places are mixed old, young, maidens, women, youths, young boys . . . buildings, landscapes, and all similar things." In just half of this painting alone we can discover Raphael's fulfillment of Alberti's suggestions.

II.

Just as the lower realm is filled with contemporary and historical figures, so is the celestial part composed of Old and New Testament figures. Moving from the right to the left part of the fresco is St. Peter, Adam, John the evangelist, David, St. Stephen, Jeremiah, Judas Maccabeus, St. Lawrence, Moses, Matthew (or James the elder), Abraham, and Paul. Each of the personages is painted with gestures and expressions that reflect his history. The expression of Mary, for example, is one of love and tenderness toward Jesus. Her face reflects the intensity of maternal love and concern. Abraham, who is portrayed holding a knife in his hand, has a look of agony and pain, as opposed to his counterpart on the opposite side, Adam, who is shown sitting in a very simple and carefree position. His facial expression is that of a simple man, naive and primary. Although each of the figures projects his individuality, we can generalize and say that the apostles are portrayed with an air of simplicity, the fathers of the church with grandeur, and the martyrs of the church with faith. Yet what are these figures doing? What can be the message of an istoria so richly populated that it is "a beauty that is simultaneously ancient and modern, outside time and experience?"

There are no signs of debate, confrontation or dispute in the painting. On the contrary, it seems to be an exaltation of theology, a reaffirmation of the mystery of transubstantiation. This seems to be indicated not only by the gestures and expressions of the figures who are pointing toward the altar and listening with enthusiasm to the clergy members, but also by the division and perspective in the painting. On the lower extreme ends of the painting the symmetry is enlivened by having a natural setting on a small hill where the construction of the church is taking place; on the opposite end it is counter-balanced by the foundation of a great cathedral that was to be built by Bramante under the auspices of Julius the second. Thus even the symmetrical juxtaposition of nature and human craft (verdure and building blocks) is an extension of the very theme of praise and worship. The darkest mysteries of the Christian faith (particularly concerning Catholic dogma) can only be elucidated and understood by human wisdom when reason passively yields to the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. Hence the vertical which divides the painting equally can be traced from the bottom of the fresco. It symmetrically divides the monstrance, the Holy Spirit, the body of Jesus, and finally God the Father and the rhombus painted in back of his head. The most interesting aspect of this division is that Christ's head is slightly bent to his right. Jesus who is the link between heaven and earth, the embodiment of the Creator's love for man, can not be subjected to the rationalization of human understanding. The fresco seems to suggest, both by tilting Jesus' head beyond the vertical and by placing the vanishing point beneath the host, that as the trinity is to Jesus so is the mystery of transubstantiation to the eucharist. Both are divine embodiments and not mere symbolism. Jesus does not represent the Father and the Holy Spirit; their being is contained essentially in him. The sacrament of holy communion is founded on the belief that the host becomes the body of Christ in that very moment when the priest invokes Paul's letter recounting the events of the last supper. Augustine writes: "The visible sacrifice is the sacrament, that is, the sacred sign of the invisible sacrament."

It is no coincidence that Dominicans are well represented in the fresco, as is Thomas Aquinas whose theological writings concerning the sacraments they propagated

as the official Catholic stance. In question sixty-five of the third part of the Summa Theologica, we find the following interpretation:

> Absolutely speaking, the sacrament of the Eucharist is the greatest of all the sacraments, and this may be shown in three ways. First from what is contained in the sacrament, for in the sacrament of the Eucharist Christ himself is contained substantially, whereas the other sacraments contain a certain instrumental power which is a share of Christ's power...Now that which is essentially such is always of more account than that which is such by participation.

After having read this passage, which even through the present date expounds the official interpretation of the Catholic church, we can see a greater similitude between the istoria and Raphael's style. Just as the symbolism of the eucharist is unique in that it is a symbol and at the same time essentially that which it represents, so too is Raphael's quest for a universal beauty, as we previously stated, founded on the notion that form should not have a representative value. Symbols should only represent themselves. The unity of form and essence in the religious symbols of the istoria, together with aesthetic unity that seeks to reveal a universal beauty by simultaneously bringing together the past and the present, heaven and earth beyond the realm of experience, seems to support the interpretation that there is harmony and not dispute in the istoria. That is to say, a general feeling of cohesion and agreement as is usually the case in an environment of praise and inquiry rather than debate and scepticism. In this way we can reconcile the istoria with its name if we take "disputa" in the medieval sense which the scholastics used meaning "inquiry" or "investigation" rather than dispute.

Although the painting is very eloquent in revealing the said interpretation, I believe that Raphael suggests more. A detail of the altar shows the name of Julius the second inscribed twice on the mantle. Vasari concludes his interpretation of the "Disputa" in the following way: "Salvo che i quattro Dottori della chiesa, che, illuminati dallo Spirito Santo, snodano, e risolvano con le scriture sacre tutti le cose degle Evangeli che sostengo quei putti, che gli hanno in mano volando per l'aria . . . resto (concludes Vasari) il papa di questa opera molto soddisfato."[1] Vasari too seems to draw a subtle distinction between the message of the istoria and that of the artist. The "Disputa" exalts theology in its istoria and construction. The use of perspective lends cohesion to the terrestrial realm and also explains the mystery of the eucharist as being beyond the grasp of reason. Raphael's use of the vertical demonstrates how Jesus, the mystery of the Trinity and God's presence in time, cannot be subjected to the laws of reason. Yet Raphael goes out of his way to imply that the prevalent belief which he is attempting to represent through art in the form of universal beauty, is the point of view of his patron. The dogmatic currents that run through the church originate in the minds of men that have a particular name. Vasari tells us how the Pope was very pleased with an istoria that shows how man's interpretation of scripture is the product of divine inspiration. Raphael does something different by discreetly writing the pontiff's name twice on the mantle. Perhaps the difficulty of revealing two istorie, an artistic one described by the patron, and that of the artist himself, is analogous to the problem which Alberti's science of perspective faces. In perspective, one admires an istoria with utmost clarity but only from one point of view. When we change our position relative to the painting then the rigidity of that perfectly geometrical world collapses, and we are no longer staring out a window, but admiring the stillness of a contrived reality. The painting seems true and beautiful from a particular point of view; such is the nature of perspective. Raphael is telling us that the mystery of

transubstantiation and divine revelation seems true and beautiful when seen through the eyes of the pontiff; such is the nature of men.

III.

We have traveled through the analysis of this fresco trying to make sense of Battista's general observation concerning the works of Raphael in the context of the particular example of the "Disputa". Our movement has also been from general to specific, from what is more apparent and obvious to our eyes, to conjectures and principles that are less apparent. In these last few lines I shall try to present the underlying principles of the beauty we see in matter by way of geometry. It is through geometry that the painter can be seen as sculptor. If form is the boundaries of matter, then Raphael has created a work of art whose harmony and beauty are founded on having the boundaries of matter coinciding with those of geometry. (See black and white reproduction, pg. 8.)

The fresco is first divided in two by a vertical that transverses the main figure and is suggested by a vertical ray drawn at the top, as well as by the symmetrical distribution of masses on either side of this vertical, then in four by a horizontal line parallel to the steps leading to the alter, and drawn at the height suggested by the tip of the main ray that emanates from the Holy Spirit. This horizontal cut separates the divine from the earthly by resting beyond any of the verdure found in the terrestrial realm. This division shows how the masses in each of the four quadrilaterals is symmetrically divided: none outweighs the other.

Three triangles dominate the painting. The first is suggested by the rhombus (which I believe to be "the geometrical model" of the painting) behind the head of God the Father, which encompasses Him together with Jesus, Mary, and John the baptist. The base of the triangle is found to be at the height of the hands of Sts. Stephen and Lawrence; this height allows the base to be directly under the feet of John and Mary. The second triangle begins at the top of the ray which originally suggested the height of the main horizontal coinciding with it at one point. The angle is determined by the width of the altar and its base coincides with the base of the altar. The trilogy of triangles is completed by following the main ray of the Holy Spirit up to the chest of the dove. From here lines are drawn to the eyes of Pope Gregory and St. Ambrose, who are both gazing at the dove. By connecting these two lines the base of the triangle is constructed.

Returning to the principle triangle, the circle behind Jesus is continued and a diameter parallel to the principle horizontal is drawn. The sides of the triangle are elongated to point slightly below the feet of David and Moses on each of the respective sides. A line is drawn under the feet of five figures on each side of the fresco, and the line parallel to it is drawn on top of the heads of the figures. The endpoints are connected by constructing a line parallel to the sides of the triangle. Hence the five figures on either side are inscribed by rectangles. Rectangles can also be inscribed around the angels on either side of the painting. Finally a fifth rectangle seems appropriate circumscribed around the four putti holding the gospels. It is constructed by using part of the main vertical and extending the tangent of the circle in which the dove is inscribed, parallel to the main horizontal, and by erecting parallel lines perpendicular to this horizontal which are just extensions of the outer edges of the gospels.

The division of space is crucial to the success of a fresco. In the "Disputa" it becomes clear that Raphael took the architecture which frames the fresco into account before tracing the lines that would group the masses of the istoria into a cohesive whole. Testimony to this consideration is the distance between the heads of the two figures on either extreme of the cloud bank (Peter and Paul) and the circular design

of the wall directly above the lunar frame of the fresco. From these two points I have drawn two lines which are connected at the bottom of the fresco with the main vertical. These lines form two sides of a rhombus that inscribes the altar and the principle figures of the fresco. It is as if the rhombus painted behind God the Father had been enlarged.

Besides producing a symmetry in the division of masses whose delicate distribution is rooted on geometrical principles, these lines and their various intersections can be construed into seven "golden sections." (See Appendix)

Perhaps it is in this presence of geometry that Raphael discovers a universal beauty that is not representative, but meaningful in itself. Geometrical figures are the supreme symbols that represent nothing other than themselves.

Appendix

Golden Sections:

1. From bottom of rhombus, to the first intersection of triangle inscribing altar to the beginning of rectangle inscribing figures on the cloud bank.

2. The line from eyes of Gregory to Ambrose and the line from either figure to first intersection with the triangle.

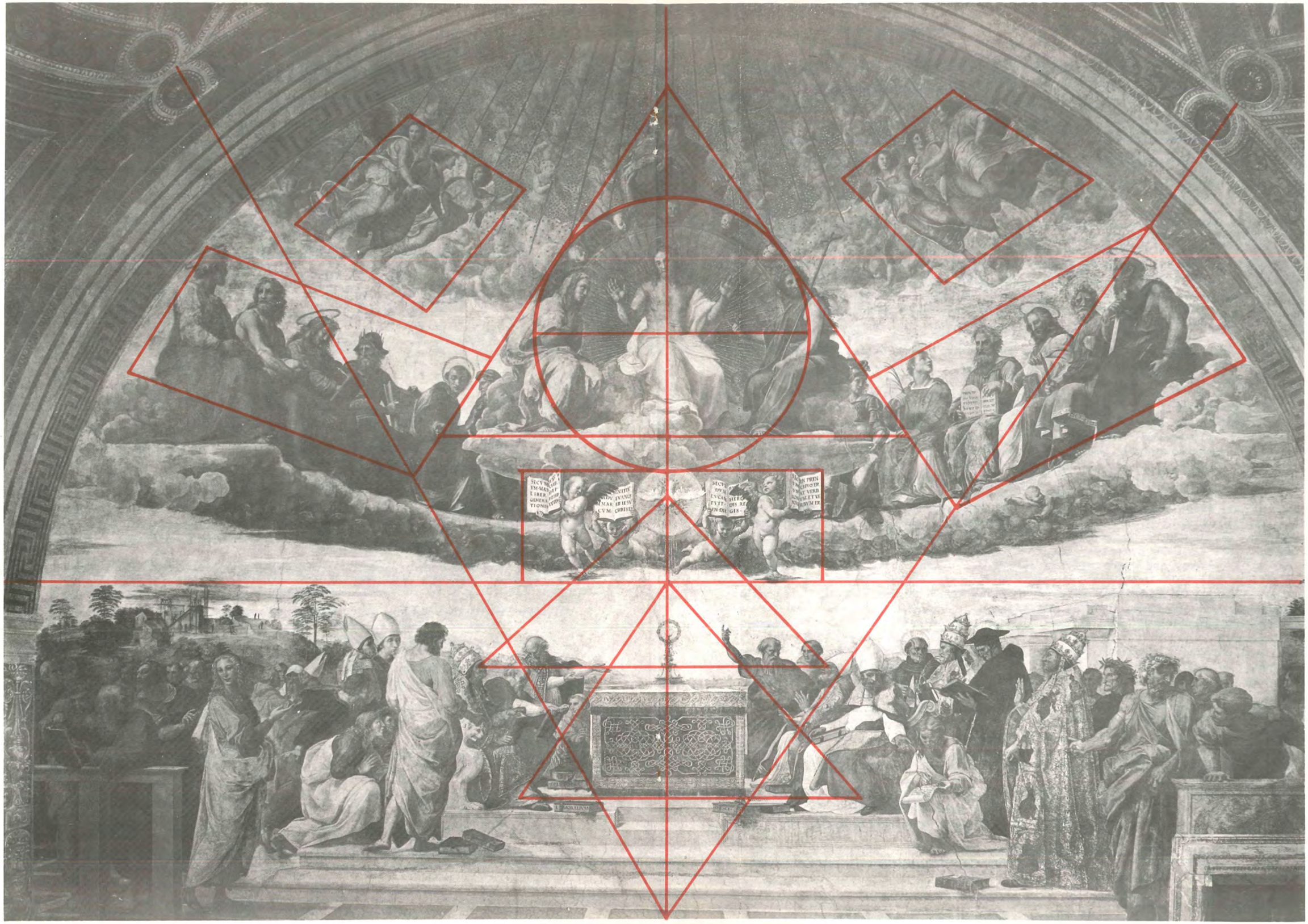
3. From Ambrose's eyes to the dove, but by horizontal.

4. The base of the main triangle cut by the circle drawn around Christ.

5. The horizon but by both sides of the rhombus and the distance between the side of the rhombus and the point where the horizontal intersects the triangle.

6. Right side of the top of rhombus from the tangent point to Christ's circle and the whole side of rhombus.

7. Same as above, but on the left hand side of the circle.



Self-Love, Diversion, And The Search For A True Identity

Zoe Churchville

Pascal asserts that the nature of the human self is to think of and love only itself. This misplaced object of its love is the result of the faculty of imagination's almost complete control over us: "this arrogant force...has established a second nature in man." Imagination deceives us and leads us astray. Imagination is far more powerful than reason and was responsible for our fall from grace, when it persuaded us to make ourselves rather than God the object of our thoughts, desires, and love. As fallen creatures we are worked upon now more than ever by our imaginations, which have gone so far as to make us forget (or regard as 'unreasonable', as though the imagination cared at all about conforming our thoughts to reason alone) our fatal connection with the original sin of Adam and Eve. And yet only when we are mindful of the fallen nature that we have inherited can we begin to understand that state of grace into which we were originally created, and for which Christ has come to redeem us: "it is, however, an astounding thing that the mystery furthest from our ken, that of the transmission of sin, should be something without which we can have no knowledge of ourselves." (Pensee 131, pg. 65.) Unfortunately, our nature is so degraded that it is impossible for us to remember what our original nature was and who our true love is, without the effectual workings of God's grace within us. And divine grace will not begin to transform us, by revealing our Hope, without first of all revealing ourselves to us. We have to see over and over again the composition of our self-love, and why the self, even when it is thoroughly sick of the bondage of self-love, is terrified of losing itself and turning inward to God.

The nature of self-love, in turn, can be seen in our endless concern for our reputation, which is an imaginary self that we have constructed and continually refine in order to make ourselves out to be real and vivid - that is, central - to the minds of others, and especially so in our own minds. Although we ourselves are the object of our self-love, the fact remains that we realize that our selves cannot withstand scrutiny. Self-love still retains one trace of true love in its ability, albeit feeble and occurring only at odd moments, to discern the true from the false regarding the qualities it sees in the self. Self-love sees, with varying degrees of acknowledgement, the flaws and weaknesses of the self. These are insights which both disgust and enrage us, for we see nothing but a mass of ugly, essentially aimless, qualities. We may even see how much our "good" qualities have been tainted and deformed by our motives for doing certain things and for refraining from others.

The alternative to looking beyond the self that is represented by qualities is far more unpleasant. Such an attempt provides the self with its first dreadful glimpse into the possibility that it may not have a self at all. This is not to say that the person doubts that he or she exists on a biological level; this is to say something much more frightening, namely, that the self suddenly and instinctively grasps that not only is there no definitive self which might give us a spiritual life, but there never will be such a self to be had. There can be no such thing as integrity for this particular person, there is no possibility of satisfying his desires, or of finding any kind of lasting purpose or peace of mind. The person will BE, but he will be nothing per SE, nothing defined. He will be a mere restless, yearning thing,

and he will know that he is nothing. Once the self - if we can still call it that - has suspected that there may be no real self, it is so shaken that it does everything in its power to avoid that thought.

This is especially true if the person has not only begun to doubt the reality of the self, but has perceived, however dimly, that the salvation of the self rests in receiving God's grace and yet he cannot feel any of the effects of that redemption. Such a state of mind produces a feeling of frenzied despair, which is not simply a feeling of wretchedness. This is the condition of the mind that measures God's mercy and, though it believes that His mercy is more than sufficient to release others from their sins, it does not believe that God can heal its own particular soul. A person of this disposition may seek diversions with a hideous, incredible passion, but this is only because the person knows full well that he is avoiding introspection, which he fears will reveal more and more clearly to him his eternal exclusion from God's presence. He knows that truth and peace lie in the contemplation of the self in its relation to God, but he also is possessed by the superstitious feeling that there is no way for him to enjoy the good fruits of this contemplative life. At the same time he realizes that he has reached a stage where he can no longer lose himself in his various diversions. He may pursue the objects of his 'passions' with fervour, but this is only an attempt to divert himself from the sinking suspicion that he will never be redeemed and he will never be truly diverted.

The majority of people, however, can actually be somewhat diverted from the feeling that the pursuit of self-knowledge, prayer and contemplation are absolutely critical to their lives. Before the self looks down deep within itself and is stricken by the thought that there may be no self, it can easily engage itself in one or more of its passions. Self-love may be at its strongest and therefore at its blindest point, but the self still perceives that it cannot examine its love object too closely. Instead, the self spends a lot of time imagining qualities and circumstances which might satisfy its desire for self-knowledge (for example, it may imagine that it is introspective, truth-seeking, converted, etc). It builds a reputation to show to itself and to others, and does everything it can to prove that it is indeed such and such a person. This kind of protection of the self, which is actually a protection of the self from itself, always requires the acquisition of external things: that is, either we need money, possessions, another person, or we need to achieve certain goals for our self-improvement. Self-love's passion for the truth, which is usually never wholly obscured, is somewhat satisfied by its ability to maintain the self's reputation, no matter how many lies and contradictions this involves. The self is almost completely absorbed with itself, yet it finds that it cannot satisfy its desire to be thoroughly absorbed, to be the center of all of its thoughts and desires, except through the acquisition of more and more things and qualities. Such an unenlightened pursuit of passion may continue for a long time. A great confrontation or loss, or the more mysterious workings of God's grace may eventually lead the person to discover that the preservation of his reputation is not enough to keep his mind at ease. In fact, he may have the uncanny desire to ruin his reputation in order to find out who he is. At that time he may look into himself and upon seeing nothing but his own wretchedness and his real inability to be interested in the truth, he will need to pursue diversions rather than passions. He will see that he is really profoundly bored, restless, and anxious (Pensee 24, pg. 36), and he will flee from this vision with all his might. Because he has no idea what it is that he is ultimately seeking to divert himself from, he will think of his diversions as ends in themselves and it is entirely possible that he will spend his whole life in their thrall. In this case self-love may not manifest itself as self-love at all. The person will not appear to be obsessed with himself, but only with external objects or activities. Self-love is there, nevertheless, in its insistence on concealing the whole truth about itself from itself, and in its inability to achieve any kind of intimacy with other people. It may demand an inordinate amount of love

and attention from others in order to assure itself of the worth of its existence, or it may try to lose every disturbing thought of itself by loving another person with too much zeal.

Self-love, then, does not seem to know much about love. It is obsessed with its object (which may not manifest itself as an obsession with the self at all), but only insofar as the object, which is the self, can be seen in external terms. Self-love is interested in the self only as a thing to be possessed, a thing with highly visible qualities for itself and for everyone else to see. Self-love can only permit the self to participate in the search for truth on an external, goal-oriented, fundamentally self-directed basis. The self insists upon knowing where it is going and what it has achieved. When it realizes that love and truth do not reside in it, and moreover, that they only reveal unpleasant aspects of the self, the self either cannot admit that there is such truth, or it will not admit that truth is anything other than certain ideals of the self's own making.

Clearly there are different levels of diversions for the self in its flight from itself. Unfortunately, precisely those diversions which seem to be most worthwhile, and therefore do not seem to be diversions, are the ones which MAY be turning us aside more than the basest, most unnecessary passion. These diversions may include intellectual pursuits and certain modes of submerging the self in religion. God will not let us make any external advances until we have turned inward beyond the self and the lack of self to Christ. (This means that God does expect us to bear the fruit of a definitive, though not to be comprehended spiritual life.)

The self is expected to give up its desire and need for the security of doing certain things and acquiring certain things in order to define itself. It is supposed to hate this quasi-self, or this kind of life, in order to find itself and the true life that can only be achieved through the grace of Jesus Christ. Then the self will receive the identity that God has willed for it, and will give to it through Christ. The incessant call to such a search for Christ explains the reality of our fear of not having a self.

The book of Revelations promises us that there is a stone in heaven with our name written on it. But this is not the name that we now have; it is a name that will truly identify us and that is now known only to God. If we endure until the end time, we will discover our name and understand what it has to do with our communion with Christ. In the meantime, we must trust in the necessity of having to lose ourselves in order to gain ourselves, and in the joy that is involved in Paul's claim that he himself no longer lives, but Christ lives in him.Paul says that we have the promise that the sufferings of this present time - which are often due to anxieties for a self that we must deny, or a lack of self that we must approach and go beyond - are not to be reckoned with the future glory that is to be revealed.

Time

James Mensch

I.

There is one thing we can say with certainty about time. We all feel that we understand what it is until we are asked to explain it. Since this explanation is precisely the attempt of my lecture, I am going to begin by making a slight detour. I shall begin by considering a problem from Plato's Parmenides. From this, I hope to find an entrance point which shall lead us to our explanation of the nature of time.

Let us begin with a little fragment of the dialogue, the Parmenides.[1] Socrates has just said that the ideas are "paradymes in nature and other things are like them and resemble them." He, then, defines "the participation of things in their ideas as itself nothing more than their having been made like their ideas." Parmenides, the ever subtle dialectician, seizes on this point. He asks: "If the thing is like the idea, must not the idea be like the thing which has been made like it, at least with regard to the point of resemblance"? Since this statement is almost a tautalogy, Socrates cannot but assent. Parmenides then draws the dialectical net tighter. "But isn't it necessary," he asks, "for the two things which are alike to participate in one and the same thing?" "Necessarily," says Socrates. Whereupon Parmenides asks: "And that which the two participate in and are alike through such participation, won't this itself be an idea?" Once again Socrates agrees and finds, to his surprise, that he has fallen into an infinite regress.

Let me spell out the difficulty that Parmenides has drawn the young Socrates into. Its first premise is that when things are alike, we say they are such through their participating in some idea. Thus, chairs are similar by virtue of their participating in the idea of "chairness." Now, we come to this idea through our perceptions of individual chairs. Arising from this basis, the idea cannot be dissimilar from them. So our second premise is that the idea is like the individual participating in it. With this, we return to our first premise: Likeness arises whenever two things participate in one and the same idea. Thus, "chairness" and individual chairs must be similar by virtue of a new idea common to them both. And this third thing, if similar to the first two, will demand for its similarity a new idea. This last, if similar to the first three will demand yet another idea and so on indefinitely.

What is the point that Plato is making here? It concerns, we can say, the being of the idea and the relation of this being to that of a thing. Is the idea of large objects, itself a large object? Is the idea of smallness itself small? Is the idea of a piece of black cloth, itself black and made out of cloth? As our negative answers to these questions indicate, we cannot predicate of the idea what we predicate of the thing participating in the idea. This distinction of predication

Mr. Mensch graduated from the Annapolis campus in '67. He delivered this lecture in the spring of '79 to the community in Santa Fe.

points to a distinction in being. The thing is an individual, material entity. It has the predicates appropriate to this state of being. The idea, however, is defined as being one thing present in many. Its being one-in-many rules out any notion that it is a material entity. Thus, as Parmenides notes, one thing can be present in many either as a whole or part by part.[2] A material thing can exist as a whole in many things only by being multiplied. At that point, however, it is many and not one. Similarly, it can exist part by part in many things only by being divided. What would a material part of an idea, for example, the idea of smallness, mean? The sillyness of such a notion is apparent when Parmenides invites us to conceive of something getting smaller and smaller as material portions of the idea of the small are progressively added to it.

If the idea is not a material thing, then we can say that the predicates appropriate to such things, predicates such as large, small, black, made of cloth and so forth, are not appropriate to it. This conclusion allows to assert that the idea is not like the thing. Insofar as we can affirm this, we avoid the infinite regress of ideas we just described. This, however, leaves us with a worst difficulty. Our knowledge begins with the things about us. How are we to ascend to a knowledge of the ideas when we say that they are not like the things? Isn't the case, as Parmenides says, that the ideas "must remain unknown to us" -- since, in fact, they are not like any of the individual things which we sensibly know?[3]

The dilemma which the Parmenides presents us with is, I think, not directly soluble. Something else must be added if we are to move away from the sterile dialectic of things being either like or unlike the ideas which they participate in. What we need, in fact, is a medium between the things and the ideas. The medium must possess the qualities of both the things and ideas and must, in fact, allow us the ascent from one to the other.

II.

Let us now talk about time. It was Augustine that first suggested that time could be such a medium. In Book XI of the Confessions, he writes that "even when we learn from created things, which are subject to change, we are led to the truth which does not change."[4] This truth is the "Word" of God. The Word is eternal and contains in its eternity, as he elsewhere writes, all of what Plato called "ideas."[5]

How is the ascent to the Word and, thus, to the ideas possible? The answer that can be drawn from Augustine is that time itself makes this possible. Time is a medium which links the changing thing to the eternity in which "all is present." The linking point, as we shall see, is the now. Augustine writes:

> "Time ... is never all present at once. The past is always driven on by the future, the future always follows on the heels of the past, and both the past and the future have their beginning and their end in the eternal present. If only men's minds could be seized and held still! They would see how eternity, in which there is neither past nor future, determines both past and future time."

To bring us to the point of holding our minds still, Augustine begins with the following, rather startling fact. It is that the future does not yet exist and the past has ceased to exist. This fact is so simple and so close to us that like a pair of glasses, it usually escapes our notice. Personal loss and the consequent longing for what is past as well as acute expectation and the tedium of waiting for what will be does, at times, give us a sense of this fact. Out of this sense comes a notion of being. Being means presence, or, to put this in Greek, ousia means parousia. Now, that which is present is at the present, that is, it shares with us a now. If

neither the past nor the future are, if only the present really is, then this last, in fact, is the place of being.

What sort of being is this? If being is presence in the now, then it would seem to be, like the moment that occupies the now, the most fleeting type of being. The present moment is but for a moment and slips into the past, that is, into what is not. As Augustine says: "If, therefore, the present is time only by reason of the fact that it moves on to become the past, how can we say that even the present is, when the reason why it is is that it is not to be? In other words, we cannot rightly say that time is, except by reason of its intending state of non-being." Augustine's point here is that the moment of the now is constantly present by virtue of being constantly new. Time is a process involving continual change. This means that the moment of the now, regarded as part of this process, is only insofar as it changes into what is not--i.e., the past. This annihilation of the moment, does not, however, mean that the process stops. A new moment appears, moving, as it were, from the future to the present. Here we can say two things. The first is that the very being of the present moment demands both the past and the future. The present moment would not be in time, that is, would not be at all, if, as Augustine says, it did not "move on to become the past." Similarly, it could not have come to be, if it had not, as part of the future, replaced the present moment.

What we have here is something worthy of our wonder. Granting that time is a process of constant change, of moment replacing moment in the ongoing now, none of time's moments can exist as an independent being. To give a moment such a being is to think of it apart from what precedes and follows it. But this is to place it outside of time. Since, however, the moment only exists as part of time, this is not to think it at all. The conclusion here is that the moments of time can only be conceived and can only exist by virtue of the moments that surround them. They are all dependent members of a whole. We can also say that, like the points on a line, they exist, not as discrete (or separate) entities, but as elements of a continuum. The second thing we can say about time is that the now, with its constant appearing and vanishing of moments, is a pure example of what we mean by becoming. It is, we can say, a pure form of the world of sensible things. This is a world which, to quote Plato, is ever anew "created, always in motion, becoming in place and vanishing again out of place."[6]

How can we say, as we earlier did, that within the thought of the now there is the thought of a link between change and eternity--in particular, the eternity of the ideas? To quote Plato again, the being of an idea is "always the same, uncreated and indestructible." It is a being "never receiving anything into itself from without nor itself going out to any other."[7] How can the present now, which continues to exist by receiving the moments of the future and, in the same process, yielding these moments to the past, qualify as a link to the eternal being of the ideas?

That there must be something more inherent in the concept of the now is indicated by the fact that our present conception does not allow us to speak of time as duration, that is, as long or short stretches of time. As Augustine writes, "We speak of a 'long' time and a 'short' time, though only when we mean the past or the future. ...But how can anything which does not exist be either long or short? For the past is no more and the future is not yet." In other words, if being is presence in the now and if a stretch of time includes by definition more moments than the one that occupies the present, then such a stretch is not yet thinkable.

Here we can state a paradox--a paradox out of which a proper conception of the now can be drawn. As we have stated, the moment of the now is not independent. As a moment of time, it exists only by virtue of the pastness into which it will flow and the futurity which will replace it. Since, however, both the past and the future are not, it is, in its own being, dependent on what is not. With this, we can be said to come to the parting of the philosophical ways. Holding fast to the notion of being as presence, we can say, on the one hand, that being as presence depends upon

absence--i.e., on what is not present. Here, we enter upon the road of neo-platonism. We affirm that absence--or what is beyond being--is what upholds being. Heidegger is the most famous modern representative of this school of thought.[8] On the other hand, we can embrace Augustine's solution. We can assert that being can only be dependent on being. Thus, for the present, dependent moment to be, both the past and the future on which it depends must also be. Being means presence in the now. This means that both the past and the future must be co-present in the now.

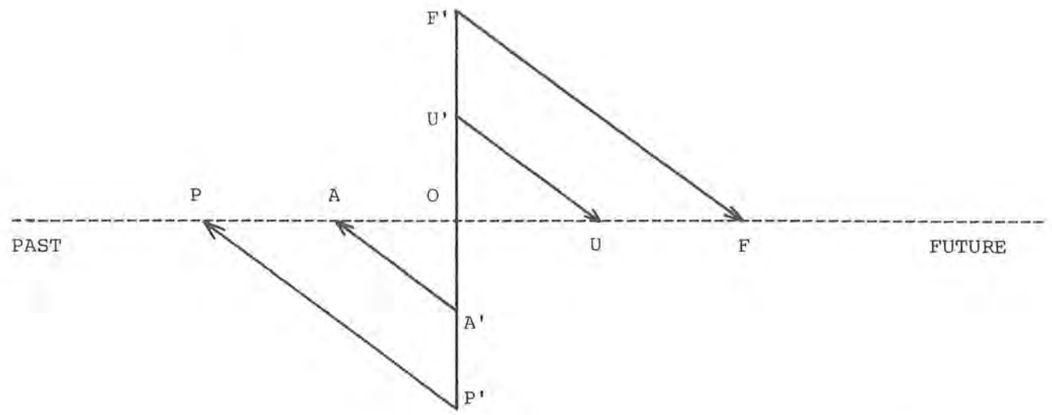
This solution can be understood on two levels. In both of these, time appears--not as an object, or as a thing among the things "outside" of us--but, in Augustine's words, as something "subjective." This does not mean that it is merely subjective. On the contrary, we are presented with a notion of a subject which transforms our ordinary understanding of subjectivity.

To begin to see this, we must first give the elements of the solution which we just suggested. When Augustine asserts of the past and the future, "it is only by being present that they are," he means that we have three components of presence: "a present of past things, a present of present things and a present of future things." The first, he says, exists as "memory," the second exists as "direct perception" and the third as "expectation" or anticipation. Since these three exist "only in the mind," it is in the mind, according to Augustine, that time is measured and has its proper being. This means that I measure elapsed time, for example, the time of a note that has sounded, by retaining in my memory the moments of its sounding. Similarly, if I hear in succession two sounds, first a short one and then a long one, Augustine writes that I must, while hearing the long sound, "retain the sound of the short one in order that I may compare the two for the purpose of measurement." This retention of moments in the ongoing now gives the now a certain depth. We do not apprehend it as an isolated instant. Its apprehension always involves a retained stretch of time that preceded. Augustine makes the same claim with regard to the future. Future moments of time are all co-present in the now and are apprehended in the attitude of expectation. Thus, we can, starting from the present moment of the now, view the future as definite stretches of anticipated time.

Augustine illustrates the workings of what he calls the "faculties" of expectation and memory by the example of reciting a psalm one knows. He writes:

> "Before I begin, my faculty of expectation is engaged by the whole of it. But once I have begun, as much of the psalm as I have removed from the province of expectation and relegated to the past now engages my memory, and the scope of the action which I am performing is divided between the two faculties of memory and expectation, the one looking back to the part which I have already recited, the other looking forward to the part which I have still to recite. But my faculty of attention is present all the while, and through it passes what was the future in the process of becoming the past. As the process continues, the province of memory is extended in proportion as that of expectation is reduced, until the whole of my expectation is absorbed. This happens when I have finished my recitation and it has all passed into the province of memory."

Edmund Husserl, a German philosopher, has provided us with a diagram which we can adapt so as to spatially represent this process:[9]



The horizontal line represents successively given time. Reading from left to right, each of the points of the line represent later moments. The O point represents the present now. Thus, to its left, OP stands for the past, while to its right, OF stands for the future. Now the reason why the line PF is drawn dotted is that neither the past nor the future exists except as present. As present, the past and the future are given by P'O and OF' respectively. In other words, the vertical line passing through the O point of the now gives us in its bottom half, the "province of memory," whose content is the retained past moments. In its top half, it gives us the province of expectation which consists of the anticipated future moments. The diagonal lines pointing away from the vertical towards the horizontal indicate the temporal references of what we retain or anticipate. Thus, the retained stretch of time P'A' has a reference to PA, a successively experienced stretch of past time. Similarly, the anticipated stretch, F'U', refers to FU, a duration in the future we shall experience. As the arrows indicate, the reference of what we retain is to greater and greater pastness as we descent along the vertical. P' is a retention of an earlier moment than A'. The same thing holds in a reverse fashion when we ascend the vertical. F' is the anticipation of a later moment than that anticipated by U'.

To make this diagram represent what happens when we recite a psalm, we must imagine the diagonal lines as remaining fixed while the vertical line is displaced, parallel to itself, from left to right. Since the intersection of the vertical and the horizontal line continues to designate the present now, this motion represents the advance of this now into successively later moments. Let us note that F', U', A', P' are determined as points of intersection between moving vertical and the fixed diagonal lines. Therefore, as the vertical is displaced to the right, the points of intersection will be seen to move downward. This means that the anticipated duration, represented by F'U', will sink on the vertical, gradually passing through the O point, the point representing the moment of the present. As it does so, the arrows denoting the temporal reference of F'U' will be reversed. When they pointed to future moments to the right of the vertical, they were directed to the right and downward. Pointing to the same moments that the moving vertical has placed to the left of the O point, the arrows will point upward and to the left. The reverse of the direction of the temporal reference means that the temporal stretch that was anticipated is now retained. The present of future things, F'U', has now become the

present of past things, P'A'. We, thus, have achieved a representation of a process in which, as Augustine says, "the province of memory is extended in proportion as that of expectation is reduced." Here we may observe that insofar as the past and future exist only as present, our diagram could have been reduced to the single vertical line with it O point. The movement of the line downward through the O point would, then, represent what is anticipated successively becoming actual and then passing into the retained past.

As we said, Augustine's solution is capable of being interpreted on two different levels. It can be looked upon as making time merely subjective. So understood, it reduces the reality of time to the memory and expectation of an individual subject. That this is not Augustine's meaning can be gathered from what he writes immediately following his description of the reciting of the psalm. He states: "What is true of the whole psalm is also true of all its parts and of each syllable. It is true of any longer action in which I may be engaged and of which the recitation of the psalm may only be a small part. It is true of a man's whole life, of which all his actions are parts. It is true of the whole history of mankind, of which each man's life is a part." The claim that Augustine is making here is that memory and expectation pass far beyond the faculties of an individual subject. The vertical line which represents the two must, in fact, be drawn as infinite.

This claim should not surprise us once we recall the dependence of the moments of time. The being-in-time of the present moment demands, in its dependence, the being of the past and the future. This implies that we cannot grant time's existence without also granting its indefinite continuance. Indefinite continuance must be assumed since the temporal being of the present moment demands the existence of the moment that replaces it as it slips into pastness. In other words, the present, in its dependence, is never without its anticipated future. This means that the vertical line, which represents on its upper half the series of anticipated moments, must be taken as indefinitely extended. Only by so conceiving it, can we make it represent the inexhaustibility of time. Since, by what we have just said, it follows that time can have no temporal beginning, we must also make the bottom half of the vertical indefinitely long. From that which has no beginning, an indefinite amount of time can be safely assumed to have elapsed.

Let us, for a moment, focus on the conception of time that we have reached. We have asserted that the indefinite continuance of time springs from the fact that every moment, in order to be in time, requires the being of the moments that surround it. It is easy to see that any finite stretch of time is also in the same condition of dependence. Its first and last moments, as existing in time, demand respectively the being of what precedes and what follows this finite stretch of time. Granting this, the dependence manifested by the moments and the finite extents of time is ultimately on nothing less than the whole of time. If this dependence is to be real, if it is to be anchored in being, then we have to say that the whole of time has an independent being. Otherwise put: If we grant the existence of the present moment, the moment at the O point of our diagram, then the chain of dependencies that links this with the whole of time demands that this whole be given an independent being. What precisely is this temporally independent being which we are pointing to? Its thought is the thought of its not being dependent on another time in order to be. It is, thus, by definition, the thought of the whole of time -- i.e., time as the abiding totality of its moments. That such a whole (or totality) does not itself move in time, i.e., progress like an individual thing that has a beginning and end -- follows from the way we have defined it. There is no "time," i.e., a time outside of the wholeness of time -- into which it could be said to progress. There is, we may observe, a name for this type of whole. It can be designated as a unique singular. Such a singular is defined as that which necessarily exists simply as one, and not as one among many individual singulars, each having the same nature. Given the dependence of the moment on the wholeness of time, we have to say that if time exists

-- that is, exists as a present, actual moment -- then it must also have the being of a unique singular. It must, in other words, have the quality of wholeness that excludes any time beyond itself.

All this has a reference to Augustine's argument that it was not in time that God created time. Time as a unique singular must be created all at once. It must, for any moment of it to appear, be entirely present as an inexhaustible whole.

Our representation of this whole is the indefinitely extended vertical line. The fact that this line is drawn vertically signifies the co-presence of every instant of time with the present now. Here, of course, we simply follow the necessity that has guided us before. This is that if being means presence in the now, both the future and the past, in order to be, must be present in the now. The line, then, represents the co-presence in the now of every moment of time; it represents the now in which "all is present." This last is Augustine's definition of eternity. With this, the now appears with an aspect opposite to that which we began with. Before, the now appeared as a pure example of the notion of becoming. Here, the now appears under the aspect of eternity.

Eternity is usually regarded as an unthinkable concept. Upon hearing the word, the mind generally stops and declares that the concept is beyond all experience. This, however, is not the case with Augustine's concept of eternity, which signifies the co-presence of distinct moments. Fragments of eternity are experienced by us at every instant of our lives. They are experienced every time we apprehend something in motion. A motion, for example, the falling of a pencil, is a temporally extended event. To apprehend it as such, I must grasp its moments as successive, i.e., as occupying distinct temporal positions. The successively grasped moments cannot, however, disappear from my consciousness the instant after their apprehension. To grasp as a whole the falling of a pencil, I must retain such moments in the present, that is, in the present of my act of apprehension. In other words, they must, as distinct moments, be co-present with my ongoing now. Thus, admitting that such co-presence is the characteristic of eternity, it is by virtue of a little fragment of eternity that I grasp my pencil's falling. That the now actually embraces more than this fragment, that, in fact, it must embrace the co-presence of the totality of time's moments, follows from what we said above: Given the dependence of the moments of time, no part of time can exist separately. In other words, time must exist as a whole or not at all.

We have reached a point where we can begin to understand the assertions of Augustine that we first quoted. He writes that "both the past and the future have their beginning and their end in the eternal present." He also claims that "eternity ... determines both past and future time." This eternity is the co-presence with the now of all the moments of time. It is by virtue of this co-presence that the individual moment can exist as present. The moment, as dependent, can only exist--i.e., be present at the O point--by virtue of the co-presence of the whole of time, the whole upon which it ultimately depends. Now, the relation of the future and the past to the present moment can be looked upon in two ways. We can think of them as standing outside of the present moment. Here, time appears as the horizontal line of our diagram. The O point, indicating the present, is both the beginning of the segment representing the future and the end of the segment representing the past. This beginning and end of the future and the past is, however, not just the present regarded as a single moment. Through it is drawn the vertical which represents the eternal present--i.e., the co-presence in the now of all that it depends upon. It is this eternal present which is, thus, always the beginning of the future and the end of the past when the latter are horizontally represented. To see this eternal present as determining both past and future time, we have to change our point of view and say that the past and the future do not exist outside of the present moment. In Augustine's words, "it is only by being present that they are." If we do this, we are left with what is signified by the vertical line of our diagram. The line

signifies eternity. The downward movement of the segments of the line represent the passage from anticipated to retained time. It also signifies eternity's determination of future and past time. The essential point illustrated by this spatial representation is simply this: If, in fact, past and future can be only as present, then this determination must be in terms of such presence. The co-presence of the past and future moments of time is, however, precisely what Augustine means by eternity.

With these thoughts, we can catch a glimpse of eternity's relation to existence. Let us make a distinction between being and existence. Being, we shall say, is co-presence in the now. It is the co-presence that is shared by the anticipated future, the actual present, and the retained past. Existence, according to its etymology, means standing out. Accordingly, we shall define it as the outstanding or exemplary condition of being present. It shall signify being at the 0 point of the now. With these definitions, eternity can be said to determine existence. For its determination of the passage of time is also a determination of the moments of time successively occupying the 0 point or actual present. It is a determination of the welling up of moments that successively take their place at the 0 point of the now. Each of these present moments is also supported by eternity. This follows insofar as each is dependent on the whole of time, on the co-presence of moments which we have called eternity.

From these reflections, two thoughts can arise. The first is that God, through his eternal word, i.e., through his eternity, both grants existence and supports existence from moment to moment. It is, we can say, through his "grace" that a thing exists and continues to exist. God is, in the eternal co-presence of moments, the being which supports the existing thing. This thought will be refined by us later, when we come to speak of the eternal ideas. The second thought which arises is that the notion of time as something subjective leads us, through the notion of eternity, to posit God as the ultimate subject. Put rather simply, it only is in God that the notions of anticipated and retained time can be indefinitely extended. It is only in him that they can be extended--as they must--to embrace the necessary wholeness of time.

III.

Let us now return to the problem from Parmenides which we discussed at the beginning of this lecture. As we recall the elements of this problem are two necessary, but apparently incompatible demands: On the one hand, the idea must be like the thing. This follows insofar as it is from our perceptions of the thing that we rise to the thought of its idea. On the other hand, if we are to avoid an infinite regress, the idea must not be like the thing. In particular, it cannot, as the thing is, be a material, spatial-temporal object. A material thing cannot have the being that defines the idea. As we saw, a material entity cannot be one thing and also be present in many.

How, then can the idea both be like and unlike the thing? Our answer involves first of all our defining the idea in terms of our discussion of time. The idea is, we affirm, the shining through of eternity in each of the present, fleeting moments. It is, in terms of our diagram, the result of the vertical line passing through the ongoing now point. This definition does not make the idea into something material, i.e., a spatial-temporal entity. It does, however, allow us to say that the idea is the very presence of a thing. In fact, insofar as being and presence continue to be the same for us, the definition allows us to say that the idea is the very being of a thing.

At first our definition may seem mysterious. It is, however, composed of common notions. Thus, when we say that the idea is the very presence or being of a thing, we are affirming that we grasp the thing as there, as present before us in the very

same process by which we grasp its idea. The idea is one thing in many. Thus, our claim is that it is through our recognition of identical elements in a multiplicity that we grasp both a thing and its idea.

Where are we to locate this multiplicity? Let us recall our assertion that it is from the perceptions of a thing that we rise to the thought of its idea. It is also from these same perceptions that we apprehend the thing as present, as being there before our eyes. Now, if we take the multiplicity in question to refer to our perceptions of some object, we can begin to see the type of entity required to solve the Parmenidean problem.[10] Let us consider, in abstraction, an individual perception. We say "in abstraction" because, like the moment that contains it, such a perception is never actually discrete or separable from those that preceded and follow it. When we do consider the individual perception, it shows us a remarkable characteristic. It is both like and unlike the thing perceived. It is like it insofar as the content of the perception becomes for us the content of the thing perceived. Thus, the redness I see can, under certain conditions, become for me the redness of an object present to me. We shall mention these conditions later. First, however, let us observe how unlike this perception is to its object. The perception, as contained in a moment of time, does not endure. It exists, in the "outstanding" sense of the term, existence, only for an instant. The object, however, continues to exist, and hence to endure moment after moment as it affords us continually new perceptions. The object, moreover, is a spatial thing. We can measure it and predicate of it, in relation to ourselves, largeness or smallness. None of this is possible with regard to an individual perception. Let us say that I see a tower in the distance. Can I tell from my single perception if the tower is large or small? Can I put a tape measure to my mind and measure my perception as so many inches or feet across? The obvious answer is that I cannot. In fact, as a slight reflection will show, it is only through the temporal ordering and arrangement of my perceptions that I have any notion of the size of the tower. I predicate largeness of the tower because, as I approach it, my perception of it takes up more and more of my visual field. Similarly, I take the tower to be a three-dimensional spatial object because, as I walk around it, my perceptions arrange themselves as a series of perspectual views. All of this is, of course, very elementary. It does, however, show us that it is not through a single perception that we arrive at the predicates appropriate to spatial-temporal, material things.

Let us repeat the question we raised: Where are we to locate the multiplicity through which we perceive both the thing and its idea? Taking the multiplicity as referring to our perceptions, the answer is obvious. All of our perceptions, along with the moments which contain them, are retained in the ongoing now. Their proper place is in that eternity which is the co-presence of the totality of retained and anticipated moments. Now, when we regard what we have called the shining through of this eternity, we see the conditions that allow us to grasp an object. We observe first of all, that although the retained perceptions are distinct in their temporal references, showing themselves as more or less past, this does not mean that we apprehend them one by one. On the contrary, we view them all together. This follows from the non-independence of the moments that contain them. This non-independence means that we cannot think of something as past without also thinking of the moments and contents that follow this in time. What we retain is, therefore, apprehended as a unified perceptual experience. It is not apprehended as discrete moments and discrete perceptions. What is the result of our apprehending our retained perceptions "all together"? Such perceptions, when viewed as a whole, are placed for us in a unity of coincidence. By this, I mean that they have a presence that is analogous to that of a series of overlapping transparencies. Now, in this coincidence, contents that are identical and, to a lesser extent, contents that are similar in quality, act to reinforce the presence of their qualities. The result of this, I believe, is the shining through of a one in many that allows us to grasp both

the thing and its idea.

Let me illustrate this by an example. I take my pencil and continually turn it in my hand. As I do so, the contents that I perceptually experience constantly enter into the retention of my memory. The pencil has only a finite number of features and, thus, the contents that I do retain, as I constantly view it from one side and then another, will recur. In the unity of coincidence in which all these contents are placed, the recurrent contents will reinforce one another. They will, as we put, "shine through." This shining through has, we say, two specific effects. In the first place, it allows me to affirm that my present, momentary perception is not an isolated experience, but is rather a perception of some object. The content of this perception is re-enforced by the identical, recurring contents that I have previously experienced. It, thus, attains a reference to what I have previously experienced. It becomes a perception of a feature of an enduring, object. With this I pass from a judgment of perception, for example, the judgment that I see yellowness, to a judgment of experience. The latter consists in the affirmation that there is something there, enduring before me, of which I am presently having perceptions. It is a claim concerning being. The second effect of this shining through is the apprehension, in a primitive form, of the idea of the object. The similar elements which recur and which allow me to unify my perceptions as perceptions of definite features of one and the same object, also allow me to predicate definite qualities of the object. They give me the definite qualities which form the elements of the idea of the object, for example, the yellowness, length, and shape of a pencil.

Several things can be said about this solution. The first is that the idea that arises in this process is both like and unlike the object. Its likeness consists in the fact that its content is identical to that of the object. Its unlikeness consists in the fact that it itself is not a spatial-temporal object. A spatial-temporal object appears perspectively. It changes its appearance from moment to moment as we view it from different sides. What we retain, however, is fixed in eternity. We cannot take a remembered perceptual experience and examine it like a physical object, turning it around so as to view it from a side which we have not yet seen. Because of this, the idea which results from the shining through of what we retain is not like and can never be like the thing in the sense of itself being something spatial-temporal. The second point is that the process, which we described as giving us the idea of a single object, can be repeated again and again to give us the idea of a number of objects. Thus, I can view in succession a number of pencils. The same process of retention, unification and reinforcement of similar contents will occur. Here, however, the resultant idea will apply not to one but to many pencils.

When we ask how far we can continue this process, two alternative answers appear. We may take our description as purely psychological in the modern sense. It will then be taken as applying only to the individual subject with his limited abilities. Alternately, we may take it as applying to the one subject who is adequate to the necessary wholeness of time. Here, anticipation and retention extend to the totality of moments and possible contents contained in these moments. The shining through that occurs through the coincidence of these contents will then be a shining through of ideas that are truly eternal. In this case, the "place" of the ideas will be in that eternity which Augustine calls the Word of God. We mentioned earlier that God, in the eternal co-presence of moments, is the being which supports the existing thing. We may now refine this thought by saying that the ideas that have their place in this co-presence support not just the existence but also the definite qualities of the thing.

Why should we, in fact, follow Augustine into this second interpretation? The answer, I believe, is contained in the notion of time. Time, as we said, is a unique singular. If it does exist, it must exist as a whole that has no beyond. The same can be said for the idea. Each idea, if it does exist, exists as an all embracing whole. Thus, the idea of man properly embraces all men. It is not added to by the

multiplication of examples falling under its concept. It is, thus, a unique singular in the same sense as time is: It is one thing and has no beyond in terms of individuals of a similar type. Granting this, we have to say that if such an idea is to arise, it must do so through the presence of the wholeness of time. This follows insofar as its notion involves the presence of all that has been and all that will be an example of its notion. Does such an idea exist? Given the above, we can say that it exists as certainly as the wholeness of time exists. Admitting the dependence of the moment, we can also say that it exists as certainly as this present moment does.

Let me end this lecture with a question. Has this moment really ended, or has it been preserved in being by you?

Footnotes:

1. Parm., 132 d-3; trans. my own.
2. See Ibid., 131 a ff.
3. See Ibid., 133 b ff.
4. All direct quotations from Augustine are taken from "Book XI," Saint Augustine--Confessions, trans., R.S. Pine-Coffine, Penguin Classics, LIII4, London, 1964.
5. See Augustine, "Concerning Eighty Three Different Questions, Question 46," The Essential Augustine, trans. Vernon J. Bourke, New York, 1964, p. 62
6. Timaeus, 52 a, trans. Jowett.
7. Ibid.
8. See M. Heidegger, "Was ist Metaphysik," Wegmarken, Frankfurt am Main, 1967, p. 6, pp. 16-17.
9. For the original diagram, see E. Husserl, Zur Phaenomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins, ed. R. Boehm, Haag, 1966, p. 28.
10. The Platonic word for "idea" is eidos. It is derived from eidon, the second aorist of eido which means "to perceive." Our analysis of perception is, thus, an attempt to get at the root meaning of eidos.

Emma's Reconciliation Of Manners And Honesty

Lenore Brown

Mrs. Elton and Mr. Knightley are discussing the strawberry picking party in Chapter 42 of Emma. Mrs. Elton says:

> Nothing can be more simple, you see....There is to be no form or parade--a sort of gypsy party. We are to walk about your gardens, and gather the strawberries ourselves, and sit under trees;--and whatever else you may like to provide, it is all to be out of doors--a table spread in the shade, you know. Everything as natural and simple as possible. Is not that your idea?

Mr. Knightley replies:

> Not quite. My idea of the simple and the natural will be to have the table spread in the dining-room. The nature and the simplicity of ladies and gentlemen, with their servants and furniture, I think is best observed by meals within doors.

Mr. Knightley firmly believes that form and regularity are necessary for ladies and gentlemen. By contrast, gypsies, no matter how gay Mrs. Elton may imagine their formless wandering, live without any regulations in their behavior or actions, which Harriet unfortunately discovers when they attack her. The gypsies' lack of form threatens her mental and physical well-being. All the contrivances of the dining room, on the other hand, are expressly for the mental and physical comfort of its occupants. Drafts are stopped and polite conversation is served so that ladies and gentlemen can continue being ladies and gentlemen with the least amount of effort.

The dining room is the paradigm of manners in Highbury society. "Rational society"--so called because it is considering or considerate, not necessarily logical--holds forth in contrived settings such as dining rooms or balls, with manners equally contrived. In Hartfield with Mr. Knightley Emma may speak as candidly as she chooses, but in the Weston's drawing room, even with the people she is familiar with, she must listen politely to Mr. Elton as he monopolizes her attention, though she would rather hear about the expected arrival of Frank Churchill. Such sacrifices make for others' comfort in Highbury.

Although some of these manners may seem insincere to us (instead of buying a screen to keep the drafts away from Mr. Woodhouse, we would probably rather ask him to stay home), they are necessary in making everyday life in Highbury more agreeable, just as not bumping into one another when dancing makes dancing more agreeable. Since the dance in the small room (Chapter 29) must continue, the fewer toes stepped on, the better. The reason for providing one another with the comfort of manners is comfort itself.

Another element necessary for polite society, besides the amenities of the dining room, is mannerly language. Indeed, it is one of the most useful vehicles for making others comfortable. While talking to Miss Bates, Emma hears of another letter from Jane Fairfax, and though she detests hearing the contents of it, she replies, "Have

you heard from Miss Fairfax so lately? I am extremely happy. I hope she is well?"(19) On the other hand, it is only when she is in the completely artless environment of the Box Hill party that she asks Miss Bates to limit herself to uttering no more than three dull things at one time--a clever, yet viciously honest request. She asks this after the group has split up and wandered formlessly, like gypsies. When she is severely chastized by Mr. Knightley, we realize that language in Highbury must be as artificial as its manners. It must be conscious of and caring for its listeners.

Yet good language is described as being more than mannerly in Emma. Austen praises Mr. Knightley for speaking in "plain, unaffected, gentleman-like English"(51). The language of society should be plain and unaffected in addition to polite and caring. But how can gentlemanly language be plain and unaffected when gentlemanly manners are not--that is, when the way to make other people feel comfortable is to be artificially concerned or to hide some of the truth?

The book answers this question while creating a new one. The manners of Highbury, though gentlemanly, are supposed to be plain and unaffected also, so that whatever permits two seemingly contradictory qualities in Highbury's manners also makes those qualities possible in its language. A man should have "truth and principle...in every transaction of his life," Emma says(46). Mr. Knightley also tells Emma to value "the beauty of truth and sincerity in all our dealings with each other"(51). Have we seen truth and sincerity in the dining room? Is Emma plain and unaffected when she tells Miss Bates that she is very happy about the news of Jane's letter? Does her caring for Miss Bates mitigate the insincerity of her speech and manners? Honesty is the norm between Emma and Mr. Knightley, but can it be so easily maintained throughout Highbury? Mr. Knightley actually upbraids Emma for speaking with too much truth at the Box Hill party. Surely the principle he praises does not consist of applying truth and sincerity to others only when it is flattering to do so. That is no principle.

A similar paradox arises when Mrs. Weston, in planning her Box Hill party, wants to have it in some "quiet, unpretending, elegant way, infinitely superior to the bustle and preparation, the regular eating and drinking, and pic-nic parade of the Eltons and the Sucklings"(46). "Unpretending and elegant" echoes "unaffected and gentleman-like," and will help to explain the paradox. Mrs. Weston wants an elegant party, not a picnic, which is not only a way of eating but is any carefree experience, like the carefree strolling of Mrs. Elton. She wants form, not a spontaneous, carefree, and careless troup of gypsies. Elegance for her is not synonymous with Mrs. Elton's pearl-studded dress; her notion of an elegant party is a well-chosen or well-selected one, like an elegant proof. She has thought everything through carefully. (In contrast, Mrs Elton presents her ideas for a strawberry party in a sloppy, inelegant way.) The connection between elegant and gentleman-like is now clear. Well-chosen, well-thought-out elegance is appropriate for a caring, considerate lady or gentleman. All the pains and contrivances of Highbury manners are thought out and well-chosen for the comfort of all.

With that explanation society's manners lose some of their stain of unnaturalness in our eyes, and the paradox of "unaffected and elegant" weakens. Emma is not pretending when she diplomatically tries to divert her father from the controversy over Mr. Perry versus Mr. Wingfield; she is considering the feelings of the others, and elegantly choosing a way to avoid more pain when she asks Mr. John Knightley "about your friend Mr. Grahm's intending to have a bailiff from Scotland"(12). An elegant proof is not insincere, even though it is made with thought, care, and no guesswork, just as politeness is not insincere, even though it arises from thought, care and nothing left to chance. Sincerity has nothing to do with spontaneity. One may at first be tempted to laugh at Miss Bates but it is not pretense that one wants her to have some dignity.

Often, however, among Highbury's well-bred we see truth and elegance forgotten, and forgotten at some of the most dramatic parts of the book. For example, Emma loses sight of curtesy or elegance when Harriet confesses her love for Mr. Knightley. She "hastily" replies, "Have you any idea of Mr. Knightley's returning your affection?"(42). Elegance is never hasty in Highbury, especially in Hartfield, where every change is accomplished slowly for Mr. Woodhouse's benefit. Harriet, exposed to many traumas thus far, usually handles them well, at least in public, and so when Mr. Woodhouse's footsteps are heard in the hall, it is significant that "Harriet was much too agitated to encounter him. 'She could not compose herself,'"(47) and flees the room through another door. Emma's attack has discomposed her as much as the gypsy attack did. Harriet must flee from both. Composure, consideration, and society all crumble in this scene, because of Emma's thoughtlessness.

When Emma examines her heart after blurting out her question, she discovers the cause of her agitation: she loves Mr. Knightley and is jealous of Harriet. Although she is usually elegant and sincere with others, she has not until now been sincere or elegant with herself. Having honesty and manners with other people presupposes sincerity and elegance within oneself. The very thing--her quickness of mind--that causes her to deceive herself, oddly enough is also responsible for her cleverness and her poor matchmaking abilities. Emma can cleverly decipher a puzzle: she can scramble letters around in her mind quickly, and when they form a recognizable group (a word), she knows that her solution is correct. She also quickly guesses words at charades, and when two of them -- court and ship -- combine to make a third--courtship--she knows that she must have the right word. Later, when guessing who has whose affections, she quickly scrambles people around in her mind. But life presents no way for her to check her answers to show her whether she is correct. She can guess with one clue that Jane Fairfax and Mr. Dixon are in love, but she can not compare her answer to any pattern; nothing "clicks." The idea of Jane and Mr. Dixon has no second half of a charade to match the first clue with, even if it were true. Mental thoroughness does not necessarily develop from cleverness or mental quickness; just because "a mind lively and at ease...can see nothing that does not answer" (27), it does not necessarily answer correctly. Emma has tried to guess why Mr. Knightley must never marry, but she is content with her first answer of wanting to preserve little Henry's inheritance. It is not until she has the second clue--her own jealousy--to check her first answer against, that she knows that she is in love. Emma then learns the whole truth "with the speed of an arrow"(47). She was not sincere with herself about her feelings of jealousy or of love.

We see Mr. Knightley also forgetting the rules of polite society because he fails to apply them within himself. He is insincere with Emma. When he asks her whether she has noticed any love between Frank and Jane, she replies firmly but playfully, "no". Although he feels obligated to protect Emma's reputation, feeling, and safety from the affections of "a young man who seemed to love without feeling"(42), and although he is willing "to risk everything that might be involved in an unwelcome interference"(42), he leaves Hartfield irritated and without pursuing the subject further. He leaves not precisely lying to Emma, but not telling her what he sincerely feels. Sometimes it is simply polite to neglect to mention certain opinions in Highbury, especially when they are careless and hurtful. But here, his omission is not tactful, but improper, because he wants to "preserve her" and does not.

He flees Hartfield "that he might not be irritated into an absolute fever, by the fire which Mr. Woodhouse's tender habits required almost every evening throughout the year"(42). But he runs away from more than Hartfield's fires, he runs away from his own. It is ironic that he has told Emma earlier that if she "were as much guided by nature in her estimate of men and women [as she is concerning children], we might always think alike"(12). Mr. Knightley himself needs to be guided more by the spontaneity of nature and less by judgement. It is a new feeling for him to want

Emma all for himself. He has always loved her but her affection for him has never before been threatened; now that she flirts with Frank he must accept his new feelings of jealousy. But he is so far from being a creature of impulse that he cannot acknowledge his own impulsive feelings. Even when he finds out that Frank has supposedly deserted Emma, he wants only to make his affection for her a little more felt. Only once does he succumb to impulse; his proposal "had been the work of the moment, the immediate effect of what he had heard, on his feelings....in the momentary conquest of eagerness over judgement"(49). So Mr. Knightley, in denying the feelings that appear in a moment, is not truthful with Emma; he breaks his own code of truth and sincerity within himself; consequently, he fails to be a gentleman with Emma.

Is it simply impossible to be as honest and thoughtful within oneself as it is to be so with others? Or must we first be honest and thoughtful within ourselves before we can be so with others? In a house that is "just what it ought to be, and...looks what it is" (42) it seems that its company must be that way too; that is, they must know who they are before they can look like what they are. Or must the appearances be doomed never to correspond with the self?

How would one prepare for the dining room if outward and inward thoughts did correspond? In other words, how can one be sincere and thoughtful, or unpretending and elegant, to oneself as well as to others? Must a gentleman periodically excuse himself from the table for a few years in order to understand his true feelings and thoughts? Or do his true feelings and thoughts become apparent in society and to himself gradually, so that he may simultaneously pass the peas and act on his own true feelings? How can Highbury prevent double standards between its public and its private lives?

Mr. Knightley retreats from society to understand himself; for after Emma tells him that Frank does not love Jane, he takes "a hasty leave, and walks home to the coolness and solitude of Donwell Abbey"(42). The Abbey's coolness and solitude make it out to be the very monastery its name implies. An abbey is a place for contemplation and reflection, and Donwell itself is a pun on done well. Mr. Knightley does everything well there; he examines his soul carefully, thoroughly, and elegantly. Alone he has no sudden surprises of love or jealousy to examine at a moment's notice. He can accept Frank Churchill's presence in Highbury and think it through. His heated jealousy is cooled now that he is away from Hartfield, that is, now that he is away from those who kindle his fires.

But does this retreat, a retreat to monkish living, prepare him for society? Donwell has "all the old neglect of prospect" (42) both of its stream as well as of Highbury's lively society. It is all very well to contemplate one's love, but how is that possible in the atmosphere of a monastery, the very atmosphere that cools his love? How can he understand or feel there the sort of thing that happens at a dinner or a ball? He may anticipate another man cutting in on his partner, but he will not feel it until it happens to him. Mr. Knightley had years to anticipate Frank's arrival and Emma's reaction to him, but he could fully feel its effects only when Frank actually arrived. The intensity of some feelings are due to their unexpectedness. Accustomed to planning the locations of his paths and fences, Mr. Knightley finds the very rapidity of feelings that are generated in public to be new to him. His elegant mind has much exercise at Donwell Abbey, but not so his sincere mind.

Although the residents of Highbury need to be sincere and thoughtful in their own minds in order to be unpretending and caring with one another in the dining room, it is now clear that they need to be in the dining room itself to be aware of some of those feelings and thoughts. And in fact, members of Highbury society are put into the dining room from a very young age. While they fill their plates, they are also filling themselves; they become the people they are because they are put into the dining room. In this sense society is rather artificial, because it is imposed on

one by other people. Insincerity exists at least temporarily--as when a child first taught to say "thank you" may not necessarily mean it.

Although this polite society is somewhat artificial, it is nevertheless firmly a part of everyone except the gypsies in Emma. In fact, it is unnatural to leave Highbury society once there. Mr. Knightley is away from Donwell Abbey (seclusion) "five hours where [Emma] is absent [from Hartfield (society)] one," according to Emma in chapter 36. Emma can certainly never pull away from Highbury, and Mr. Knightly runs to it. Even Donwell Abbey is partly "comfortable," that is, ready to serve others. In addition to its being Mr. Knightley's retreat, it is what it ought to be--the home of a "family untainted in understanding or gentility."

If solitude is not natural for the people of Highbury, neither is being alone in a crowd or estranged from one's group. At the Box Hill party, there was a "want of union" among the picnickers because "they separated too much into parties" (43). Being alone in a group is as wrong for them as wandering like gypsies.

Solitude and society are both slightly unnatural for gentlemen and ladies. What is most natural to them are the most striking parts of the book, where someone has a strong feeling for another person, knows it, and expresses it. Sincerity and caring truly merge here; neither quality belongs exclusively to their personal lives or exclusively to their social world. When Emma visits Jane to wish her well on her engagement and to apologize for having hurt her, Mrs. Elton's presence makes it "expedient to compress all her friendly and all her congratulatory sensations into a very, very earnest shake of the hand" (53). The true joy caused by their sincerity of feeling and caring gives us a hint as to what members of society are meant to be. In contrast, we feel the effect of its members acting merely as they ought when Emma and Jane follow "the other ladies out of the room, arm in arm, with an appearance of good will highly becoming to the beauty and grace of each" (34). Emma has felt and contemplated both care and joy in private before she shakes Jane's hand, and both care and joy are heightened when she is with Jane. She has no such contemplation or feeling before walking arm in arm with Jane; indeed she has only come to a hurried conclusion about Jane's "affair" with Mr. Dixon.

We witness the same thing happening after Frank writes his reflective letter to Mrs. Weston. He, Jane, and Emma are at the Westons' when Frank asks Emma if a certain ornament will be beautiful in Jane's dark hair. "'Very beautiful, indeed,' replied Emma: and she spoke so kindly, that he gratefully burst out, 'How delighted I am to see you again!'" (54) Frank and Emma are finally honest with and caring for each other. A little earlier, they had both sincerely reflected on their feelings for one another--Frank in his letter and Emma upon hearing the news of their engagement. Nothing is contradictory. The spontaneous feelings generated at the Westons', the sincerity with the self, the deep reflections and the expressed kindnesses all match up in this happy moment. The public and private selves do not have to disagree.

The most striking scene, and the one that unites unaffectness and gentility, is the proposal chapter. Both Emma and Mr. Kinghtley have realized their love, yet feel it more when faced with each other; both have reflected thoughtfully on their love, yet care more for each other in person. They are sincere and spontaneous in their love. No hypocrisy exists here between truth and caring, as it might exist between Emma's true feelings for Mrs. Elton and her politeness to her.

Do Emma and Mr. Knightley need Highbury (polite society) for such a meshing of truth and elegance? Love would unite these two qualities anyway, but in Highbury they unite often.

At a dinner party at Hartfield Mrs. Weston's "looks and words had nothing to restrain them. She was happy, she knew she was happy, and knew she ought to be happy"(35). Like Emma, who had English to check her scrambled letters against to discover whether they "clicked," Mrs. Weston has a model of living to check her actions and feeling against: that ever-present "ought" throughout Emma. Emma

learns about this model during the merging of her spontaneous mind and Mr. Knightley's elegant mind, when she says "just what she ought, of course"(49), Mrs. Weston knows that she "must love Frank." That is one precept in the model which she can check her feelings and actions against. Privately, she has carefully and caringly thought about and worried about Frank with all her elegance of mind. She can express that love to him and feel it more when she sees him. She does not love Frank simply because she is supposed to; but that pre-established code of sincerely caring for others strengthens the love which she privately feels for him. She knows she loves her new son without any "oughts," but those "oughts" help her realize that she is meant to love him.

Just as Mrs. Weston feels that she is meant to love Frank, because she does and because she ought to, so do the people at the ball (that is, in society itself) feel they were meant to be there, because they do find it "delightful" and because it should be delightful. The shrubbery around Hartfield, like polite society, gives those who are in it the feeling that they are meant to be there. Like being in society, shrubbery is a combination of what really is--the plants--and what should be--formal paths and shaped hedges. It is a visible combination of truth and elegance, and undoubtedly helps to combine Emma's spontaneity with Mr. Knightley's principles.

> Never had the exquisite sight, smell, sensation of nature, tranquil, warm, and brilliant after a storm, been more attractive to her. She longed for the serenity they might gradually introduce; and...she lost no time in hurrying into the shrubbery.--There, with spirits freshened, and thoughts a little relieved, she had taken a few turns, when she saw Mr. Knightley passing through the garden door, and coming towards her.(49)

The garden cleanses and restores and brings together the two characters. Society is needed in the marriage of sincerity and elegance of mind, as its image, the garden, makes clear. In nature, one may enjoy its "brilliance after a storm," but one enjoys it as a visitor. In the garden, however, Emma's spirits are freshened and her mind is relieved because she belongs there. She knows where the paths turn and what the flowers will look like; this is not an adventurous walk, it is a comforting one. It is also comforting because one is aware that everyone in it knows where the paths turn. A Highbury resident knows that the principles of honesty and manners belong to everyone. The beauty of the garden transcends nature because one feels he belongs there. The beauty of living in society transcends truth and elegance because, rather than simply enjoying that beauty, one is at home in it.

Edgar's Growth In *King Lear*

Christian Holland

Edmund begins his plot against father and brother first by writing a letter which sets out his own villainous designs upon Gloucester's title and estate, next by forging the letter with Edgar's signature, and last by directing his father to read it and make of it what he will. Having just witnessed the breach of the bond between Lear and Cordelia, "there's father against child" (I, ii, 121), Gloucester persuades himself of the likelihood of the letter's contents, "there's son against father" (120). He blindly exchanges Edgar for Edmund -- a would-be parricide -- and Edmund for Edgar -- a dutiful son -- just as Lear earlier exchanged Cordelia for Goneril and Regan, and Regan and Goneril for Cordelia. That's how Edmund's plot begins to take shape. But if he is to fashion a fully formed drama, he must practice his craft on Edgar.

When Edgar first enters King Lear Edmund announces his brother's role in his drama: "Pat! he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy" (145). In early comedy the plot was made to seem all of a piece until suddenly, through some unexpected and timely event, the parts fell together to form a whole and bring the play to a close. Similarly, Edmund's plot is fully worked out only through the unexpected and timely entrance of his brother. Edgar's role is to be the conclusion of Edmund's drama -- in more ways than Edmund knows. But Edmund's drama is an imitation in miniature of Shakespeare's greater drama. Possibly Edgar plays the same role in the play as a whole.

Edmund's words have a special significance intended by the greater dramatist. Catastrophe and comedy appear just this once in King Lear. They apply fittingly only to Edgar. Edgar is the conclusion of Shakespeare's drama literally because he delivers the final quatrain, but more importantly because he alone among the survivors of King Lear is not a "ruin'd piece of nature" (IV, vi, 136), he alone at the play's close is ripe to take Lear's role as king. Edgar is like a person out of a comedy because his characteristic movement is upward. He starts out in a state of ignorance and shallowness, "contemned and flattered" (IV, i, 2); he passes through a period of awesome suffering requiring great patience with Lear on the heath and Gloucester on the cliff; and the outcome of his travails is an enlightened, deepened, ennobled, and continued life.

In the most pedestrian way, scene by scene, act by act, I shall follow Edgar through the play paying particular attention to his dress, speech, and acts. I want to learn something about what it means to grow up, up to the point where a man is ready to be king and rule over others. Along the way Edgar may serve as a guide through the thorns and thickets of Lear's and Gloucester's characters. Edgar aside, trying to make this passage is the greatest challenge and the greatest reward of any reading of King Lear.

i. His Father's Son

At the outset Gloucester is jocose and well-meaning, free and easy, but short-sighted, careless, gullible, irresponsible, and superstitious. In the opening scene, betraying his lack of insight into his own wrongdoing, he jests with Kent about what

"good sport" was had at his bastard son's "making" (I, i, 23). He tells Kent in the very presence of Edmund that he has "so often blushed to acknowledge [the whoreson]" that now he is "brazed to't" (10). Gloucester's lack of care for the feelings and the dignity of his son is the first showing of that cruelty which is characteristic of King Lear, the cruelty which arises from an inability or an unwillingness to recognize and respect a fellow person. With such words and deeds Gloucester hardens the unfeeling and indignant portion of Edmund's heart; other more considerate words and deeds might have encouraged Edmund to respond to his father with gratitude rather than treachery. Appropriately, Edgar later refers to the place where Gloucester begat Edmund as "dark and vicious" (V, iii, 175). Gloucester's dealings with others are shrouded in darkness. He takes note of the people and the actions which surround him, but he does not look beneath the shadowy surface to see them as they are. He is easily gulled by Edmund's forged letter. Showing no grasp of either Edmund's or Edgar's character, he accepts the whole story even though, or perhaps because, it portends his own death at his elder son's hands. Right away he takes it upon himself to "apprehend" the "abominable villain" (I, ii, 83) as if this were the responsible thing to do rather than going deeper into the matter. Gloucester finally attributes Edgar's supposed "unnatural dealing" (III, iii, 1) to the "late eclipses of the sun and moon" (I, ii, 111).

Parodying his father's superstition, Edmund promises Edgar that a prediction based upon an astrological study has proved correct:

> . . . . . as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent, death, dearth, dissolution of ancient amities, divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against King and nobles, needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches . . . . (142-152).

As a noble Edgar is threatened with harm; what is more, so are his father and his king. But since Edmund puts his true account of past, present, and future happenings in the context of a study of the stars, Edgar pays him no heed. Edgar's duty is to ask his brother what evidence besides the stars he has to demonstrate that the prediction is correct. Instead Edgar questions Edmund in jest: "How long have you been a sectary astronomical?" (163). "Come, come," says Edmund, gratified to discover that his brother will be as easily gulled as his father, "when saw you my father last?" (164). Edgar does not remark upon Edmund's patronizing my father and informs his brother, "Why, the night gone by" (165). It makes sense that Gloucester and Edgar see one another in the dark. Neither understands the other. There is no trust between them.

Edgar says almost nothing in this scene. What we learn from his silence is that he is without experience and prudence. He is passive, untried, untested. Nine times he speaks: five are questions; three are simple answers to Edmund's carefully crafted questions; and the last is a dumb recognition of fact: "Some villain hath done me wrong" (177).

Edmund's exchange with his brother is full of irony, all at Edgar's expense. Edgar is shown to be an innocent fool. When Edmund advises his older brother to "go armed" (124), and Edgar, in weakness and dismay and fear, responds, "Armed, brother?" (125), Edmund says,"Brother, I advise you to the best. Go armed. I am no honest man if there be any good meaning toward you" (186). It is noteworthy that Edgar is not armed, that he is even taken aback at the thought of being armed. A true nobleman, like the great knight of La Mancha, ought to be clothed with a sword.

Gloucester being a poor father it comes as no surprise that Edgar is idle and asleep, smugly secure and protected, and that he fails to recognize that his position is a privileged one which carries with it weighty responsibilities. Edgar does not feel the presence of others who are less fortunate than he is and who rely on men

with native abilities such as he has. Edmund sums up Gloucester and Edgar with his special flair:

> A credulous father! and a brother noble,
> Whose nature is so far from doing harms
> That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
> My practices ride easy! (182-185)

Childlike, honest foolishness is endearing and beautiful to behold. From it shines forth the goodness of simplicity, and we are reminded that the world abounds in good things. Be that as it may, Edgar is unknowingly aiding wrongdoing by being foolish and by not doing. It does not seem possible to be a child and a fool and still act responsibly in a world which must withstand the fiendish exploits of an Edmund, or a Goneril or a Regan.

Edmund is clever, colorful, passionate, and determined; he is a great reader of others' weaknesses, but a poor reader of their strengths. In comparison, Edgar is dull, pale, and close to lifeless; he is unripe; he has no convictions and no thoughts about what might be the right thing to do. If Edgar, like Lear and Gloucester, "hath ever but slenderly known himself" (I, i, 290), it is because, like them, he has not opened his heart to the sorrows of his fellows, or to his own responsibility for their sorrows, or to the role he ought to play in bringing relief to those who are in sorrow. Edmund laughingly uses the word "noble" to describe his brother; he scoffs at nobility as if it had everything to do with what is legitimate and what is not. Edgar will begin to seek out what he presently lacks, a nobility of heart, not of name or of fortune, a nobility which he will find only by actively feeling and caring for others, by graciously accepting others' griefs as his own. But to feel and to care and to accept, he must suffer.

Upon hearing that Cornwall is due to arrive at Gloucester's castle, Edmund insinuates that Edgar has "spoken 'gainst" the duke" (II, i, 25). Edgar's response is a surprised and frightened, "I am sure on't, not a word" (29). These are Edgar's only words in this his second scene. He is unchanged since his first appearance as a simple and gentle, but blind, vulnerable, stupidly innocent, spoiled rich kid. When Edmund senses Gloucester's approach he quick-wittedly draws his sword on Edgar: "Draw, seem to defend yourself; now quit you well" (33). Edgar has taken his younger brother's earlier advice and armed himself, but Edgar with a sword cuts a more idiotic figure than Edgar without a sword. He has the weapon with which to act, the weapon of his station; when he does not act his will is shown to be weak and flaccid. As soon as Edgar draws, if he draws, he flees to avoid being seen by his father. He cannot stand up for the right of his case; he cannot use his sword to defend himself; still less can he use his sword to conquer his foe. Edgar will begin to gain readiness for his next and last encounter with Edmund by growing, by learning about what vileness and harshness can live in the world of men's words and deeds, by seeing the need for noblemen to take up arms against the powers of ingratitude and self-righteousness. But to grow and to learn and to see, he must endure the storm's thunder and rainfall.

ii. Poor Naked Wretch

Kent, in disguise and in the stocks, asserts that "nothing almost sees miracles/But misery" (II, ii, 163). Just then Edgar appears, in misery. He has fled from his father's castle, his own home, and is now in a wood, and out of breath as the aspirants in his speech show: "I heard myself proclaimed,/And by the happy hollow of a tree/Escaped the hunt . . .(III, i, 1-3). Gloucester has ordered that Edgar be sought out, captured, and punished for his crime. He has sent Edgar's picture "far and near, that all the kingdom may have due note of him" (II, i, 84). The stage directions demand that Gloucester be surrounded by torchlight when he utters these words. He is a cave-dweller. He is certain that he knows his son when

all he has to go on is hearsay, and he seeks to make others know Edgar as he knows him -- with the aid of an image.

Once thrown back upon himself and challenged to fend for himself, Edgar proves to be extremely resourceful. He strips himself of his fine and dandy clothes and takes on the disguise of a Bedlam beggar: ". . .the basest and most poorest shape/That even penury, in contempt of man,/Brought near to beast. . ." (II, iii, 6-9). Edgar echoes Gloucester, when, in fear of Lear's rage and fury, he warns Cornwall not to put Kent in the stocks, not to inflict upon the king's servant the punishment reserved for "basest and contemned'st wretches" (II, ii, 140). Later Lear echoes Gloucester and Edgar, when, in response to Goneril's and Regan's "Monster Ingratitude!" (I, v, 2), he says: ". . . our basest beggars/Are in the poorest thing superfluous./Allow not nature more than nature needs./Man's life is cheap as beast's. . ."(II, iv, 260-263). This similarity in their speech suggests that there is some special intimate bond between Gloucester, Edgar, and Lear, that there is something they share in common.

Edgar and Kent are also joined in partnership. They are both outcasts, idiotai. The stage set reveals their common plight. Edgar enters the wood while Kent is in the stocks outside Gloucester's castle. In effect Edgar delivers his first soliloquy silhouetted against the figure of Kent in the stocks.

Edgar's new outward appearance aptly reflects his inner wretched condition. His nakedness serves to unite and to harmonize what he seems to be and what he is. His former dress as a nobleman was a cover for something else, something, if not contrary to the nature of nobility, at least falling far short of it. It was not fitting for Edgar to be dressed as a nobleman, and now, as a pariah, his nakedness suits him: "Poor Turlygod, Poor Tom/That's something yet: Edgar I nothing am" (II, iii, 20-21).

Again, through his words, Edgar joins in fellowship with Lear and Kent. Edgar's "I nothing am" echoes the Fool's words to Lear: "Thou art nothing" (I, iv, 200). And his "something yet" is the positive formulation of Kent's "nothing almost." That clear vision can belong to the wretched, that the grief-stricken and downtrodden have the eyes to see the miracles which are at work in the world is a truth which penetrates the darkness and doom of King Lear.

In King Lear those -- Gloucester, Edgar, Lear -- who are secure and protected in their high estate, those who define themselves strictly in terms of their positions of birth and neglect the responsibilities their positions demand, are each one confronted by some unexpected event which throws into question what lean understanding they have of themselves and their role in the world. From this wayless, wandering state, a state which takes physical shape in the heaths and fields that have no paths to guide wayfarers and pilgrims, they can begin to search for the truth about themselves and their roles. That Edgar is now engaged in such a search, that he is gaining insight and that his imagination is coming to life, is suggested by his speaking in blank verse for the first time. Edgar is young and eager to learn. His Poor Tom disguise -- his lostness and his aporia -- allows him to find the courage and strength required to make his search fruitful. Edgar will "with presented nakedness outface/The winds and persecutions of the sky" (11-12).

Edgar's private undressing to take on the disguise of a Bedlam beggar brings to memory Lear's public undressing to "divest [himself] of rule" (I, i, 51). Lear's growing awareness that when he invested his daughters with his "Pre-eminence, and all the large effects/That troop with majesty" (134), he "gave [them] all" (II, iv, 248), works hand in hand with Goneril's and Regan's gradual disquantitying of his hundred knights. Lear's herculean imagination leaps from the concrete to the symbolic without hesitation. When his train, strength and regality and royalty, is reduced to nothing, he begins to see that he too, "his little world of man" (III, i, 10), is reduced to nothing. He is without power, without wealth, and without a place at the center of the large world of man. Lear is naked; but he continues to wear the splendid robes of his office. He has not come so far as Edgar. He has many more

years and seasoned self-deceits to overcome. Edgar's heart has never been opened because of a lack of experience, but Lear's heart has been closed and hardened over time. Lear will teach Edgar what sorts of dangers await the simple human things in a king's life.

Childlike foolishness sets Lear running from his daughters, as it set Edgar running from his father. The Fool tells Lear the truth: ". . .thou mad'st thy daughters thy mothers . . . thou gav'st them the rod and putt'st down thine own breeches" (I, iv, 178). Lear threatens his daughters as a child would his mother if she were to do fiendish things:

> . . . . . No, you unnatural hags
> I will have such revenges on you both
> That all the world shall - I will do such things -
> What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
> The terrors of the earth! You think I'll weep;
> No, I'll not weep; (Storm and Tempest)
> I have full cause of weeping, but this heart
> Shall break into a thousand flaws
> Or ere I'll weep. (II, iv, 280).

The storm is on the heath; the tempest is in Lear's mind (III, iv, 10). It is, besides the deluge in Genesis, the fiercest downpour that ever hit the earth. Nearly heartbroken, Lear seeks comfort from his beloved and devoted Fool: "O Fool, I shall go mad" (280). So ends Lear's tirade.

Lear is not accustomed to speaking as a child, issuing threats, but as a king, issuing commands. A king need only say the word, and the deed is done. The imperative mood dominates Lear's speech when he enters the storm:

> Blow, winds, crack your cheeks! Rage! Blow!
> You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
> Till you have drenched our steeples, drowned the cocks!
> You sulpherous and thought-executing fires,
> Vaunt-couriers of oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
> Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
> Strike flat the thick rotundity o' th' world,
> Crack Nature's molds, all germains spill at once
> That make ingrateful man! (III, ii, 1-9)

Lear commands the elements as if they were subjects quaking before his majesty; he addresses them with huge compounds to establish the grandness of the occasion. Lear's fury in the face of "ingrateful man" comes closer than any man's fury has ever come to God's wrath, the wrath that smote Sodom and Gomorrah with brimstone but failed to triumph over the ungrateful bearing of human beings toward their Creator. The roundness of the earth, so like the shape of a pregnant woman's belly, Lear wants smashed, crushed so that never again will a father who gives his all to his children have to endure their ungracious sinfulness. But only God the Creator of all and the Father of all can accomplish such works.

In the storm Lear comes to see that the sense he has of his own role in the world is grandiose and overblown, that he is not the leading player on the great stage. The change which takes place in his speech is a key to Lear's deepening sense of himself as a being in relation to others. His tone changes from rage to compassion, and his mood from imperative to interrogative. The same titanic passion with which Lear commanded the wind, the rain and the thunder is present in his kind, gentle and tender words to his Fool:

> Come on, my boy. How dost my boy? Art cold?
> I am cold myself. (III, ii, 68)

Lear has never spoken this way before; he has never known it was within him to speak this way. He is beginning to feel and to care for the suffering of those around him,

not only his own. When Lear and the Fool reach the hovel on the heath which houses Poor Tom, Lear urges the Fool to go in while he stays outside to pray:

> Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are,
> That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
> How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
> You looped and windowed raggedness, defend you
> From season's such as these? O' I have ta'en
> Too little care of this. Take physic, pomp;
> Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
> That thou may'st shake the superflux to them
> And show the heavens more just. (III, iv, 36)

The gorgeous clothes of kingship, the pomp and pageantry, buried Lear's inner sympathy for others' sorrows. Lear prays that he will be able to find in his human being what he could not find in his being king. Entering the storm is Lear's return to his original humanity.

But what was it about being king that prevented Lear from tapping his rich wellspring of feeling? For Lear, kingship did not permit the separation of the private and the public and this thwarted his person, this led to his downfall. A king who knows his role is able to place the private alongside the public lest he abuse the private as Lear abused Cordelia's love by trying to exhibit it to the public.

But is it right and fitting for a political man to feel with, to show compassion for castaways and idiots? Can a king feel what wretches feel and still retain the lofty dignity which he needs in order to preserve order in his kingdom? Maybe the more detached feeling of pity, a feeling for others, is what a king ought to possess to meet the requirements of his office. If this is the case, Lear's greatness is not political. His mighty heart cannot remain detached.

The storm is the outward manifestation of Lear's suffering, the rain of his inner tears. Despite all his talk to his daughters, Lear weeps. After the prayer Poor Tom enters yelling, "Fathom and half, fathom and half" (32), as if to measure the outpouring of Lear's sorrow and compassion.

iii. Being with Lear

Lear's prayer is Edgar's cue to enter. He is the person -- outcast, wretched, fooled, and Lear's heir to the throne -- for whom Lear needs to feel. One of the greatest deeds Lear is able to perform at this crucial time in his life is the passing on of what he knows about kingship to the future ruler.

Edgar hides himself in the presence of his familiars -- Lear, the Fool, and Kent -- by disguising his way of speaking and acting, by taking on the role of Poor Tom. Unlike solid and steadfast Kent, whose physical change is not accompanied by any character change, Edgar shows himself capable of being a new person while play-acting. Kent knows who he is, and he is, in his own words, "too old to learn" (II, ii, 129). Edgar does not know what he is about but he is about to learn.

These four fools gathered together in fellowship on the heath in the storm are "wanderers of the dark" (III, ii, 44). Yet "though it be night, yet the moon shines" (II, ii, 29). Lunacy shines her terrible beams on Lear and Edgar bringing them into a special companionship which lightens their grief. Edgar feigns madness, his words and actions represent the words and actions of Poor Tom; he is an artificial person (cf. Hobbes' Leviathan, chp. 16). Lear's words and actions are his own; he is a natural person.

Poor Tom comes on the scene at the ripe moment to set Lear's imagination soaring and to sweep him fully into madness. The Fool labored "to outjest [Lear's] heart-struck injuries" (III, ii, 67). He tried to make the king laugh at himself with the hope of saving him from madness. The Fool was bold to the point of cruelty

in his attempt to make Lear face the truth of his role, his speeches and deeds. But Lear did not have the ears to hear the Fool's wisdom. With his mighty heart -- "Hysterica passio!" -- about to burst, Lear could not look upon himself and laugh. Now Lear pays close attention to Poor Tom's lunatic remarks. As a result he begins to acknowledge truths about himself and others which he had formerly avoided. Edgar takes charge of Lear once the Fool has lost his influence. In the mock trial which follows the storm scene Edgar sings songs in folk rhythms in the style of the Fool. The Fool sadly leaves the company of his fellows at that time, going off to die alone.

Like the Fool, Poor Tom has nothing keeping him from putting his understanding of what is taking place around him and in him into bold words, mad words. Lear was the first to use the word "fiend" when he accused Goneril of being a "marble-hearted fiend" (I, iv, 266). Poor Tom exploits that image in his speech with Lear. He also exploits the animal imagery begun by Lear in his curses and insults directed at his elder daughters. (Lear uses the word "wretch" when he is angry at Cordelia.) Animal imagery enlivens the fact that men can under some circumstances, like extreme poverty, be forced into bestiality, and under others arrive there on their own powers. Imagining that Poor Tom could only be in his present condition if he gave his serpentine daughters all, in other words, imagining that Poor Tom is none other than himself in some way, Lear asks the beggar about his past. Edgar answers him with a shrewd adjustment of the seven deadly sins:

> False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand;
> hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness,dog
> in madness, lion in prey. . . (96)

Poor Tom responds by telling Lear about his own past: false of heart in regard to his love for Cordelia and Cordelia's love for him; light of ear in accepting Goneril's and Regan's pledges; bloody of hand in being implicated in the death of his dearly beloved daughter -- "I might have saved her; now she's gone forever!" (V, iii, 270). Lear has been a beast himself.

When next he speaks, Lear shows that he has assimilated Poor Tom's words:

> Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou
> ow'st the worm no silk; the beast no hide; the sheep
> no wool; the cat no perfume. Ha! Here's three on's
> are sophisticated. Thou art the thing itself;
> unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare,
> forked animal as thou art (III, iv, 110).

Compare the order of Edgar's animals with Lear's: hog-worm, fox-beast, wolf-sheep, dog-cat. Lear compliments Poor Tom, and even imitates him by speaking in prose for the first time. Lear's formal, conventional, poetic speech has given way to a more natural manner of speaking which more nearly identifies him with Poor Tom. The more Lear makes himself like Poor Tom, the closer he comes to feeling what the wretch feels.

The word "expose" in Lear's prayer--"Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel"--prepares the way for his actual undressing. Like Edgar before him, with this act he makes his outward appearance harmonious with his inward condition. But while Edgar undresses out of fear and cunning, feeling the need to take on the role of an artificial person, Lear freely chooses to undress, needing to feel what Poor Tom feels. Returning to his original being as a natural person while striving to join in communion with Poor Tom, Lear commands: "Off, Off, you lendings. Come! Unbutton here!" (111). Presumably this command is issued to the person closest to Lear in blood and in heart, to Edgar himself. The full significance of this moment, this deed at the very center of the play, will show itself later. For the time being what is most remarkable about this happening is Lear's recognition of himself as a human being among other human beings through the agency of Edgar's feigned person.

Edgar speaks to Lear about right and wrong, what is lawful and what is not, about the foul fiend who anxiously works on every human soul to destroy righteousness and lawfulness. Edgar presents Lear with an altered version of God's commandments to the sons of Abraham in the wilderness:

> Take heed of the foul fiend. Obey thy parents, keep
> thy word justly, swear not, commit not with man's
> sworn spouse, set not thy sweet heart on proud array
> . . . (III, iv, 83).

Thanks to Edgar's words Lear probes more deeply into human being and what is just. When they take refuge together in Gloucester's farmhouse, Lear begins court proceedings against his monstrous and fiendish daughters. He makes Edgar play the role of his "robed man of justice" (III, vi, 36), after seeing in him the soul of a "noble philosopher" (III, iv, 125). The trial is a travesty. But Edgar's companionship with Lear, and his fathering of Lear, gives him new insight, new depth, new life. Edgar shows pity for Lear: "My tears begin to take his part so much they mar my counterfeiting" (III,VI,60). When Edgar finally finishes with his counterfeiting, he will fully take Lear's part.

Edgar has been as much in need of the enriching power of tears as Lear has been in need of their cleansing powers. With new strength of will and purpose Edgar delivers the soliloquy which concludes the whole drama beginning with the storm and passing on to the mock trial:

> When we our betters see bearing our woes,
> We scarcely think our enemies our foes.
> Who alone suffers, suffers most in the mind
> Leaving free things and happy shows behind.
> But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip
> When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
> How light and portable my pain seems now,
> When that which made me bend made the king bow.
> He childed as I fathered! (III, vi, 109)

Edgar is speaking in rhyming couplets for the first time, the only time aside from his concluding quatrain. The only other speech in the play which is comparable in its long chain of rhymes is France's proclamation of trust in Cordelia. Stanley Cavell is right when he says that if France's words are spoken with authority and distinction, France's sensitivity and manliness show forth the character of fully ripened nobility. For solid reasons of his own he refuses to admit that Edgar achieves the same kingly stature in the course of King Lear. I rather think that Edgar's rhyming couplets are an indication of his likeness to France.

Edgar is resolving the dissonances of the storm scene and the mock trial with his cadence-like soliloquy. He is clinching for the audience a truth so simple and so common that it is often overlooked, or, what is worse, despised. Edgar's true speech is sententious in the original and old-fashioned sense of the word; it is full of meaning, not ponderously trite or pithy. Imaginatively feeling for others who are in anguish, taking their part, whether in prayer or in being fully present for them, not as an advisor or as a counselor, but just as a fellow presence, is a great act of gracious human goodness. When a father and a child feel for one another in such a way, this is a sign of their right relation in blood and in heart. So it is with Lear and Edgar. They are with one another and for one another in the storm and in the mock trial as father and son, as king and prince, as fellows who share human being. Lear is Edgar's godfather, his spiritual father. Lear named Edgar (II, i, 90).

Edgar opens the fourth act with a hopeful speech on worstness:

> Yet better thus, and known to be contemned,
> Than still contemned and flattered. To be worst,
> The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,

Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome then,
Thou insubstantial air that I embrace!
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts....(IV, i, 8)

Edgar's speech harks back to Lear's words to the "unaccommodated man" on the heath, "the thing itself": "Thou ow'st the worm no silk. . ." (III,iv). While playing the role of Poor Tom, Edgar patiently observed Lear's actions and heard his wisdom. What trustworthy, good, and right words emerged from Lear's suffering, Edgar absorbed. Lear has unknowingly done Edgar some charity in the form of teachings.

Edgar's speech also looks forward to Lear's knowing statement about his daughters and his courtiers, and himself:

> . . . .They flattered me like a dog . . . .When the rain came to wet me once and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. They were not men o' their words; they told me I was everything; 'tis a lie. I am not ague-proof. (IV, vi, 102).

Lear calls to memory the time of his newfound awareness, his recognition of his daughters' double-dealings and his own faultiness. In the storm Lear heard Poor Tom preach -- "keep thy word's justice" -- and received the charity of Edgar's teachings. Both Lear and Edgar are better off knowing that they are what they are, human beings with faults. They see into their own faults and acknowledge them as all other persons must acknowledge theirs, difficult as it may be to do. Kings are tempted to a greater degree than most other human beings, because of their flatterers, to consider themselves faultless, hence guiltless, hence unaware of their own sinfulness, which means that they are likely to become self-righteous citizens of the fiend's state. Lear did believe that he was everything at the play's opening. How else could he have done what he did? Believing that he was everything, he thought he needed nothing. Lear thought that he could do without Cordelia's love being fully present for him. But he cannot. He cannot live without her love. Edgar keeps Lear alive during Cordelia's absence.

iv. Being With Gloucester

Exclamatory and horrible cries abound in King Lear: "Darkness and devils!" (I, iv, 259), "All dark and comfortless!" (III, iv, 86), "Pluck out his eyes!" (6), "Hang him instantly!" (7), "Most serpent-like!" (II, iv, 160), "O villain, villain!" (I, ii, 76), "Abhorred villain!" (22), "Abominable villain!" (79), "Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!" (IV, vi, 182), "Murder, murder!" (II, ii, 44), "No, no, no, life!" (V, iii, 307), "Never, never, never, never, never!" (309), "Howl, howl, howl, howl" (259), "Heaven and earth" (I, iv, 302). Seeing his bloody father being guided by an old man, Edgar cries out: "World, world, O world!/But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,/Life would not yield to age" (IV, i, 10).

When the faithful, loveable old man leads Gloucester toward Poor Tom, Edgar learns that his father, in being blinded, has come to see who is his truly devoted son.

> . . . Oh, dear son Edgar,
> The food of thy abused father's wrath!
> Might I but live to see thee in my touch
> I'd say I had eyes again! (23)

Gloucester's newfound awareness of his own guilt and Edgar's innocence, his recognition, occurs at the same time as his peripety (cf. Aristotle's Poetics).

After hearing his name called out by his father, Edgar acknowledges that he was wrong about his own worstness: "Who is't can say "I am at the worst?" I am worse than e'er I was" (25). Why isn't Edgar full of joy to discover that he can be united in trust with his father? My imagination tells me that the sight of the bloody-eyed, pitiable old Gloucester is too woeful for words. Says Edgar: ". . . the worst is not so long as we can say "This is the worst!"" (27). So long as we have the clarity of vision to see that we are in a bad way, so long as reason is still a part of our madness, the worst is not. Edgar confesses that his suffering is surpassed by what Lear and Gloucester, his elders and betters, are enduring.

Edgar is prepared to pass through what more may come his way. Cordelia later echoes Edgar in saying to Lear: "We are not the first/Who with best meaning have incurred the worst" (V, ii, 4). Whatever the worst is -- the suffering of innocents? The unlawful death of the righteous? -- Cordelia and Lear are at the worst. She knows that. And yet, like Edgar, she remains calm and patient. Unlike Edgar, she refuses to accuse her accusers, to condemn her condemners.

Gloucester's trust in the gods has been weakened by the hardship, the injustice, and the cruelty of his overwhelming suffering: "As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods/They kill us for their sport" (IV, i, 32). Edgar grieves to hear his father speak this way and plays the fool: "Bad is the trade, that must play fool to sorrow,/Arguing itself and others" (39). Edgar expects those who hear the story of his life to be upset and put off by his foolish role with his father. For some reason he sees no other way to act. Why doesn't he simply reveal himself to his father? Wouldn't that restore Gloucester's belief in the "kind gods" (III, vii, 72)? (When he is blinded, Gloucester cries, "O cruel! O you gods!" (71), but a moment later he learns of Edgar's innocence, and prays, "Kind gods! forgive me that, and prosper him" (72).) But no. Edgar has yet to come to a sure knowledge of who he is and "how this world goes" (IV, vi, 156). He cannot utter his name until he is most fully at work being who he ought to be.

Edgar has already established the condition of his self-revelation: "When false opinion . . . in thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee" (III, vi, 113). Only when he is prepared to overthrow the present rule of ingratitude and injustice, the new Earl of Gloucester, his own brother Edmund, only then will Edgar have accomplished full nobility and only then will he be reconciled with his father and the gods. Being aware that false opinion is directed at the gods more severely than at him, and trusting to their graces, Edgar undertakes as his mission to prove the gods just. By offering the proof in deed, Edgar will have it proved to him that the gods are just. Trust yields knowledge.

Gloucester, like Edgar and Lear, is a man "more sinned against than sinning" (II, iv). The pain he is forced to undergo hardly seems deserved. Remembering the mystery of the suffering of the fully righteous Job, however, who can judge what suffering would be a fit measure for Gloucester's sins? Gloucester's agony in blindness allows him to see in company with Lear and Edgar that to trust and to know, he must feel. Gloucester prays:

> . . . . . .Heavens deal so still!
> Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
> That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
> Because he does not feel, feel your power quickly;
> So distribution should undo excess,
> And each man have enough. (IV, ii, 74)

Gloucester and Lear, in their prayers, both use the word "feel" twice in the same line. But while Lear prays to feel what wretches feel, to be the wretch in feeling, Gloucester calls on the heavens to make the man who does not feel in Lear's sense, feel the power of the gods. For Lear, justice will be accomplished through his own action, his own wretched and charitable feelings. For Gloucester, justice will be accomplished through the god's action. Lear will show the gods just. Gloucester

will be shown the justice of the gods. Edgar, in showing the gods just and thereby being shown their justice, in being both active and passive, is a blend of Lear, his spiritual father, and Gloucester, his natural father.

Lear sees what Gloucester does not: a person must act freely and compassionately in order to be righteous. But Gloucester sees what Lear does not: to act freely and compassionately a person must be filled with the grace of the gods. No human being can be self-justifying without falling into the hands of the fiend. Human beings can only be made just through God's work. God is active in the world. He goes about doing good things. If it were not for Him, Lear could not fully feel what Poor Tom feels. What person has the right to make himself a wretch unless God graciously informs and supports his action? Lear exposes himself to feel what Poor Tom feels, and in so doing gives a gift of charity which brings relief to Poor Tom's burdened sorrow. Gloucester feels the power of the heavens, and in so doing gives a purse to Poor Tom. Lear's and Gloucester's prayers are answered.

Lear begins to feel with Poor Tom, he tears off his kingly garments and reveals a kingly soul, just after hearing Edgar's adjustment of the seven deadly sins accompanied by animal imagery. Gloucester begins to feel the power of the heavens, he begins to be saved from the power of the fiend tempting him to suicide, just after hearing Edgar's adjustment of the seven deadly sins accompanied by devil imagery.

> Five fiends have been in Poor Tom at once; of lust as
> Obidicut; Hobbididance, prince of darkness, Mahu, of
> stealing; Modo, of murder; Flibbertigibbet, of mocking
> and mowing, who since possesses chamber-maids and
> waiting-women. So, bless thee, master! (IV, i, 60)

Lear and Gloucester, whose broad characters encompass something of what is in everyone, have been prone to bestiality and devilishness. This they must face in order to become aware of their own sinfulness. Only then can they know and trust themselves and the gods. In acknowledging their sins, and not merely shoving them aside by moping over their being more sinned against than sinning, Lear and Gloucester feel their dependence on others and the gods. Edgar's disguise, in speech and in act, makes it possible for Lear and Gloucester to hear just words of the divine law and act upon them. Edgar would be despised as self-righteous and all knowing if he presented his mad words to Lear and his father in blunt, Kent-like speech and in the dress of a young nobleman. Edgar must play out his role as fool before he can be fully who he is.

Gloucester commands his old servant to do a favor on Poor Tom's behalf: ". . . bring some covering for this naked soul" (48). On their way to the cliffs of Dover, where Gloucester has resolved to leap off the edge, Edgar is dressed in the "best 'parel" (49) of his father's ancient and devoted servant. Edgar's new found awareness of his father's love, and his taking on a new role suited to his new clothes, happen hand in hand. Edgar grows in stature being loved and being dressed.

Edgar is leading Gloucester on a pilgrimage. In his view they are wayfarers journeying to a sacred place as an act of religious devotion. It is a pilgrimage which is "above all strangeness" (IV, vi, 66).

Edgar makes a world in speech for Gloucester's imagination so that he may picture the place appointed for his suicide.

> And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
> And crows and choughs that wing the midway air
> Show scarce so gross as beetles, Half-way down
> Hangs one that gathers samphire -- dreadful trade!
> Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.
> The fishermen that walk upon the beach
> Appear like mice: and yond tall anchoring bark
> Diminished to her cock; her cock a buoy
> Almost too small for sight, the murmuring surge,

> That on unnumbered idle pebble chafes,
> Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more
> Lest my brain turn and the deficient sight
> Topple down headlong. (23)

Edgar's poem is highly descriptive. He uses an active voice and an indicative mood; and his meter is a strict iambic pentameter. The details are carefully chosen; first the birds halfway down the cliff; next the fishermen on the shore; last the ship at sea. His vocabulary is particular and technical with names of birds, insects, animals, and boats. He looks low: the ship becomes like its cockboat, its cockboat like a buoy, the buoy vanishes: nothing left to see. He listens high: nothing can be heard. At last he delivers a run of monosyllables imitating the quickening heartbeat of someone creeping and peering over the edge; "deficient" and "sight" halt the pitter-patter; and the long o-sounds of the final three words shift the motion to a gradual, slow, arching fall. Gloucester is ready to leap.

Delightful as it may be to inspect Edgar's craft and imagination, there remains the danger of losing sight of what is in his heart. Without looking into Edgar's heart, he becomes a strangely confused son playing a cruel act on his vulnerable and downcast father. His picturesque speech becomes a mockery of his father's blindness. His appeal to Gloucester's hearing only to announce that nothing can be heard makes him cold and marble-hearted. The whole pilgrimage becomes grotesque. A blind old man in despair is made a fool by his only beloved son. Gloucester's leap becomes one of the most ugly, hideous deeds in all of drama. By looking into Edgar's heart, we see what it is that is truly happening. A caring son, full of concern for his father's grief, is doing his utmost to save him from death and lead him to a firm and enlightened trust in the gods. Edgar seeks to drive the fiend away from Gloucester as he drove the dogs away from Lear in the mock trial.

The seeming duality of Edgar's action, cruel and kind, is articulated by the servants at the close of the third act. Their discussion prepares the audience for Edgar's role in the pilgrimage. The second servant, mockingly considering that Poor Tom will lead the "old Earl" to Dover, says of Edgar: "his roguish madness allows itself to anything" (III, vii, 105). The third servant, wishing the best for Gloucester, as is Edgar, says, as if to predict what is upcoming, "Now Heaven help him!" (107). If the two servants could watch the scene at the imagined cliff, the second would see only the horror of the action, but the third would be relieved and thankful to see that heaven does help Gloucester by means of Edgar's madness and foolery. Prayers are answered in <u>King Lear</u>.

Edgar himself sees the need to give some cause for his action: "Why I do trifle thus with his despair/Is done to cure it" (IV, vi, 33). Hamlet saw the same need in the bedroom scene with his mother: "I must be cruel only to be kind" (<u>Hamlet</u> III, iv, 174). Edgar and Hamlet are both play-actors and play-makers on the great stage of fools.

Gloucester is tormented by the prospect of a longer life full of "affliction" in the midst of the "opposeless wills" of the "mighty gods" (IV, vi, 38). He does not accept out of trust that the gods will only good things. Instead he leaps. He falls. And yet he lives. "Thy life's a miracle" (956), says Edgar. Having received the gift of the power of the "clearest gods" which makes possible what is impossible for a man alone to do, Edgar works a miracle. He brings Gloucester to new life.

Edgar informs Gloucester "what thing" it was that led him to "th'extreme verge":

> . . . . methought his eyes
> Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
> Horns whelked and waved like th' enridged sea:
> It was some fiend. (73)

Now that the fiend has been driven away, Edgar can speak to Gloucester as a son, he can see in Gloucester a father: ". . . Thou happy father . . . bear free and patient thoughts" (80).

iv. Edgar's Readiness

Edgar's sane words are punctuated by the entrance of King Lear at the height of his madness. The scene which follows is climactic with respect to Lear's raving thoughts on human being, on justice, and on the presence of evil in the world. The tables have turned somewhat since Edgar and Lear were last together. Then Edgar was "the thing itself" (III, iv, 107). Now Lear is "the King himself" (IV, vi, 85). Lear showed compassion for Poor Tom on the heath, and now, in another wilderness, Edgar looks upon Lear with pity: "O thou side-piercing sight" (85). Edgar is wounded from a distance by the sight of Lear; he does not get up close and touch him as he was touched by him in the storm. Edgar does not have the mightiness of spirit to feel what Lear feels. He is an onlooker, a spectator, detached. Edgar's role in this scene is to attend to Lear's kingly words with the circumspectness of a man who must himself someday sit on the throne.

Lear has been off stage for a whole act. He last appeared in the mock trial bringing charges against Goneril and Regan for their ingratitude. His kingly madness was bent on seeing justice done. But Lear saw into the foul judicial process: "Corruption in the place!" (III, vi, 55). He relinquished his efforts to take revenge on his daughters under the cover of the court, and he sought out the origin of their bestiality and devilry: "Is there any cause in nature that make these hard hearts?" (72). In his absence Lear has gone over this question and passed on to consequent questions. If there is a cause in nature for beasts and devils in human shape, are human beings by nature lustful animals and fiendish creatures? If so, can there be such a thing as natural justice? Can one person rightly judge another? With Edgar present, Lear offers his mad reasonings, the fruits of his experience as a fallen ruler.

Lear speaks as a king, "Ay, every inch a king" (IV, vi, 109), on matters of greatest concern to a ruler. He asserts with irony that human beings are by nature animals, and that they must be free to act in accordance with their nature. Therefore, a king cannot justly prosecute men and women for their lustful deeds. Lear speaks with Gloucester present:

> I pardon that man's life, What was thy cause?
> Adultery?
> Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery? No!
> . . . . . .
> Let copulation thrive: for Gloucester's bastard son
> Was kinder to his father than my daughters
> Got 'tween lawful sheets. . . . (115).

Lear supports his assessment of human being by recalling that Edmund showed filial devotion to his father while his own lawful daughters showed ingratitude. His speech echoes Edmund's earlier address to his goddess, "Nature" (I, ii). Edmund's sayings about marriage present a husband and wife who "Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops/Got 'tween sleep and wake" (I, ii, 14). Edmund claims that he outshines Edgar in strength, wit, beauty, because he was conceived in a fit of "riotous appetite" (IV, vi, 166), which accords with nature, while Edgar was conceived in a dull, stale, marital act, which accords with convention. In Lear's view, the bond between the child and parent is stronger when the child is conceived, in Edmund's words, "in the lusty stealth of nature" (I, ii, 11). Not knowing Edmund, Lear's vision is clouded.

Lear is aghast at the way human beings abuse justice, and at the weakness of justice in the face of such abuse:

> Through tattered robes small vices do appear;
> Robes and furred gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold
> The strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;
> Arm it in rags, a pygmy's straw does pierce it. (168)

The rich and powerful in their role as judges persecute the poor and unprotected: "The userer hangs the cozener" (164). What is to be made of justice when its only function is to comfort the privileged and to turn the impoverished into scapegoats?

Lear's words bring to memory Edgar's tattered rags in the storm and Edgar's role as "robed man of justice" (III, vi) in the mock trial. Edgar has taken the part of the condemned wretch and the judge. Having seen both sides, he can stand silently by and detect what awful truth is in Lear's remarks: all human beings sin. Paradoxically, Lear claims the opposite: "None does offend, none, I say, none!" (169).

> Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;
> Thou hotly lusts to see her in that kind
> For which thou whip'st her. (164)

In John's Gospel Jesus is confronted by a group of Scribes and Pharisees who wish to test him as Satan tested him in the wilderness. These men are preparing to act upon the law which prescribes the death by stoning of an adulteress. Eager to find some weakness in Jesus, a faulty or heretical teaching, and eager to bring some charge against him, they ask Jesus what ought to be done with the woman they have caught in the act of adultery. Jesus is seated on the ground running his finger through the sand. "Whichever of you is without sin, let him cast the first stone." The Scribes and Pharisees in order of age take their leave.

Jesus and Lear know the prayer of King Solomon to God: "Give to thy servant understanding, to judge thy people, and to discern between good and evil" (I Kings III:9). As kings and human beings, they are judging beings. Among the many things Hobbes says about the sovereign in the Leviathan, some are these:

> . . .he is judge of what is necessary for peace; and judge of doctrines; he is sole legislator; and supreme judge of controversies; and of the times, and occasions of war, and peace; to him it belongeth to choose magistrates, counsellors, commanders, and all other offices, and ministers; and to determine of rewards, and punishments, honor, and order. (Chapter 20)

In the story of the stoning of the adulteress Jesus shows that he knows that no man is without sin. He therefore urges all of us to take our own sinfulness to heart when we judge the wrongdoings of our fellows. Jesus pardons, forgives the adulteress, and commands her to go and sin no more.

Lear enables the adulteress to go on sinning. Since human beings are no more than beasts, and beasts cannot be said to be sinners, Lear refuses to acknowledge any wrongdoing on her part. Sin is nothing. But truly this is Lear's way of pardoning, of forgiving. The path Lear travels in seeking to understand the origin of evil in his daughters, leads him first to an awareness of his own sinfulness, and last to a desire to show his daughters mercy. Showing that he feels deeply that every person is responsible for the sins of every other person, he, after Cordelia's death, sorrowfully cries: "A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!" (V, iii, 272).

In response to Lear's outrageous speeches, Edgar comments: "O, matter and impertinency mixed/Reason in madness!" (IV, vi, 176). Edgar lets nothing of the wisdom in Lear's kingly words pass him by. With Jesus Edgar knows that all men sin, and with Lear he sees a manifestation of this truth in the corrupt judgements of human beings and in the abuse of justice by human beings.

Edgar knows that just acts are needed to fight evil and defend good. With Solomon's prayer, and the teachings he has learned from Lear, Edgar is being filled with the spirit fit for the right discernment of good and evil and for the deed which will accomplish the triumph of justice over wrongdoing. Edgar is the Almighty Sovereign's minister and general.

Edgar alone is present with Lear throughout the whole of his maddest suffering, on the heath, at the trial, and in the field at Dover. And he alone is present with Gloucester throughout the final days of his broken life. Edgar, perhaps unwittingly, does well in being that presence which serves to bring Lear and Gloucester together again. That moment when Lear recognizes Gloucester -- "I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloucester" (179) -- could only be brought about through the agency of their common son. The bond between child and parent shows itself in hidden ways.

The longer Edgar has heard Lear's wisdom, the longer he has experienced as a patient and sensitive presence the weight of Lear's and Gloucester's sorrows, the better prepared he has become to judge and to act righteously. Now Shakespeare allows Edgar both to learn of a battle about to be fought between Goneril's and Regan's army, and Cordelia's army, and to emerge from his companionship with his fathers into the larger world of the play, a world in which he has the role of a noble knight and the heir to the throne.

Recognizing the change which has come over Edgar, Gloucester asks: "Now, good sir, what art thou?" (223). Edgar's response reveals that he has been filled with the spirit of a righteous human being and a just king, the spirit of poverty:

> A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows;
> Who by the art of known and feeling sorrows
> Am pregnant to good pity... (224)

Edgar won't be fully ready to enter the world of sophisticated evil until he confronts and vanquishes the unsophisticated evil of Oswald, "a serviceable villain" (256). Goneril, Regan, and Edmund have put a price on Gloucester's life. Oswald hopes to "raise [his] fortune" (232) by killing, murdering him. But Edgar, the jack of all roles, ever ready to adapt himself to whatever occasion presents itself, adopts the rustic dialect to match his peasant dress and stands up in defense of his father. Oswald is all puffed up. He is convinced that he can overcome the lowly Edgar. They fight. Oswald falls. Edgar upholds the integrity of "good folk" by slaying Oswald, just as Cornwall's servant did earlier when he slew his master. Edgar's words tell us what he must feel also after he fights his sophisticated brother: "I am only sorry he had no other deathsman" (262).

With his dying breath Oswald commands the bold peasant to give certain letters to "Edmund, Earl of Gloucester" (253). Edgar can make his next step into the larger world. He learns from the letters that Goneril and Edmund, "murderous lechers" (280), are plotting to kill Albany when "time and place are fruitfully offered" (264). They do not anticipate an encounter with the newly ripened Edgar.

v. The Champion

Pretending to be a poor man, Edgar gives Albany the letter, and begs a favor:

> Before you fight the battle, ope this letter,
> If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
> For him that brought it: wretch though I seem
> I can produce a champion that will prove
> What is avouched there. (V, i, 40)

Edgar displays enormous patience and a mastery over time in this whole sequence of events. He brings the letter to Albany "in the mature time" (IV, vi, 273); and he will appear to deliver proof of Edmund's guilt and his own righteousness "when time shall serve" (V, i, 47). At the beginning of the play Edgar showed no capacity for patience; he reacted rashly to warnings given by Edmund concerning his father's wrath. Thanks to the time spent with Lear and Gloucester, Edgar has been able to develop calmness and readiness and moral alertness; he has learned how to wait for the ripe moment to act and how to measure his acts with precision.

Patience is not passivity. Neither is it stoical, unmoved endurance. Patience (derived from the Latin patientia, a participle form of patior, which itself is

derived from the Greek pascho) is, first, an experiencing, or enduring, or suffering, of turmoil and sorrow, with kindness, and gentleness, and hope in a coming time of rest and joy; and next, an active, attentive viewing of this experience so that what is offered as a teaching is learned. Edgar's patience allows him to suffer fruitfully alongside Lear and Gloucester.

After recognizing Gloucester, Lear tenderly reprimanded him with a fatherly tone: "Thou must be patient./We came crying hither . . . When we are born, we cry that we are come/To this great stage of fools" (IV, vi, 180). Edgar has attended to Lear's words; for when Gloucester shows a loss of patience, he says: "Men must endure/Their going hence, ever as their coming hither:/Ripeness is all" (V, ii, 10). Edgar witnesses Lear's and Gloucester's trials with some detachment -- he pities them -- so that he may come to know a better way.

"Ripeness is all." These are Edgar's last words before appearing as champion. He is finally ready to reveal his fully-formed nobility after having lived through wretchedness and peasantry and servitude. "Thou art armed, Gloucester," says Albany to Edmund (Shakespeare would wish us to hear these words as a call to Edgar), "let the trumpet sound" (91). At the third sound of the trumpet, in memory of Jesus and the angels, as if to signal the advent of the final judgement, Edgar enters armed. He is not feigning. At last we are given Edgar's natural person. The question so often put to Edgar -- as if to mark the steady stages of his growth -- is asked again: "What are you?" (V, iii, 121). Edgar: "Know my name is lost:/By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit:/Yet I am noble . . ." (122). That name which Edgar received from King Lear, that name which he had been unable to utter in his disguises, as if disguised from himself, he can utter now (we learn in a moment that he has already revealed himself to Gloucester), but not in this company, not until he has proven his brother's guilt, his own strength and wit, and the gods' justice.

Edgar reveals his newfound nobility first in dress, then in speech, and last in deed. He challenges Edmund: "Draw thy sword" (125). When last they were together Edmund mockingly made the same challenge to Edgar. Edgar speaks of the entitlements of his knighthood which make such a challenge just and demand that it be accepted: "Behold, it is my privilege,/The privilege of mine honors,/My oath, and my profession . . ." (131). In acting upon the responsibilities which go hand in hand with his privileges, Edgar is no longer a stray layman, an idiotes. With knight-like words and passions Edgar accuses Edmund of treason:

> . . . . . I protest,
> Maugre thy strength, place, youth, and eminence,
> Despite thy victor-sword and fire-new fortune,
> Thy valor and thy heart, thou art a traitor,
> False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father,
> Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince,
> And, from th' extremest upward of thy head
> To the descent and dust below thy foot
> A most toad-spotted traitor . . . (137)

Edgar's "fair and warlike" presence, along with his heart pregnant with good pity, likens his natural person to Machiavelli's prince (see chapters XIV-XXIII, The Prince). His noble heart, his fighting on the side of truth against falsity, pity against treachery, righteousness against serpent-likeness, faith against unbelief, thankfulness against ingratitude, all his good doings make Edmund see the unnamed and unrecognized Edgar -- so much has he changed -- as a prince. Edmund accepts Edgar's challenge. They fight. Edmund falls.

Edmund quite suddenly takes on a gentle tone. He admits to being a traitor, "and much, much more" (163). He wishes to forgive his slayer and his better, provided he is noble (164). Again the question is asked: "but what art thou/that hast this fortune on me?" (167). Edgar reveals himself.

Let's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund:
If more, the more th' hast wronged me.
My name is Edgar, and thy father's son . . . (169).

Edmund earlier scoffed at the usage of "legitimate" when applied to Edgar while he was called a "bastard": "Why brand they us/With base? With baseness? Bastardy? Base? Base?" (I, ii, 40). Certainly he had due cause to be outraged by the cheap remarks of his father and others. As a child born out of wedlock he went unrecognized and unloved. Consequently he knows nothing of the family bond which yields to, and is a requirement of, political and social order. Edmund saw himself in a condition of war against everyone, believing his legitimacy to be what growth and prosperity his native talents could accomplish at Edgar's and Gloucester's expense. The stronger takes all. That he takes all from his kinsman is not an issue. He owes them no allegiance. He is self-sufficient; he needs no companions. Such a man, says Aristotle, is either a god or a beast, in other words, such a man is no politikon zoon.

By looking upon himself as a man engaged in a selfish struggle for wealth and power and glory against every other man, Edmund looks upon everyone else as hateful and comes to see himself as hateful, and . This fate awaits all those who think they can act alone apart from God and other men -- the fate of the self-righteous. Only to the extent that others could further his private interests did Edmund find them useful. The "love" triangle among Goneril, Edmund, and Regan demonstrates his incapacity to hold any firm commitments of a longlasting and wholesome kind. Without any regard for his immediate family, his father and his brother, or a future family of his own, Edmund is a traitor to community life.

Edgar shows Edmund what misguided thoughts he had about sonship. He acknowledged that he is not more "in blood" because he had a lawful mother and Edmund did not, but because he acts in accordance with the political fact of human life, a being with others for the good of all. Edgar's filial gratitude shows that he recognizes with thankfulness his ultimate dependence on others: his parents, and their parents, and so on through the generations, back to the primary and first source of being, whom we call God.

After defeating Edmund, Edgar is fully reconciled with the gods. With trust he can confidently proclaim:

The gods are just; and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us:
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes . . . (172).

Edgar echoes an earlier remark by Albany. When he learned that Cornwall had been slain by his virtuous servant while in the act of stamping out Gloucester's eyes, Albany proclaimed:

This shows you are above
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge. But, O poor
Gloucester! (IV, ii, 72)

Seen in the light of Edgar's words, Albany's betray a naive optimism. At the same time Cornwall was getting his recompense, Gloucester, according to Edgar, was also being dealt a just blow. Albany is named a "moral fool" by Goneril. Goneril does not know in what way her words are true, but it does seem to be the case that to see feelingly how this world goes requires moral foolishness of a sort. Edgar too is a fool, to be sure, his words about his father are hard to take. But he is no Albany. Edgar's strength and prudence are unmatched by any other character in the play, except France.

Albany challenged Edmund to a duel, "If none appear to prove upon thy person/Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons" (V, iii, 93). But Edgar appears; he is the

person who becomes fully manifest, the trait of heroes (andres epiphaneis). Edgar makes good the challenge of the moral fool, just as earlier he made good Kent's challenge to Oswald. At the close of the play Albany hands over the power of rule to Edgar. This is a wise move on his part; so doing, he acknowledges Edgar's greater fitness for the task.

After Edgar reveals himself and comments, somewhat prudishly, upon the cause of Gloucester's suffering, Albany wonders where he has "hid" and how he has "known" the "miseries" of his father (V, iii, 182). Edgar tells "a brief tale" (183). It is one of only three narratives in the play. First Kent recounted the events which led to being put in the stocks; next a Gentleman described Cordelia's tears; and now that Edgar has a clear view of his experiences, he tells how he was hunted and changed "into a madman's rags":

. . . . . .and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost; became his guide;
Never -- O fault -- revealed myself unto him,
Until some half hour past, when I was armed.
Not sure, though hoping of this good success,
I asked his blessing, and from first to last,
Told him our pilgrimage. But his flawed heart --
Alack, too weak the conflict to support --
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly. (202)

Now is the time to observe why Edgar reveals himself to his father when he does. Accomplished nobility requires the fulfillment of certain conditions. Responsibilities and duties accompany the privilege of owning wealth and holding power: noblesse oblige. A nobleman must be prepared at all times to arm himself and fight for the order of the community. He must possess the judgement to determine under what circumstances he ought to fight and the prudence to know how to win the day for the sake of the common good. He must possess the courage to face injustice and the strength to conquer it. Edgar was not noble in the true sense at the beginning of King Lear. He did not own the judgement, prudence, courage, and strength required to discern and overcome Edmund's injustice. But he suffered and he learned. Edgar's patience allowed him to fulfill the conditions of his birth. By joining company with the griefs of his fathers, and by accepting the teachings of the religious traditions which are passed on generation after generation, Edgar rises to nobility. Edgar's full-fledged natural presence is revealed when he appears dressed as a knight, accompanied by trumpet calls, armed. But he cannot escape failure: He recognizes that he is what he was meant to be from the start only when he is armed. "Never -- O fault -- revealed myself unto him/Until some half hour past, when I was armed" (195).

Is the fault that Edgar could not humble himself and allow others to see him and to know him, if not at his worst, not at his best? This is common enough. Again it is the simple thing that hits the mark. Everyone knows what it's like not to recognize a fellow, not to meet his or her eyes for longer than the time it takes to blow out a candle, for fear of being seen by the other, for fear of having to be revealed to the other. But the consequences are tragic. At least Edgar should be praised for looking squarely upon his wrongdoing and confessing it to all the world. Not the least of us would fail to do that.

As is so often the case with failings, Edgar's fault arises from his goodness. His desire to bring to completion his noble nature, his wishing the best for his father, his capacity for playing the fool for others, his devotion, these are good things. But his confidence in his own knowing -- knowing when he is full grown, knowing what is right and best for his father, knowing that he must play the fool in such and such a circumstance, knowing that Gloucester is justly punished by the gods

-- is his fault. Insofar as Edgar acts knowingly, instead of feelingly, that portion of self-righteousness in his heart is at work. Still it is praiseworthy that Edgar acknowledges the part he has played in his father's death, just as Lear acknowledges his part in Cordelia's death.

vi. The King

> This would have seemed a period
> To such as love not sorrow; but another,
> To amplify too much, would make much more,
> And top extremity . . . .(V, iii, 205)

With these words Edgar prepares his audience -- those listening to his adventures -- for the tragic tale of Kent. Selfless Kent, who did Lear "service/Improper for a slave" (222), was so stricken with grief to hear of the sufferings of Lear and Gloucester, "The strings of life/Began to crack" (218). Edgar's words also have a significance outside the context of his narrative. Through them Shakespeare prepares his audience for a scene more sorrowful than just about any ever told.

After Edgar's story, Lear enters with Cordelia, dead, in his arms. A horror and a mystery, I can say no more. Cordelia's death is an unforeseen effect of Lear's love test. Testing love, trying to love without trust, can only lead to death, as Anselmo also knows.

Lear is aware of his own responsibility for, guilt in, the death of Cordelia: "I might have saved her; and now she's gone forever!" (220). Strangely, Lear's last words before his own death are these: "Do you see this? Look on her! Look, her lips! Look there, look there!" (310). Does Lear "burst smilingly" like Gloucester? Does Lear's misery turn to joy at the sight of a miracle when he dies? Does Cordelia rise again in Lear's imagination? I pray that is what happens.

I wish to offer another view of the last moment in Lear's life, one which by no means excludes or runs contrary to Lear's bursting smilingly. A key to understanding Lear's condition at the time of his death can be found in the words he speaks just prior to his last. "Pray you, undo this button. Thank you, sir" (311). In the storm Lear spoke words just like these: "Off, off, you lendings. Come, unbutton here!" (III, iv). Aside from the notable change in tone, Lear has the same request at the center and at the end of the play. What can this mean?

I have already suggested that Edgar, the closest to Lear in blood and in heart, was the person to heed Lear's command in the storm. Lear always turns to Edgar for relief when he is in need of a fellow. On the heath Lear made Poor Tom his philosopher and questioned him on causes: "What is the cause of thunder?" (III, iv). In other words, what is the cause of suffering and of madness? No answer. Lear insists on keeping the company of his philosopher for comfort, companionship, and relief. In Gloucester's farmhouse Lear asks another cause question: "Is there any cause in nature that make these hard hearts?" (III, vi, 78). No answer. Being reminded of his disquantitied train at the mention of his daughters, Lear turns to Edgar, his noble man of justice, for comfort, companionship, and relief: "You, sir, I entertain for one of my hundred" (74). At the end Lear asks a third cause question, the kind that wrench the heart: "Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life, and thou no breath at all?" (V, iii, 307). No answer. Again Lear turns for relief: "Pray you, undo this button." To whom does he turn? Only Edgar's knightly presence can bring Lear a final rest. Edgar undoes Lear's button. "Thank you, sir." Edgar is the only person to whom Lear owes some thanks. It would not be fitting for Lear to thank Kent, his own shadow. Lear's last words to Kent are, "You are welcome hither" (291). Lear embraces Kent; he hopes that Kent will join company with him in and beyond death.

But why does Lear owe Edgar thanks? Why is Edgar the only person who can bring Lear a final rest?

King Lear begins with a grand event, which, for the full effect, Edgar must attend. The great King Lear is providing for the perpetuation of his peaceful reign. Foremost among his concerns is who will succeed to his throne, who will take on his "cares and business" (I, ii, 38). He has designed a plan so that Cordelia, his favorite, will rule the physically largest and politically central portion of his kingdom. The plan fails because Cordelia is silent -- like Budd before Claggart and Christ before the Grand Inquisitor -- because she says "nothing" when her father commands her to profess publicly her love for him. She cannot comply with a test or make a game of her love. Lear enraged disclaims Cordelia and hastily gives all to Goneril and Regan, dividing his kingdom in two (the number for strife) rather than three (the number for unity). Lear can only hope that either Goneril or Regan will bear a son to carry on his name. But no. He curses Goneril's womb, a curse which might equally condemn Regan's:

> Hear, Nature, hear; dear Goddess, hear:
> Suspend thy purpose if thou didst intend
> To make this creature fruitful.
> Into her womb convey sterility.
> Dry up in her the organs of increase.
> And from her derogate body never spring
> A babe to honor her . . . (I, iv, 288)

With these words Lear ensures that he will have no progeny, no grandson to name. But there is Edgar, Lear's spiritual son, whom he named. Unknowingly, throughout the play, in words and in deeds, Lear has taught Edgar crucial things he needs to know about kingship -- the danger of flatterers, the corruption of courts, etc. Lear has just about fulfilled his duty as a father and a king, and Edgar will, once he learns the most crucial thing about kingship, fulfill his duty as a son and a prince. So, Lear owes Edgar thanks, and Edgar is the only person who can bring Lear a final rest.

But what sense can be made of Lear's last words -- "Do you see this? Look on her! Look, her lips! Look there, look there!" -- in this context? Why should Lear command Edgar to look on Cordelia's lips? If Lear sees Cordelia's lips breathe new life, that is a miracle. Pray, let it be so. But those lips have another significance. Possibly Lear is commanding Edgar to look on those lips which he tried to make utter words they could never utter. Lear is reminding and teaching Edgar what was his greatest fault as a king, hoping that Edgar will learn this most crucial thing and never fall from the same fault. Lear's final gesture is at once an acknowledgement of his wrongdoing, an acknowledgement that his wrongdoing is a hidden cause of Cordelia's death, and an effort to ensure that the future king be free from such wrongdoing. Lear's last gesture is his greatest.

Edgar and Cordelia, Lear's gracious children, always remain faithful to the truth, the one to the truth of his natural person, the other to the truth of her love. Because of this steadfast loyalty Edgar cannot reveal himself to his father in speech until his natural person is perfected, and Cordelia cannot profess her love for her father. The tragedies of Lear and Gloucester are in part the consequences of Edgar's and Cordelia's goodness. I cannot rebuke them for being proud, uncompromising, unscrupulous, or what have you. I cannot say that they should have said this or that at such and such a time. This, after all, was Lear's original fault. Edgar's penultimate couplet shows that he has understood Lear's last gesture:

> The weight of this sad time we must obey,
> Speak what we feel not what we ought to say. (V, iii, 324)

Finally, Edgar is king. According to Machiavelli, he will show great competence in his office. His gift for making the most of whatever accidents happen to befall him entitles him to the name "natural prince." He has firsthand knowledge of the actions of great men, which is so important for a ruler. He has been offered what is perhaps the best possible education for kingship in living the lives of his subjects: the madman, the beggar, the poor man, the servant, the common man, the nobleman, the

judge, the philosopher, and last, the champion knight. Knowing that Edgar will rule, I believe that the line which best captures the mood at the end of King Lear is Kent's: ". . . though it be night, yet the moon shines."

NOTES

I wish to acknowledge four works of interpretation to which I am indebted: Stanley Cavell's The Avoidance of Love; Robert Heilman's The Great Stage; Lawrence Berns' Gratitude, Nature, and Piety in King Lear; William O'Grady's On Almost Seeing Miracles.

Also, I wish to thank Mrs. Flaumenhaft for her encouragement and guidance.

ENERGEIA

St. John's College
Annapolis, MD 21404

Non-Profit Org.
BULK RATE
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT No. 120
ANNAPOLIS, MD.