ENERGEIA

FALL, 1986

COVER:
Evole
by Patricia Dawson
Linoleum Block

ENERGEIA: The activity in which anything is fully itself.

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

Energeia is a non-profit, student magazine which is published three times a year and distributed among the students, faculty, alumni and staff of St. John's College, Annapolis and Sante Fe. 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.

Corrigenda for *The Jacobson Cut* by Henry Higuera (Spring 1986)

I. Substantive.

1. p. 29 l. 8 from bottom: reads
   "EN:OW :: NO:OT";
   should read "EN:OW :: N$\underline{T}$:OT" .

2. p. 30 l. 10: reads "∠GEG=∠FED";
   should read "∠GE$\underline{D}$=∠FE$\underline{G}$".

3. p. 31 ll. 12-13: reads "EHG NHM";
   should read "∠EHG<∠NHM".

4. p. 31 l. 14: reads "∠EHN<∠ENH"
   should read "∠EH$\underline{M}$<∠ENH"

5. Note 5 l. 1: reads "sq.A: sq. B A:C"
   should read "sq.A: sq. B > A:C"

6. Note 5 l. 3: reads "A:B and A:C"
   should read "A:B and $\underline{B}$:C"

II. Minor

1. Angle signs missing at p. 29 ll. 15, 16, 19, Note 2 ll. 2,3, N. 3 l. 2, N. 4 ll. 2,3.

2. Triangle sign missing at N. 4 l. 4.

3. p. 31 l. 7 from bottom: reads "...sq. EH rect.>GE,HN..."
   should read "...sq. EH>rect. GE,HN..."

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"The Play's the Thing..." (*Hamlet* II.ii)
Vision and Action in *King Lear*

Celeste DiNucci

Being a performer--I do not make the claim with any grave intent, neither am I interested in appending that I am either bad or good, it is simply what I do-- the reading of plays has always been for me a slightly different endeavor than the reading of other forms of literature. Henceforth, I cannot help but approach a play as something meant to be seen and heard, but what I am faced with is the written word. It looks pretty much the same as most other pieces of literature. For the most part, it even reads the same: the character designations are not to be heard in our heads any less than an identifying proper noun in direct discourse, and it would be difficult to claim that we envision a stage direction any more vividly than a descriptive passage in prose. But somewhere in this manuscript I know that I want to find the element that makes it necessary that a play be a play. Something in this work must make it appropriate only as a piece of performance art.

But a play does exist on paper, and, as can be said of literature in general, a careful reading of a play usually serves to reinforce and clarify our first impression, that is, the sense that we, as an audience, get from a performance. Indeed, we would expect no less from those whose business it is to produce the performance: impromptu performances are fine, but we expect that there is something to be found within a careful reading of a play that should be known by a director or an actor. But is the job of the performer simply to derive this kind of sense from the paper and display it to the audience, to "give voice" to the poetry of a play? Does the theater merely make "spectacle" out of "literature"?

This question recurred to me most pointedly in coming to know Shakespeare's King Lear. My first reading of the play was a slow, careful study. Any impulse to flip back, to reread, to note and trace themes backwards and forwards was given free rein. The upshot was that I was simply baffled. It wasn't that there was a lack of themes put forth and developed: quite the contrary, the abundance of themes in the play seemed frighteningly inexhaustible as the variety and number of volumes published on Lear strikingly testify. The same thing is as true of the characters as of the plot: many interpretations are available, and all seem plausible and justifiable in terms of the text; but no single one offers itself as most satisfying, and consequently none is quite satisfactory. In short, it seemed that in this play could be found everything, but what I, as a reader, was left with was nothing.

Take, for example, the character of Cordelia. How was I to read her words in the first scene? Her first speech, "What shall Cordelia speak? Love, and be silent" could not exactly be taken as a simple statement of intention, as she neither remains silent, nor when she speaks does she verbally spout gushing love. I did not know whether to cheer Cordelia--after all, I think that the reader is put off by Lear's contest just as Cordelia must be--or to be horrified at the coldness of her words, which in themselves could be interpreted as running the gamut from meekness to cruelty. What's more, the subsequent scenes did not afford any greater clue. That Cordelia really loves Lear becomes clear, but whether this first scene is motivated by petulance or by a clear vision that simply seeks to set her beloved father straight seemed to be an arbitrary choice. Her protest of "No cause, no cause" in IV.vii could be an expression of guilt at her own willfulness or the gentle comfort

of a teacher who realizes she has proferred a lesson her pupil is not ready for. She was only one of the many characters whose words could be interpreted in any number of ways, and the text seemed no help in directing my choice.

Still, even in the midst of all this aimlessness, my abiding faith in Shakespeare was not betrayed. That is, I had a sense that King Lear did not fail as a play. Through closer scrutiny, I did not see these characters become contrivances, but rather I became mystified by them just as I become mystified through the closer knowledge of someone I had previously formed an opinion about. As Kenneth Muir states, in the introduction to the Arden edition of the play, concerning the characters seemingly inexplicable actions:

> Indeed, a certain mystery in the characters prevents them from becoming mechanical, just as in real life we can classify our acquaintances, not our friends. The play had not yielded up its secrets under close examination, and yet I believed in its believability.

This was a start. What had become apparent was that reading the play as literature was, in the end, fruitless. Somehow, the sense of believability that I gained from the play did not seem to lie here on the page--that is , the endeavor to find a sense of the play in this way began to appear to me as wallowing in the beauty, elegance, and mystery of the words. I began to realize that, in order to gain an understanding of what made King Lear viable, a different approach was required: to suspend my reading of the play as poetry, and instead to engage in the reading of it as a tacit performance. It is, after all, in performance that a play becomes a play, and therefore only there that a real evaluation of its effectiveness could begin.

And so the question became: what could the distinction between poetry and performance possibly mean? What are the limitations of the written word in preserving a play? The actions, the development of the plot, and even the rhythm of the speech are all preserved here on the page, in the poetry. But, though a performance obviously cannot be viewed as entirely distinct from what is written on the paper, the object became to understand how the play became different when it utilized that element peculiar to the literary form of "play": immediacy. This element had to be explored, not by reading carefully, but by "watching".

And so the stage is set, the houselights go down, the actors enter, and the play commences. What do we, as an audience, see and hear? Professor Allardyce Nicoll, in his Studies in Shakespeare (1927), states:

> Shakespeare has left us with something which simply cannot be tolerated on the stage, for to find an explanation of Lear's decision and demeanor in this first scene, we need to know the subsequent developments of the plot: by themselves they are simply unintelligible.

I think this is true, but its importance lies in understanding what exactly the nature of this unintelligibility is. The humanity of the characters is at this point not in question: their motives may be hidden, but we do not find them unbelievable. We still want the play, through a filling out and clarifying of Lear's character, to show us what makes this bizarre contest and all of Lear's subsequent actions necessary as a consequence of what he is.

Instead, we are discomfited to find that the play is full of futility, not lessons learned; full of deepening ambiguities, rather than movement toward a clarity of the position each character holds in the play, in their world, and in relation to

one another. By III.ii , Lear doesn't know whether this storm be his ally, nature's right destruction of "ingrateful Man", or his enemy, the "servile ministers" of "two pernicious daughters", and neither do we know on whose side nature lies, and who it is who acts unnaturally. Our attempt to judge Goneril and Regan begins to seem as futile as Lear's trial of them in III.vi, since we do not know Lear any better than he himself does (I.iv, 1.227). This play is moving away from resolution, and we begin to have an uncomfortable feeling that if we are to get the sort of answers we were looking for, either we are in for a very long evening or else nothing short of a deus ex machina will do.

But there are no gods here. Shakespeare has left us with only human beings. Still we do have them: as the play becomes less clear through its words, it becomes more accessible and more believable. We are not baffled by King Lear because the characters become wooden and lifeless; on the contrary, their actions are as extreme as the extremity of their circumstances calls for. Neither does this extremism seem unbelievable: there is no lack of dramatic exigency. What baffles us is that the play doesn't make sense at the same time that it acquires its most convincing reality. And so we are left denying and accepting in the same moment: it is as we see the wholeness of these characters that we are able to deny their words.

It is here that we are forced to begin surrendering the comforting belief that what we are witnessing is merely spoken poetry. No amount of careful reading can give us an indication of why we are affected in this way. It is as we have witnessed the play unfolding in time that we admit to its believability, and as we search the text for extended metaphor and juxtaposition. And so, we are faced with the question: if it is not the poetic or thematic integrity of this play that makes it believable, what is it?

What became apparent to me is that Shakespeare has somehow managed to put his command of poetry into the service of the immediacy peculiar to a play. In other words, here the content and form do not simply reflect one another, as in the common device of words doing what they say found often in poetry. More than this, in putting this poetry into the mouths of human characters--in making these words the unpremeditated speech, not of mere allegories or symbols, but of characters we recognize as being human and whole--we see and experience these words as whole or active truths. Content and form are no longer distinguishable as they once were: the words become an act, and the question of their truth or falsity becomes that of the clear expression of character. These people, indeed, mean what they say.

This is what makes the reading of most plays sensible; this is how a performance can convey the sense that we find in the reading of the play. But what makes King Lear stand out as a play is that here, instead of a complicity of poetry and character, we have a dichotomy. Shakespeare has invested Lear's character with no lack of humanity, but neither has he abandoned his powerful treatment of what makes Lear's character with no lack of humanity, but neither has he abandoned his powerful use of words! It is this that allows for the successful treatment of what makes Lear's unintelligibility nonetheless believable: his madness. It is the character that remains intact, not the speech; and as Lear's character is revealed in all of his madness and humanity, his words, by their very nature, can only run on and in among themselves. The poetry has created the character, and yet the very stuff of which the character is made, the poetry, is belied by the believability it has invested in the character. In IV. vi, we are finally able to hear Lear's words, not as offensively nonsensical, but rather as a pitiful expression of his madness, as much as the flowers with which he has bedecked himself. It is only when Lear's words reach the point of utter intelligibility that his character has attained all of the contours of deepest humanity.

Still, I was not quite satisfied with this understanding of how King Lear somehow failed as a piece of literature and succeeded as a play. It seemed that what

ensured the success of the play was that the audience was not at leisure to judge Lear's acts in the way that a reader is: to see them as selfish, or foolish; to weigh the senselessness and the necessity; even to admire Lear's actions, or to seek to learn from them as though he were a tragic hero. Somehow, the need for that sort of decision became irrelevant. Something was accomplished in this conversion of words to acts that was not merely simple believability.

The question of what makes seeing these words as acts important began to reveal itself not in the examination of the meaning they acquire but rather in what this sort of seeing makes possible. Words as meaning can elicit criticism or agreement, appreciation or denial. It is only when the words become an act that they can elicit a response outside of this reasonable judgement. Words as acts can elicit act. What literature demands of us is comprehension; a play, on the other hand, can only require apprehension. Seeing a play requires, not that all of our critical faculties be on the alert, but rather that our vision be clear so that our action (or perhaps more appropriately our reaction) can be clear and true. Literature, if it seeks to accomplish something outside of reasonable judgement, can only do this through undermining that judgement; if it wants to be incisive in this way, it can only succeed through being subversive. But since it is vision and action that belong to a play, what is subversive when it is read as literature becomes the thing that creates its success as a play: trust.

I am wary of being too explicit about the term "trust" for the simple reason that I would like to retain all of the allusions and all of the depth associated with it in everyday speech. What I would like to emphasize by using it, however, is the idea that understanding can be brought about <u>necessarily</u> even when language is not the medium used to elicit this understanding. When words as acts do not coincide with other acts - other words, or perhaps gestures, or even simple character attributes, such as gender or age (Lear's babbling like a child, for instance) - we can have the sense that the character is being false or ironic, or that the character is simply not able to say what he needs to say. And when what needs to be conveyed is something which by its nature <u>cannot be said</u>, this un-saying need not destroy the character speaking: the <u>act</u> of un-saying can elicit the <u>act</u> of understanding in the spectator through the immediacy of the theater. In <u>King Lear</u>, Shakespeare has utilized the immediacy inherent in a play, and the trust it creates, to successfully treat of that most impossible of themes, madness, without making it either humorous or impossible to watch.

In a strange way then <u>King Lear</u> becomes a play about trust, not as a theme, but as an act. When our trust is claimed, all questions of judging Lear's character have been left behind. The play has shown us about trust through act and in doing so has shown us something about trust that no piece of literature could accomplish. Trust has not been presented to us; instead, we have engaged in it. Through the use of its own temporality, the play has stripped us of the premeditation that could only destroy trust and has instead given us trust as act reflecting act. We have surrendered reason, and it is only this that has enabled us to reflect act with act and so create the trust that the play is about.

What belongs to a play that does not belong to a book is that which is created only through vision and action: trust. This trust becomes all but invisible when it reinforces comprehension. But when a playwright treats of other themes--themes outside of comprehension, such as madness, or perhaps love--this trust becomes necessary and whole unto itself. That <u>King Lear</u> is a play that is successful in its treatment of madness is what makes it impossible to read! That <u>Lear</u> is impossible to read is what brings to light this special claim of the form of "play".

After all of this discovery, then, I returned to my original question, but in a new way. No longer was I concerned with how exactly a play differed from other forms of literature. The question now became how the play might be seen as a form of

literature at all. Literature, through beauty and reason, or perhaps through the denial of these, may hold a very special place in relation to the reader and may create a clarity within us. Theater, through vision and action, may enable us to be fully where we are, at least for the duration of the performance. To be fully where we are can only be learned in practice though; and if the theater can, even for a moment, leave us bereft of the need to deny what we know or construct what we do not, then that experience can change our lives. Literature may be able to show us what we are, but perhaps the beauty of the theater is to show us that not knowing what we are is no excuse for not being what we are.

The Ethical Value of Justice in Plato's *Republic*

Christopher Sturr

In the beginning of Book II of Plato's Republic[1], Glaucon uses strong words in reference to Socrates' dialogue with Thrasymachus which took place in Book I. Glaucon says,

> "Socrates, do you want to seem to have persuaded us,or truly to have persuaded us, that it is in every way better to be just than unjust?"
>
> "I would choose to persuade you truly, I said, if it were up to me."
>
> "Well, then," he said, "you're not doing what you want." (357ab)

After some questioning of Socrates by Glaucon, Socrates continues:

> "I, for my part, suppose," I said, "that it [justice] belongs to the finest kind [of goods], which the man who is going to be blessed should like both for itself and for what comes out of it."
>
> "Well, that's not the opinion of the many," he said, "rather it [justice] seems to belong to the form of drudgery, which should be practiced for the sake of wages and the reputation that comes from opinion; but all by itself it should be fled from as something hard."
>
> "I know this is the popular opinion," I said, "and a while ago justice, taken as being such, was blamed by Thrasymachus while injustice was praised. But I, as it seems, am a poor learner."
>
> "Come now," he said, "hear me too, and see if you still have the same opinion. For it looks to me as though Thrasymachus, like a snake, has been charmed more quickly than he should have been; yet to my way of thinking, there was still no proof about either. For I desire to hear what each is and what power it has all alone by itself when it is in the soul -- dismissing its wages and its consequences." (358ab)

Glaucon complains that since the popular conception is that justice is bad and disadvantageous on its own, he constantly hears arguments against justice, whereas "the argument on behalf of justice -- I've yet to hear from anyone as I want it." (358d). He goes on to restore Thrasymachus' argument, speaking "in vehement praise of the unjust life" (358d), in order to induce Socrates to refute his arguments, and to show that justice is good and injustice is bad.

It is disturbing to hear justice blamed and injustice praised by Glaucon and Thrasymachus, yet their arguments seem difficult to refute. On the one hand, they are constantly heard, as Glaucon points out. What is more, they appeal to impulses that everyone has, and perhaps cannot completely get away from. On the other hand,

the arguments go against many forces that form the basis of our actions: parental, religious, and legal authority, senses of responsibility or obligation for things beyond ourselves, the 'Golden Rule', and so on. In a discussion in which what is at stake is a way of life, as Socrates points out (344e), such conflict of ideas in one's mind is indeed disconcerting.

I, like Glaucon, want to hear an adequate argument for justice and against injustice. I want to understand exactly what the position Thrasymachus takes entails and how one could go about refuting it. I propose to examine Socrates' dialogue with Thrasymachus in order to understand the nature of the dilemma, and analyze the dialogue and its arguments to see how one might refute Thrasymachus.

The dialogue between Socrates and Thrasymachus can be divided into three stages which correspond roughly to three assertions about justice advanced by Thrasymachus and Socrates' apparent refutations of these assertions. In the first stage Thrasymachus defines justice as the advantage of the stronger; in the second he says that justice is someone else's advantage, whereas injustice is one's own advantage; in the third he asserts that the unjust life is superior to the just life. I will briefly outline the dialogue and then treat the arguments from each side separately.

Polemarchus defines justice as "helping friends and injuring enemies." (332b). Thrasymachus is dissatisfied with Socrates' apparent refutation of this definition. He advances his own definition of justice: "the advantage of the stronger." (338c). Socrates uses three lines of argument against this first definition. First, he claims not to know what Thrasymachus means by "the stronger", asking whether he means those who are physically stronger, such as wrestlers. Thrasymachus clarifies himself by saying that by the "stronger" he means the ruling group. His reasoning: ruling groups everywhere set down laws which are advantageous for them, and say that the laws are just for the people who are ruled; therefore, what is just is advantageous for the ruling group.

Next, Socrates points out an apparent contradiction in the definition. Implicit in Thrasymachus' reasoning is that it is just for subjects to obey the laws of the rulers. It is also just for them to do what is advantageous for the rulers. Yet Thrasymachus agrees that rulers are capable of erring, i.e. of making laws that are disadvantageous for them. So it appears that it may be just for subjects to do what is disadvantageous for the rulers -- whence the contradiction. Thrasymachus escapes the contradiction by asserting that rulers, insofar as they are rulers, do not err, in fact.

In his third criticism of Thrasymachus' first definition, Socrates says that the ruler insofar as he is a ruler (using Thrasymachus' expression) does not consider his own advantage. His evidence is that the arts seek the advantage not of themselves, but of that of which they are arts. So just as a doctor considers not his own advantage but the advantage of the sick, the ruler, insofar as he is a ruler, considers not his own advantage, but that of those he rules.

Thrasymachus responds to this reasoning by offering his second definition of justice. To counter Socrates' assertion, he cites the example of the shepherd. The shepherd, in caring for the sheep, looks not to the good of the sheep, but to his own good, and to the good of his master. The ruler is the same way, and rather than look to the advantage of the subjects, he should look to his own, and 'fleece' them. From this analogy, Thrasymachus also gets the idea that justice, which characterizes Socrates' doctor, is someone else's advantage, whereas injustice, which characterizes Thrasymachus' shepherd, is one's own advantage. People who are incompletely unjust, such as petty criminals, are blamed, whereas those who are completely unjust are praised from all sides. Therefore, he concludes, injustice is "mightier, freer, and more masterful" than justice (344c).

In response to these assertions, Socrates draws a distinction between the normal arts and what he calls the "wage-earner's art". Craftsmen who earn wages do not earn

them as a benefit of their particular art, but as a benefit of the wage earner's art. If a craftsman works for nothing, he does not get the benefit of the wage-earner's art, but some benefit, the benefit peculiar to the art of which he is a craftsman, is produced. In this way, Socrates reasserts his belief that the ruler, insofar as he is a ruler, considers the advantage of the ruled, not his own.

Talk of wages leads to the third part of the dialogue, which deals with the relative merits of justice and injustice. Thrasymachus has asserted that the life of the unjust is superior to that of the just. Socrates and Glaucon are not persuaded. They decide to engage with Thrasymachus to discover whether what he say is so. They first discuss the relationship of justice with virtue and wisdom. After being questioned, Thrasymachus asserts that injustice is in the camp of virtue and wisdom, whereas justice is in the camp of vice and ignorance. As the dialogue evolves, it is deduced that in general the good and wise man tries to get the better only of those unlike him, whereas the bad and ignorant man tries to get the better of those both like and unlike him. Socrates points out that the just man tries to get the better only of the unjust, whereas the unjust man tries to get the better of everyone. From this it is concluded that the just man is good and wise, while the unjust man is bad and ignorant.

Next, Socrates, Glaucon, and Thrasymachus discuss whether injustice might still be mightier than justice. Socrates makes several points: first, for one city to become stronger than another, it needs justice, since justice is wisdom. Second, the members of any group with a common enterprise must act justly toward one another to be successful, since injustice implants hatred and leads to faction. Third, just as injustice makes any group an enemy both to anyone around it and to itself, injustice makes a man not only unable to act, but also an enemy to others and to himself. Lastly, whereas the just man is a friend of the gods, who are just, the unjust man is the enemy of the gods.

Finally, they discuss the life of the unjust man, and whether it might be happier than the life of the just man. Socrates points out that the work of the soul cannot be accomplished if the virtue of the soul is not present. Since justice is the virtue of the soul, and injustice is the vice, the just man lives well, and therefore happily, whereas the unjust man lives poorly, and therefore wretchedly. They conclude that justice has been shown to be more profitable than injustice.

Socrates, like Glaucon in Book II, expresses his dissatisfaction with the dialogue with Thrasymachus :

> "Before finding out what we are considering at first -- what the just is -- I let go of that and pursued the consideration of whether it is vice and lack of learning, or wisdom and virtue. And later, when in its turn an argument that injustice is more profitable than justice fell my way, I could not restrain myself from leaving the other and going after this one, so that now as a result of the discussion I know nothing. So long as I do not know what the just is, I shall hardly know whether it is a virtue or not, and whether the one who has it is unhappy or happy." (354c)

This is our dissatisfaction as well. A closer examination of the arguments in the dialogue may give us clues about the nature of the dilemma at hand.

Even though justice remains undefined, we can understand from Book I what kind of thing is called justice, and what the attitudes toward it are. When Socrates asks Cephalus what the greatest benefit is from possessing great wealth, he says it is "not having to cheat or lie to any man against one's will" and being able to make sacrifices to the gods and repay one's depts (331b). This is how the discussion of justice is introduced. At Cephalus' age, he is afraid of the evil that may await him

in Hades if he has been unjust. So he defines justice as "speaking the truth and giving back what one takes." (331d).

Polemarchus refines his father's definition by citing the poet Simonides, who said that it is just to give what is owed to everyone. Polemarchus interprets this as meaning that it is just to help one's friends and harm one's enemies (332b). Polemarchus later talks of justice as being useful in contracts and partnerships (333a). Later in the Republic, Socrates addresses the question of in what situations actions might be considered just or unjust: "--either concerning the acquisition of money, or the care of the body, or something political, or concerning private contracts" (443e). It seems that justice is spoken of as concerning honesty and good faith in agreements, and respect of others' property. In any case, the examples of situations in which questions of justice arise almost always have something to do with relations in a community.

It makes sense that questions of justice should come up in the discussion of a political community. Aristotle has this to say about justice in the Nicomachean Ethics[2] :

> The noble (τὰ καλά) and the just (τὰ δίκαια), what are studied by political science, have so much disagreement and variation as to seem to be by custom (νόμῳ), and not by nature (φύσει). (I, iii, 2-3)

Such disagreement comes up in Book I of the Republic: Thrasymachus and Glaucon are suggesting, as Aristotle says, that justice is not by nature, but only by convention.

The first book of the Republic seems at first to be concerned not with politics, but with ethics: the members of the dialogue are trying to decide on the best way of life. But it seems significant that Aristotle's Ethics and Politics[3] are so closely related to it. In the beginnings of each, Aristotle says that every human activity aims at some good. In the Politics, he adds that every group and therefore every city is instituted in order to attain some good. Aristotle also says in the Ethics that the aim of the study of politics is the highest good, or happiness (I, iv, 1). The connection between ethical and political considerations is even closer in the Republic. The best way of life, which is sought in the first book of the Republic, is the one which obtains happiness. This clearly explains the coincident political nature of the Republic. The question at hand is, what role does a political good, justice have in the ethical consideration of obtaining this best way of life?

Cephalus and Polemarchus profess to agree with Socrates that justice is necessary for the good life. This fact may account for their differences of opinion with Socrates about how justice should be defined. For although they differ greatly with Socrates about how one ought to act towards other people, they want to say that how they think people should act is the just way to act. For example, Polemarchus believes that one often needs to injure people, specifically one's enemies. Since he wants to say that one also needs to act justly, he must work his belief that one should injure others into his definition of justice. This is where he comes into conflict with Socrates, and this illustrates how Socrates comes into conflict with political life as it operates in Athens.

Thrasymachus does not believe that justice is needed for happiness; in fact, he thinks that it hinders the pursuit of the good life. Ironically, this belief would make Thrasymachus less reluctant to agree on a definition of justice with Socrates in terms of a code of behavior towards other people: Thrasymachus would not consider that code of behavior a good guide for how one ought to behave. So Polemarchus winces at excluding the injury of others from a definition of justice because that would make his 'perfect man' -- the one who acts as Polemarchus thinks one should act -- unjust; Thrasymachus doesn't mind saying it is unjust to injure others because he

doesn't mind being called unjust.

The positions of the interlocutors are analogous to those in the Gorgias.[4] Socrates speaks in that dialogue with Gorgias, Polus, and Callicles successively, about, among other things, justice. Polus accuses Gorgias, and later Callicles accuses Polus and Gorgias, of being shamed by Socrates, and of not saying what they really believe about justice. Callicles claims that by following their instinct for most of the argument, and then being shamed by Socrates and popular opinion to say something they don't believe, Gorgias and Polus were forced to contradict themselves (Gorgias, 482de).

In a similar way, Thrasymachus could claim, Cephalus was made afraid by thoughts of Hades, and Polemarchus was shamed by popular views about justice into saying that justice is good. But the rest of their views contradict this. Callicles and Thrasymachus, on the other hand choose to be unintimidated by commonly held beliefs, rather than conclude that their original premises were wrong.

Ironically, even though Callicles and Thrasymachus are more difficult to refute (if indeed they are ever refuted), their kind of interlocution is better, from a philosophic standpoint. If one thinks that their views are wrong, one is tempted to think that it is correct that they should be silenced by shame. But the philosophical process of dialectic, which seeks truth, requires that no premises, such as popular beliefs, be accepted on faith in such a way that they silence what could be investigated for truth or falsehood. So it is easier to determine that truth or falsehood of beliefs which, when presented, are unaffected by what others think, and therefore are not inconsistent with themselves. Callicles and Thrasymachus strive to put forward views of this kind. When Socrates, praising Callicles for not being ashamed and for speaking freely, tells him "not to slacken at all, so that it will really become clear how we should live" (Gorgias, 487ab, 492d, 494cd), and when he urges Thrasymachus to stick to what he has said (Republic, 345b) and praises him for "speaking the truth as it seems to you" (348e-349a), he is not sarcastic or mocking, as at first seems, but sincere.

But Thrasymachus is equally justified in the restrictions he makes on Socrates. Thrasymachus requires that Socrates not define justice as "the needful, or the helpful, or the profitable, or the gainful, or the advantageous" (336d). Socrates claims that this restriction is unreasonable, and that Thrasymachus is forbidding him from saying what Thrasymachus knows Socrates thinks the definition of justice is. Actually, Thrasymachus is forbidding Socrates from expressing his preconceived judgement about justice instead of defining it. The task should be, Thrasymachus seems to say, to define justice "clearly and precisely" (336d), and then to decide whether it is advantageous or good. This is exactly the point, quoted earlier, that Socrates makes at the end of Book I.

Thrasymachus has his own ideas about justice which might be clearer if he would not assume, as Socrates does, that justice is advantageous. He tries to express his ideas through his definitions of justice. Thrasymachus' words seem incoherent and contradictory at times. However, a sympathetic treatment of them which tries to understand "truth as he sees it" can reveal a coherent and plausible alternative to Socrates' assumption.

The sense in which Thrasymachus refers to 'justice' in his definitions is unclear. When he defines justice as the "advantage of the stronger", Socrates rightly responds, "First I must learn what you mean,...for, as it is, I don't yet understand." (338c). Does Thrasymachus refer to what justice is, or how it is referred to, or how it should be described? Cleitophon and Polemarchus are equally confused about his meaning (340bc).

Thrasymachus' explanation seems to say that justice is created by whatever laws those in power ('the stronger') put down for their own advantage. He seems to think this is appropriate. Yet in his second definition of justice, that it is someone

else's advantage, he regards it as something to be avoided. Both definitions seem to express his point of view, but the second violates Thrasymachus' own restrictions on how justice can be defined.

Glaucon's speech in Book II is just the kind of sympathetic treatment I referred to, and he cleans up some of the difficulties with Thrasymachus' definitions. Glaucon sets out his first task: "I'll tell what kind of thing they say justice is and where it comes from" (358c). According to Glaucon, the greatest good is doing injustice. Justice was established by the weak, who could not carry out injustice. Justice, then, is by convention (νόμῳ) alone. It is a compact of people, agreeing not to commit injustice to one another. The strongest men, who are able to commit injustice, would be mad to set down a compact agreeing to be just, because it clearly would not be to their advantage.

Another problem understanding Thrasymachus' argument comes from his idea of a 'ruler', which is clearly different from Socrates'. Socrates speaks of the ruler as the person who has the job of ruling. He clearly thinks of ruling as an art. This is why he can compare the ruler's activities, which Thrasymachus says must work to his own advantage, to the practice of an art. If Thrasymachus thinks of a ruler not as an artisan, but as the person in a position of power, it is hardly fair to apply standards which apply to artisans to the ruler Thrasymachus speaks of, unless Socrates can show that this is not the nature of rulers. As it is, Socrates' definition of a ruler seems to be inherently linked with his ideas about justice, and both would be proved together. Just as a doctor is a practitioner of the art of caring for the bodies of others, the ruler is the practitioner of the art of caring for the souls of others. He is therefore a dispenser of justice, and does not consider his own advantage.

Socrates chooses to view artisans as rulers of the objects of their arts. He also introduces the innovation of the wage-earner's art to explain what benefit artisans get from the practice of their art. If rulers are not as he assumes they are, but do consider their own advantage as Thrasymachus claims, then we get a more telling picture of Socrates' view of the arts. This view would explain, as Socrates' does not, why conflicts often arise between the motives of the wage-earner's art and the art which benefits others. No one hears 'we do it all for you' without some amount of skepticism.

In the Sophist[5], the Eleatic Stranger divides arts into two classes: the productive arts and the acquisitive arts (Sophist, 219ab). In the Republic, Socrates mentions as examples only productive arts, except the wage-earner's art. Unlike Socrates' examples of art, the acquisitive arts are not creative or servicing, but are coercive. Socrates' view of the arts excludes consideration of these coercive arts. For example, it is hard to imagine that the hunter, the practitioner of an acquisitive art according to the Stranger, is a) the ruler of those he hunts, and b) one who looks to the benefit of those he hunts. This is the substance of Thrasymachus' shepherd example, and clearly Thrasymachus' art of ruling must lie among the acquisitive arts.

The innovation of the wage-earner's art is meant to show how just actions can coincide with personal benefit: if the artisan is just and looks to others' advantage, he himself is also benefitted by the wage-earner's art; if he is unjust, he is not benefitted by the wage-earner's art. Thrasymachus would say that this benefit is by convention, and his 'stronger man' is meant to illustrate the possibility that a man could be separate from the material consequences of his justice or injustice. Thrasymachus proposes that for this man, there is no advantage to justice and no disadvantage to injustice, after the conventional advantages and disadvantages have been taken away. The material consequences of justice are what Thrasymachus and Glaucon want to call convention: laws and common views that label justice 'honorable'. So by pointing out that the 'stronger man might err', Socrates unwittingly avoids the

view he should, and eventually does, defend: that justice is natural (φύσει), and is naturally good. It seems to me a wrong way to argue against injustice to say that no one could ever execute it efficiently, because this still admits that if it could be done, it would be profitable.

Glaucon's Gyges' ring story gives a better illustration of this principle. Glaucon wants to know if justice is, as Socrates believes, a good in and of itself, not just for what it can get someone: "For I desire to hear what each [justice and injustice] is and what power it has all alone by itself when it is in the soul -- dismissing its wages and its consequences." (358b). The man wearing Gyges' ring offers this opportunity. He "escapes the notice of all gods and humans", as Socrates later says (427d), and so he does not have to worry about the material consequences of justice or injustice. Glaucon speculates that any man wearing the ring (presuming he would do exactly what is to his best advantage) would not bother with justice at all.

Thrasymachus asserts not only that injustice is more advantageous than justice, but also that it is virtuous and wise. The difference between profit or advantage and what is fair or good, which Socrates emphasizes (348e), is unclear. He may want to point out the distinction which is made between what seems to be advantageous or what is considered to be advantageous, and what is actually advantageous. In any case, Socrates makes his final challenges to Thrasymachus in response to these assertions.

Socrates first gives an argument to show that justice is virtue and wisdom, drawn from a comparison between artisans and just and unjust men. He seems to assume, again, that artisans are unconcerned with justice and injustice, and that justice accompanies all forms of knowledge or expertise, by nature. In this, he presupposes that justice a) is associated with knowledge (what he is trying to show at the moment) and b) is natural (which is his fundamental point). So, these presuppositions beg the question in more ways than one.

The definition of justice still in question, that justice is someone else's advantage while injustice is one's own advantage, implies what Thrasymachus asserts about the goodness of justice. This definition clearly sets out the more specific question: Is others' advantage necessarily my own? When Socrates talks about people's actions in a group, he addresses this more specific question most directly.

Socrates first tries to show that justice is necessary for a city to act (justly or unjustly). This is because his first argument supposedly shows that justice is wisdom, and so since wisdom is clearly needed for the city to act, so is justice. Thrasymachus says he doesn't doubt that first argument, the one that equates justice with wisdom and virtue. Socrates doesn't seem to, either. If he did think that he had adequately proven that justice is wisdom and virtue, then he wouldn't feel compelled to go on, as he does, and give arguments for why justice is mighty, and why the just man is happy. When Socrates gives the example of the group of people with a common goal, he is making two important assertions. First, he is asserting that the completely unjust group would be unsuccessful. If the group is completely unjust, besides having an unjust common purpose, its members would be unjust to one another. So the group would be unable to accomplish anything.

Socrates' second, implied assertion is that justice is necessary for external order. Complete injustice in a group, we have said, includes injustice of each member in the group towards every other. Order within the group is necessary for the group to accomplish anything, as Socrates first asserts. If we consider the group, then, injustice in any member of the group disrupts the internal order of the group by creating faction and hatred. If we consider one member of the group, his unjust actions disrupt the order outside of him, his external order. This point is evident from what has been understood from the beginning about how justice is spoken of: If justice concerns partnerships or agreements, or respecting others, then injustice in

a person's actions clearly disrupts the order outside that person. We also accept this when we consider the fundamental question of whether justice, a political good, is also an ethical good.

From these assertions about what injustice accomplishes in groups, Socrates makes some conclusions about what it must accomplish in individuals :

> "And when it is in one man, I suppose it will do the same thing which it naturally accomplishes.
> First, it will make him unable to act, because he is at faction and not of one mind with himself and,
> second, an enemy both to himself and to just men,
> won't it?"(352a)

Just as complete injustice in the group disturbs external as well as internal order, so it does in the individual.

Thrasymachus does not discern some errors in Socrates' reasoning; or, at least, he does not bother to challenge Socrates at this point in the dialogue. Socrates does not address whether a group could accomplish an unjust act while its members are just towards one another. This seems perfectly plausible, and a limitation of this sort would make Thrasymachus' view less ridiculous. Thrasymachus could argue that perhaps justice is a (slightly) limited good. Occasionally, the unjust person has to act justly towards others to accomplish his eventual advantage. This seems reasonable is we consider how Thrasymachus' view was compared to Polemarchus' earlier. Whereas Polemarchus believed in helping friends and hurting enemies, Thrasymachus saw no reason to help even friends. But if we consider the logical qualification now that Thrasymachus would in fact help others if it were to his ultimate advantage, the positions of the two do not seem so far apart. Thrasymachus and Polemarchus would probably have defined their 'friends' similarly. This also agrees with the earlier point that Polemarchus' and Thrasymachus' views of justice are not so far apart, but seem to be, since Polemarchus allows himself to be shamed by popular belief.

Does the small addition of acting expediently in this way really detract from Thrasymachus' doctrine of selfishness in the way that Socrates implies it does? Actually, it seems to make it even more dangerous. Should it be called 'justice' when the unjust person, a member of an unjust group, acts justly toward others in the group in order that they might carry out the ultimately unjust acts? Just as Aristotle says that acting virtuously is virtue only if it is for the right reasons, acting justly should be called 'justice' only if it is for the right reasons. It seems, then, that there should be a distinction between enforced or expedient 'justice' and willful, enjoyable enactment of justice. And if Socrates wants to assert that justice is good, then he shouldn't admit that this former kind of justice is for the right reasons.

So if this kind of action is not just, then the person who acts that way -- the person who, like the members of the unjust group, acts justly toward others for his own benefit -- may still be Thrasymachus' completely unjust man. In fact, he seems to be the completely unjust man of whom Glaucon spoke (361ab). He is even more formidable than the man who seems unjust, since he gives the appearance of being just and friendly toward others.

Furthermore, Socrates very easily assumes that the individual and the group can be compared. He makes such comparisons throughout the Republic, as is seen when he compares the 'states' of the man's soul to various kinds of states. The facility with which Plato compares man and state may have something to do with his idea of the coincidence of the studies of ethics and politics. Here, Socrates shows that justice within the group is internal order and that it is needed to accomplish anything. he also shows that justice in the individual, as a member of a group, is necessary for

his external order in the group, whether the group be a gang of thieves or society as a whole. He presumes that justice in the individual means internal order. By talking in this way about justice, he presupposes what he wants to prove, again -- that being just is advantageous, or virtuous; that it promotes the health of the soul. Socrates needs to show that what he calls justice in the soul is the same as the justice which rules a person's actions toward others.

We have said that Socrates failed to recognize, or at least failed to mention, the possibility of a group with unjust goals, but internal order. We have observed that the 'justice' accounting for the order in the group which we have said is expedient may not deserve to be called justice at all. If the comparison can be made, the corresponding individual would be one who is just to others, yet has an 'unjust' (if we use Socrates' term for 'unordered') soul. This is exactly the kind of person Thrasymachus suggests can exist.

Socrates has not answered Thrasymachus' challenge, but he has silenced him. At first we thought Thrasymachus, like Callicles, spoke freely, and was not ashamed of popular belief. But we see that at 350d, when Socrates claims to have shown Thrasymachus' just man to be "unlearned and bad", Thrasymachus blushes. Thrasymachus, like Gorgias and Polus, is a rhetor, and ultimately concerned with appearing wise and good. The possibility that what Socrates implies may be true, and that Socrates understands this disconcerts him. Thrasymachus, too, as Glaucon says, "like a snake, has been charmed more quickly than he should have been." (358b).

Glaucon and Adeimantus take up the argument which Thrasymachus seems to have abandoned. The response which arises out of their challenge, when, in the beginning of Book II, they restore Thrasymachus' argument better than he probably could have, takes the form of the "city in speech". It takes its general idea from this last comparison of justice in the group and in the individual.

The idea of studying a city to understand the nature of justice in the individual appears at 368e:

> "So then, perhaps there would be more justice in the bigger and it would be easier to observe closely. If you want, first we'll investigate what justice is like in the cities. Then we'll also go on to consider it in individuals, considering the likeness of the bigger in the idea of the littler?"

After the city has been formed, Socrates calls upon the others to complete the search for justice and injustice and their natures :

> "In the next place, get yourself an adequate light somewhere; and look yourself -- and call in your brother and Polemarchus and the others -- whether we can somehow see where the justice might be and where the injustice, in what they differ from one another, and which the man who's going to be happy must possess, whether it escapes the notice of all gods and humans or not." (427d)

This is asserted again at 435a:

> "Then", I said, "is that which one calls the same, whether it's bigger or smaller, unlike or like in that respect in which it's called the same?"
> "Like," he said.
> "Then the just man will not be any different from the just city with respect to the form itself of justice, but will be like it."

"Yes", he said, "he will be like it."

The city is supposed to be bigger than the man, but the same in form. So after the city has been formed, wherever justice is found in it, justice in the man might be found in the same place. What is more, justice may be of the same nature and may produce the same effects in the man as in the city.

When Glaucon and Adeimantus begin the scrutiny of the city they have produced, they assume that if it has been correctly founded by them, then it must be perfectly good. Therefore, they conclude, it must be "wise, courageous, and just" (427e). Again, it is easy to understand the 'goodness' of wisdom and courage for a city, i.e. how they are beneficial to it in every way, but it is questionable whether justice is necessarily good. Their conclusion, then, seems unfair.

When they later equate injustice with "extreme evil-doing" (434a), they may be justified, however. They reason that an extreme evil-doing, something which would cause great harm to the city, would be for the members of one class to try to get into another class. Injustice is extreme evil-doing in the sense that it disturbs the internal order of the city, as Socrates has affirmed. Therefore, they conclude, this must be injustice. Its opposite, minding one's own business, must be justice. This makes sense with our original understanding of what was being called 'justice'.

They are cautious about the switch from consideration of the city to consideration of the man, and address it after they have defined justice in the city. (434d):

> "If there are still any doubts in our soul," I said, "we could reassure ourselves completely by testing our justice in the light of the vulgar standards."
> "Which ones?"
> "For example, if, concerning this city and the man who by nature and training is like it, we were required to come to an agreement about whether, upon accepting a deposit of gold or silver, such a man would seem to be the one to filch it -- do you suppose anyone would suppose that he would be the man to do it and not rather those who are not such as he is?"
> "No one would," he said.
> "And as for temple robberies, thefts, and betrayals, either of comrades in private or cities in public, wouldn't this man be beyond them?"
> "Yes, he would be beyond them."
> "And, further, he would in no way whatsoever be faithless in oaths or other agreements."
> "Of course not."

Glaucon wants to believe that justice is good. He knows that the man he and the others have created is good, for he is their own. They simply presume that the man with the ordered soul the parts of which act justly toward one another is just towards others as well. They go on to give other examples of injustice that their perfect man surely wouldn't commit.

Two points about this section: first, Socrates carefully qualifies his statements to cover all forms of injustice, in the appropriately limited sense that it must be understood in order for the Thrasymachan argument to make sense. He says that clearly this man won't do these injustices either to "comrades in private or cities in public". As we have said, Thrasymachus might well modify his ideas to allow justice to comrades in private. Socrates himself pointed out that in order for a group to carry out even an unjust act, the members must be just to one another. So

all would agree that one should be just to one's comrades in private. Socrates now asserts as well that this man would also necessarily be just to cities in public. This is much closer to the realm in question, the realm of the ruler. Thrasymachus believes that certain men, those who are able, should rule and benefit as much as they can from it.

Second, Socrates sets the stage rhetorically for Glaucon and the listeners to react in the way he wants them to. The "vulgar standards" (442e) are described by the word φορτικός , used of arguments to call them "vulgar" or "low".[6] Socrates seems to imply rhetorically that the consideration of whether the internally ordered person might not also be externally just is hardly worth their time.

They again reverse the association between acting justly and having a well-ordered soul at 444d, when they presume that the man who acts justly will also naturally have an ordered soul:

> "Then, in its turn," I said, "isn't to produce justice [by acting justly] to establish the parts of the soul in a relation of mastering, and being mastered by, one another that is according to nature, while to produce injustice is to establish a relation of ruling, and being ruled by, one another that is contrary to nature?"
>
> "Entirely so," he said.

The comparison between health of the body and health of the soul is complete: acting justly produces justice, and if justice is the health of the soul, then acting justly naturally produces a relation of ruling in the parts of the soul which is healthy according to nature.

They agree at 443b that their dream "has reached perfect fulfillment", and at 443c Socrates says,

> "And in truth justice was, as it seems, something of this sort; however, not with respect to a man's minding his external business, but with respect to what is within, with respect to what truly concerns him and his own. He doesn't let each part in him mind other people's business or the three classes in the soul meddle with each other, but really sets his own house in good order and rules himself."

We have seen that Socrates' words may not have adequately resolved the dilemma of whether what he says here is so.

If we ask, however, what Plato's position is with regard to the ethical value of justice, the answer is much less clear. First of all, the Republic is full of contradictory ideas of justice -- Plato is clearly aware of the difficulty of the dilemma at hand. For example, even though, as I have pointed out, Socrates does not discuss the possibility of an unjust group whose members are just towards one another, the republic Joe? have created is exactly this kind of group. The city has gone from being a "city of utmost necessity" (369d) to being one of luxury, or as Socrates puts it, from being healthy to being feverish (372e). To support these luxuries, the city would need an army of guardians to take lands away from neighbors since the land which would have formerly sustained the city would no longer be adequate. Clearly, taking what belongs to others is not minding one's own business. It is unclear, then, whether this city is, as Socrates says at 427e, "wise, moderate, and just", as well as good.

The guardians themselves present another difficulty. Far from being like the perfect man modeled after the city, the guardians are closer to Polemarchus' ideal

man: they must be "gentle to their own and cruel [χαλεπούς] to their enemies" (375c). This claim comes from the same Socrates who tells Polemarchus at 338d, "Nor is injuring, in fact, the work of good, but of its opposite."

Similarly, descriptions of Thrasymachus indicate Plato's acknowledgement of the existence of people who can get things done through the unjust use of force. At 336b, for example, just after the mention of "men who have a high opinion of what they can do", Thrasymachus is compared to a wild beast as he flings himself into the discussion. Other such passages occur at 340d, 343a, and 344d. Thrasymachus is eventually subdued, in a way, but Callicles in the Gorgias offers an even better example. Not only does he hold his own in arguing against justice, but he may well be the best candidate for one who could carry out injustice completely. There seems to be a link between the ability to carry out injustice and the shamelessness in argument which Callicles shows, and the others lack in varying degrees. This link may be conscience. Plato, despite Socrates' rhetoric about justice, does not deny in his characterizations the possibility of people lacking conscience to certain degrees.

To point out contradiction, however, is not to say that Plato does not have anything coherent to say about justice. Plato acknowledges the difficulty of the dilemma. He also presents evidence and ideas which can help the reader get closer to truth.

The common views of political good -- justice -- and individual or ethical good -- happiness -- are such that they necessarily oppose one another. As Glaucon points out, justice is seen as something necessary for the function of the state but undesirable in itself for the individual. Happiness and internal order, or the 'good life', are thought to come chiefly with material things, pleasure, and power or honor, as Plato shows through the characters in his dialogues. As Callicles points out (Gorgias, 491e) a man who is enslaved at all by justice or temperance for example cannot be happy. If justice is defined as not trying to get the better of others materially but rather honoring agreements, and yet material betterment of the individual is necessary for happiness, then justice of necessity gets in the way of happiness.

By revising the conceptions of the goals of a human being, the goals of a state, and the relationship between human being and state, Plato resolves the tension between justice and happiness. As Aristotle does in his political treatise, Plato asserts the goal of the state to be the happiness of its citizens. This is the substance of the argument that the ruler thinks not of his own benefit, but of the benefit of those he rules. This claim establishes a first like between ethics and politics. They both aim at the same thing. If humans are political by nature, they naturally need the companionship of other humans and organized association with them to attain happiness.

Plato's view of human goals completes the connection between ethics and politics. If human goals are concerned not with external goods, but with internal perfection, then justice no longer interferes with the pursuit of those goals. Take again the example of Socrates' suggestion near the end of Book IV :

> "And in truth justice was, as it seems, something of this sort; however, not with respect to a man's minding his external business, but with respect to what is within, with respect to what truly concerns him and his own. He doesn't let each part in him mind other people's business or the three classes in the soul meddle with each other, but really sets his own house in good order and rules himself; he arranges himself, becomes his own friend, and harmonizes the three parts, exactly like the three notes in a harmonic scale, lowest, highest and middle. And if there are some other parts in between, he binds them together and

> becomes entirely one from many, moderate and harmonized. Then and only then, he acts, if he does act in some way -- either concerning the acquisition of many, or the care of the body, or something political, or concerning private contracts. In all these actions he believes and names a just and fine action one that preserves and helps to produce this condition, and wisdom the knowledge that supervises this action, while he believes and names an unjust action one that undoes this condition, and lack of learning, in its turn, the opinion that supervises this action." (443c)

If "what truly concerns him and his own" is what is within a human being, then justice no longer interferes with happiness.

Aristotle accordingly draws the distinction between good and bad kinds of self-ishness. "Self-love" is a term of reproach for people

> when they assign to themselves the larger share of money, honors, or bodily pleasures; since these are the things which most men desire and set their hearts on as being the greates goods and which accordingly they complete with each other to obtain. (Nic. Eth, IX, viii, 4).

Such competition necessitates injustice. The person who zealously competes to obtain the 'noble' (τὸ καλόν), that is, who seeks to perfect his soul, is still self-loving, but in a good way. Aristotle says (IX, viii, 6), "he therefore who loves and indulges the dominant part of himself [Plato's calculating part of the soul] is a lover of self in the fullest degree." This person, moreover, does not need to interfere with others for his perfection.

With such an understanding of how happiness is obtained, the connection between politics and ethics can be completed. Not only is it not particularly advantageous to be unjust, as it was when happiness was thought to be achieved through external goods, but it is particularly advantageous to be just. That the good of the individual as a member of society is equivalent to political good is a necessary consequence of man being a political animal. However, with this new conception of happiness, Plato can assert also that the good of the individual as a human being is equivalent to political good. Justice, as Socrates says, is something internal. So political good, justice, is equated with ethical good, virtue, just as the concerns of politics and ethics were acknowledge to be the same.

The problem remains of how these revisions should be viewed. At first it seemed as if the ethical value of justice could go either way. Justice could be thought of as good or bad practice, with certain logical consequences following each choice. Glaucon and Thrasymachus presented a plausible alternative to Socrates' assumption that justice is good. We have demonstrated that Socrates' answer to this alternative does not have the force of a deductive proof, and that this and may contradictions in the text continue to point out the difficulty of the delimma. Finally, it seems that notwithstanding his acknowledgement of the difficulty of the dilemma, Plato does give a coherent answer to the dilemma. To ask how Plato's revisions should be viewed is to ask what Plato's intent is in the answer these revisions form.

The very least that Plato's answer to the dilemma affords is an equally plausible alternative to Glaucon's picture and Thrasymachus' view of the character of justice. But the insufficiency of this kind of answer induces us to search further. We have said that some, Glaucon and Adeimantus included, desire to hear justice praised and injustice blamed. Motives may be noble by Plato's standards and may come from, for example, a person who has been taught to seek perfection of his soul and needs

some reassurance. They may be ignoble and may come from, for example, someone who wants a reason to be just, but would otherwise be inclined to Glaucon's belief that justice is simply a convention and should be avoided. Plato and Aristotle exaggerate the importance of the state, and so have to extol justice, without which the state cannot function, even more forcefully. The idea of justice in the Republic which Socrates presents is a logical and convincing account, elegant in its conception. It therefore provides a comfortable way to believe justice to be advantageous, for those who want to believe this.

The myth at the end of the Gorgias fulfills a similar function. In a question of great importance and difficulty, where obvious proof is lacking, people naturally seek answers which rely on faith. Callicles alone, we remember, has been unconvinced by Socrates' assertions about justice and the just way of life. Socrates then describes Hades and judgement of souls after death. In Hades, souls are stripped of the body. When he who judges souls views a soul stripped of its body, he can detect in it how just or unjust the person has been over the course of his life. Acts of injustice appear in the souls as scars or contortions. Souls which are found to have committed "ultimate injustices" (Gorgias, 525c) are incurable and must suffer vengeance in Hades for all times. Socrates addresses Callicles after offering this myth:

> "Now perhaps you think these things I've said are a tale, like an old wife's, and you despise them. And certainly it wouldn't be at all surprising to despise them, if we should search and somehow manage to find something better and truer. But, as it is, you see that the three of you who are wisest among the Greeks now, you and Polus and Gorgias -- you three can't manage to show that we should live any other life than this, which is shown to be profitable for there too. No; among so many arguments, when the others are being refuted, only this argument is stable -- that we must avoid doing injustice more than suffering it, and above all a man must practice not seeming good, but being good, in private and public life; if someone becomes evil in some way, he is to be punished, and this is the second good after being just -- to become just and pay justice in being punished." (527ab)

The myth first of all confirms the fears of those who, like Cephalus, need a reason to be just, such as fear of Hades. But it also gives an account of damage which occurs to the soul through injustice. That justice is the health of the soul is thereby made more believable. Plato knows that justice is necessary for political society, and therefore some "stable" argument for justice is needed, even if it requires faith. In the same way, the Republic argument will fulfill this function by satisfying a need for some believable account.

This is not to say that the philosophical value of the Republic is in any way diminished by this function. The thoughtful reader who seeks a kind of cognition higher than faith, that is, knowledge, about the ethical value of justice, is challenged. The form of the dialogue rhetorically and dramatically presents the reader with different and conflicting ideas about justice, and evidence about the nature of justice. These ideas and evidence are the substance of the insight Plato has to offer on the ethical value of justice, and it is through them that the careful reader can come closer to knowledge of the truth.

[1]The Republic of Plato, trans. Allan Bloom, New York: Basic Books, 1968.

[2]Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics, trans. H. Rackham. (Loeb)

[3]Aristotle's Politics, trans. H. Rackham. (Loeb)

[4]Plato's Gorgias, trans. Terence Irwin, New York: Oxford, 1979.

[5]Plato's Sophist, trans. Harold North Fowler. (Loeb)

[6]Greek-English Lexicon of Liddell and Scott.

ask Newton

Jana Giles

Curtains walk
out from the window-
a fan calling
wind's steady sound

outside sky's hazy
stuffily sultry
humid day
my eyes pain in the glare

somewhere a poet breeds
word and soul-
frenzied, watching
hairs glitter gold on his dark arm

rubble rattles angrily at me
as I kick it
down the slope from its ancient broken home;
roofless ghosts roam

sometime it will stop, and forgive me.

ask Newton : his head was dark though the
prism cast long colored lights,
barred and striped
grate-like.

my ceiling is fish-scaled arcs
stolen from a goggle-eyed
blue-brained damsel of the sea:
she invited me to go dancing.

Shall I scream and beat the eggs?
(my blender keeps the tune)
tonight, darling,
we are having souffle´, pâte´, rose´, Perrier and the Frobishers

white lace, green money
the dog peed on the rug again honey

don't touch me I might scream
my bites are mean
you'll get gangrene

I tittered as I walked
Ha!
the poet's editor smiled
we walked arm in arm

'til the poppies and Noah's 40 days
drowned me
victim of an impossible

jealous aching unending dream

children weeping in the dust;
a swollen moon lumbered red-faced
across the horizon,
raging nightmared sleep:

in the hot tropical night
anacondas wrap their cool supple waists
around Yeats' steaming neck;
he peeled pears beneath the moonlit mosquito net.

Tell Dostoyevsky the calico man is coming.

"Man is Directed to God as an End Which Surpasses the Grasp of Reason"

Dan Touey

The first question of Thomas Aquinas's Summa Theologica asks whether any discipline other than the philosophic ones, whose rule and domain is reason, is required by human beings. As the beginning of an inquiry it has special importance, and not in the sense that it deals with matters that must be taken care of before other, more vital questions can be answered. In the question and in the way Thomas chooses to answer it is implied the difficulty that may have induced him to undertake his work in the first place and that will determine the manner and content of most of the vital parts of it: the opposition of faith and reason. The positions of the Objections are these, that man should not seek things outside the domain of reason, since it is the only domain in which he can have any real certainty; and that the philosophical disciplines deal with everything that is, even God, so that any other discipline would be superfluous. Thomas answers by saying that "man is directed to God as to an end that surpasses the grasp of his reason." This first interchange is the true beginning of Aquinas's work, and in it are implied the conflicts and questions with which it will be Thomas's onerous duty to deal.

Thomas will not attempt to deal with faith fundamentally until the end of his work, and hence it may be wrong to juxtapose faith and reason explicitly in this incipient question. But when he does attempt some kind of definition of faith he says that it is an assent of the intellect to the divine truth at the command of the will, which has been endowed with grace, that is, moved by God. The intellect then, and how this term is actually employed in this context is not altogether clear, must in a sense be overcome for faith to occur. Here Thomas is saying that there are some things necessary for man to believe that the intellect, in itself, will not consent to; and that there is no such thing as an argument, or demonstration, that can lead one to believe the things that must be arrived at through faith.

Reason does not require, like faith, that man overcome himself to accept what is true. With reason, we can say that things are apparent, that they simply are, and, to a certain extent, are undeniable. One of the reasons for this surety is that we can posit in man a certain faculty, reason, to which there are certain corresponding objects, or principles, that are immediately clear and true, or can be shown to be so by investigation. Therefore I can say that things that are equal to the same are equal to one another, and such a statement will be accepted by another because it appeals, in some way, to reason. The truth of this may be a question, but at least we can formulate such a faculty and its objects, and they or something like them seem consistent with the common nature of man. But I cannot posit such a faculty of faith; there is nothing in the intellect or the consciousness of man that I can say the objects of faith correspond to. There is nothing in the nature of man that can move him to the kind of belief that is of faith; he must be moved by the intervention of God. And so in the Summa, though faith and reason are both ways of knowing what exists, of gaining knowledge, it is only with reason that we have a clear idea of how the process occurs. At least afterwards we can trace a construction of reason that seems to fit with our nature. This we cannot do with faith.

So what is it that leads man, to whom reason is in a sense natural and easy, to faith, in which he must overcome what is natural to him essentially, the rational

intellect, and what he cannot arrive at himself but must posit an outside influence, the grace of God, to receive? Why faith? Why isn't the argument of Objections one and two, Article one, Question one, of the Summa enough for Thomas? It seems that the first Objection is right in saying that man shouldn't go beyond the scope of his reason after all; and Objection two is correct in saying that Theology should only be a division of philosophy, as far as God can be treated in terms of reason. The most important point of Thomas's reply is that man is directed to God as his final end, and that God is something that surpasses his reason. If the existence of God can be arrived at through reason, and some things can even be predicated of Him beyond the fact of His existence, as Thomas believes, then why can't man arrive at his end through his natural, communicable faculty and experience of reason? Why does Thomas assume from the beginning that God is beyond this faculty, which is the assumption upon which his reply to the first Objections, and hence his whole work, stands or falls? Why isn't reason, in the context of the knowable, enough when the object of knowledge is God?

I think that the answer to why this is so, or why it is so to a thinker like Thomas, can be answered by beginning with reason, and examining just what it is we can say with reason concerning the idea of God. This might, but not necessarily, lead us to the idea of faith, or some clue as to the need for the idea of faith. We hope to see what it is about reason that would leave open the room for the idea of faith. But it will not be the complete story; man's ways of understanding God in the context of reason are only one part of that understanding; eventually we will have to look at other aspects of the story. At times the things that follow about faith will merge with other considerations that make us think about faith, but at some point it seems that we must give up our grounding in reason as our reference entirely, and look at faith from a different point of view.

Since reason is the ground upon which we choose to begin our attempt to understand faith, it is necessary to ask what can be said about God through our reason. The philosophic inquiry that treats of God, Aristotle's division of philosophy called theology, has its limitations set out by Thomas in Question twelve, Article twelve of the First Part. According to Thomas, God can be known by reason only in so far as he follows from some perception rooted in the senses. This is necessarily so because all thought has its beginning in sense-perception, and abstract thought is the derivation of universals out of the always individual sense-perception and sense-object. So our rational understanding of God has its beginning in the sensory world. And our understanding of God in the rational sense will always be in the form of a cause.

In the second article of Question two, Thomas says that there are two sorts of demonstration, the first in which we reason from a known cause to the effects of that cause, the second in which we reason from effects back to their proper cause. On the surface, the two methods seem merely conversions of one another, to be different directions of inquiry into the same process of cause and effect. They both seem to be ways of proceeding from the known to the unknown and of making what was not evident evident. But it soon becomes clear that they are not different directions of the same process, nor do they achieve the same things in their ends. When we know a cause or principle, something that is apparent to us and the truth of which can be agreed upon, then if we do accept it to be true, certain things follow from it. In fact, it is only then that we can call anything a cause; until we find that it directly leads to or is in a certain sense responsible for certain conclusions. Then it is only an evident truth. In this sort of demonstration, both cause and effect are evident, known, and the work of the mind is not creative but receptive. The mind, in a sense, has only to follow what reason presents to it. In the case of reasoning from effects to cause, however, such an uncomplicated process does not appear.

In reasoning from effect to cause, the process is only simple if the cause is already a thing known, although not known as cause. The establishment of the cause

and effect relationship using effect as the starting point cannot be an epistemological method in the same way as when cause, or principle, is the beginning. In the latter case we know both cause and effect because we know cause but when we know only effect, we can only infer the need for cause and make a hypothesis for the nature of the cause form what we know of the effect, but not know the cause. In some sense, as Thomas says, the conclusion is implicit in, or a part of, the principle. Because of that we can say that we know the conclusion because of our knowledge of the principle. But can it be said that the principle is implicit in the conclusion in the same way, or even at all? Thomas was fully aware, as evidenced in his own criticism of the method in Article twelve of Question twelve, that reasoning from effect to an unknown cause had its limitations. He said that in treating of God from the evidence of His effects, he could only establish the existence of God and what necessarily belonged to Him as a cause. That is, he knew that in this way he could never know God as a thing in itself. This is the most important criticism of the method, but our own may add a further insight. For it seems that not even the establishment of a cause that establishes existence, at least in the way that Thomas would like it, is possible. An examination of the method as it is actually employed might make the criticism more clear, and fortunately we have such an example in Thomas's own use of the method in Question two, Article three, where he uses it to demonstrate the existence of God.

In all of his five ways of demonstrating the existence of God, Thomas's method is that suggested in Question twelve, Article twelve, of using knowledge gained from observation of the physical world and reasoning to a principle that accounts for the cause of these observations. He begins by asserting something about the world that he feels to be generally accepted as true, and from this he reasons to a point where the existence of God is a logical necessity according to the principles that were deemed evident to begin with. Of course, any reading of the five ways will show that their smooth and simple argument does not rely wholly on the demands of pure reason, and is not as simple as it reads. An examination of the first "more manifest way," the proof using motion, will probably be enough to get an idea of how Thomas goes about his effect-to-cause proofs.

At the risk of oversimplifying Thomas's argument, we will paraphrase it here. He starts by asserting first that there is motion in the world, and second that nothing is in motion unless caused to be so by another thing in motion. All things in motion must have had a prior potentiality towards that motion. Since potentiality cannot actualize itself but must be made so by a thing already in actuality, then each motion can be said to have an immediate antecedent cause of motion. But the process of motion causing motion could be traced back infinitely without finding a motion that began setting all things in motion in the first place, so there will be no motion. Therefore it is necessary that there be some thing that moved itself. By common consent, only God could move in such a fashion. Therefore He exists.

The question that we need to ask is whether Thomas's conclusion of cause follows from the knowledge that he originally gained from his observations of the world. We must ask whether his construction of cause and effect is one that is determined by the argument, or one that is presupposed by it, and is the assumption that actually gave the argument its form.

Thomas states his principles that motion exists and all motions are dependent on prior motions. Then he states the consequences of that assumption: by following back the process of motion always being the cause of motion, we will regress infinitely without ever finding a first motion that caused all posterior motions to be. His principles lead him to a difficulty, a problem, what Aristotle called (απορια), a place where the passage seems to be blocked. What Thomas does to gain a passage, though, does not follow from his principles; what he does is determine that something must exist that does not conform to the rule that he has assumed as

principle, a thing that moves without being moved. He must step out of the bounds of his argument to solve his difficulty and reverse the direction of his reasoning. When he finds a difficulty, an impossibility that follows from his principles, he looks for what must be necessary for those principles still to be true. In some ways Thomas's conclusion seems right; in fact it is probably the only way in which he can pass through his place of no passage, by assuming a first principle of motion that does not obey the laws of motion. But this answer is not arrived at through pure reason, or at least it is not the only conclusion we could have reached at such a point.

Perhaps, though, it will be the only satisfying conclusion. For we could also conclude that the principles we started with are either wrong or incorrectly or incompletely stated. In fact, in areas such as mathematics that is the way we would go; if an assumption leads to an impossibility, then we cannot accept it as true. In the case of knowledge gained from observation of the everyday world, though, to be forced to regard it as invalid is much more serious; we would have to re-evaluate all such knowledge, reassess the way in which we see the world. We also have another option, which is to still accept our principles, but also accept their problematic conclusions without positing another principle that clears them up. Then we must admit that we live in an irrational world, one without a beginning, or that we live in a world our rationality cannot comprehend. Although both of the other options lead to conclusions which are less simple and more disconcerting than the one that Thomas chooses, they seem more likely to be the ones that reason, on its own, would be forced to choose. What is it that makes Thomas choose his way?

The answer might be found at the point where Thomas reverses his reasoning, where he first inserts God into the argument. His unmoved mover does and does not follow from the argument. It does not follow from what the accepted principles of the argument afford. But it does follow, or at least it is reasonable, if the idea of such a being has already been conceived of, not in the guise of cause, but as a being whose role as cause is not the parameter of the conception of it. So for Thomas, the implicit assumption in his argument that is prior to all other assumed principles is the idea and possibility of God. Otherwise he is left only with his own contradictions. There is some small indication that he was aware of this. His ultimate conclusion in the demonstration being, "this everyone understands to be God," instead of the preceding, "Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, moved by no other," is not as unfounded as it first appears if we concede that a kind of belief in God is what gives the argument form in the first place. But of course, we must also sacrifice our hope in establishing God's existence purely from evident knowledge. It seems that Thomas, in his argument from effect to cause, must make a leap out of the line of his reasoning to determine cause.

The two criticisms of reasoning about God, Thomas's and the one tentatively set forth here, seem to indicate a severe poverty as to what reason can say about God. Thomas says that our knowledge will be limited to the existence of God and only what necessarily belongs to Him as cause. The other criticism would say that not even this much can be gathered, that the argument that finds God's existence needs to know God beforehand to conclude that He exists as cause. So even the footing on which natural reason deals with God seems questionable. In this way we begin to answer for ourselves the question of why Thomas cannot regard theology as a division of philosophy.

It seems that we are now in a better position to understand what Thomas means when he says that "man is directed towards God as to an end that surpasses the grasp of his reason." At least the last part of the statement, that reason cannot treat of God, seems more explicable to us. Why God is said to be the end of man, and how "beyond reason" man is to attain that end, is not clear. As far as attaining to the knowledge of God, the very methods that reason was forced to use seemed to obstruct

it from reaching that end. Reason attempted to inquire into God as to a cause from an effect, but it seems that a principle cannot be known from reasoning back from effects. Even if we grant that something like God's existence can be established, the conception of His existence would necessarily be determined by our knowledge of effects. But in attaining to the knowledge of a thing, we wish to see it in itself, and not only in relation to other things. But if all our knowledge is rooted in sense-perception, as Thomas says, then we could never know God in such a way.

One example of how Thomas seems to answer this can be found in Article four of Question twelve, when he says, "For knowledge takes place according as the thing known is in the knower. But a thing known is in the knower according to the mode of the knower. Hence the knowledge of every knower is according to the mode of its own nature. If therefore, the mode of being of a given thing exceeds the mode of the knower, it must result that the knowledge of that thing is above the nature of the knower." By stating the impossibility in a different way, Thomas allows himself to go on. Reason cannot treat of God not because God fails reason, but because reason fails God. The inquiry into God takes a different direction. Reason no longer tries to define God or argue about God in such a way that God becomes reasonable, but reason itself must change so that God can become known as a thing in itself, so that the "mode of the knower" is in accord with the "mode of being" of the thing to be known. Thomas is taking a step out of reason, and looking at its boundaries, when he posits the possibility of anything the being of which exceeds the mode of knowing of the reasoning intellect. He can only do this, it seems, if he has in mind the idea of a boundless God, which of course he does.

It is clear that for reason to know God, for it to reach what is beyond its grasp, it must be altered. One option at this point is again to conclude that man cannot know God, since to do so he would have to change the mode of his reason, to change his nature. But Thomas argues out of this position by emphasizing the part of the statement we quoted from him earlier that says God is man's end. In the first article of Question twelve, Thomas responds to the objection that the created intellect cannot see the essence of God by arguing that man's blessedness consists of the operation of the intellect in seeing his end or source, God. For the mind to be unable to see God would mean that all man's activity is in vain, because that activity is always a striving towards God. Hence it must be possible for man to actually know God, to see His essence. So Thomas will use his position outside of reason that he has arrived at to say that man can know God not through reason grasping God but by God taking in hand the reasoning intellect. The concept of knowledge, where the mind receives into itself only such things that by their nature are fitted to reason, will be abandoned; and the mind instead will be fitted to receive what it knows. This is the essential altering of perspective that Thomas effects to be able to deal with how God can actually be known as a thing in itself.

One of the reasons that the whole of Question twelve is so interesting is that it attempts to describe an epistemology that is beyond reason. How far Thomas can succeed in removing his description of seeing the essence of God from the terms and analogies appropriated by reason is another question. But what he does describe is something unique, neither reason nor faith, yet similar to both. His seeing of the divine essence is like demonstrable science in that there occurs an intellectual vision of apparent truth; and also like faith, in that the experience is one that surpasses reason and is a matter of grace, indemonstrable and incommunicable. And in his construction of the experience of seeing God, Thomas will also curiously echo one of the most puzzling ideas of Aristotle.

Thomas attempts in the fourth article of the Question to arrange the experience of seeing God's essence into a construction that includes the other kinds of knowledge that the intellect is capable of. All natural knowledge begins, again, in the sense-perception of the individual sense-object, and this Thomas calls the soul's

"act of a corporeal organ." But the soul also has intellect, and the intellect has the power to analyze the object of the senses into matter and form. By isolating form, the intellect obtains an abstraction that is common and universal, which is not confined to any individual perception, but relies on the individual object of sense for its being. According to Thomas, this is the extent of natural knowledge. But just as the intellect can transcend the initial sense-perception, so can the intellect "by grace be raised up to know separate subsisting substance and separate subsisting being." That is, by God acting somehow on the intellect, it can have a knowledge that no longer has its source in sense-perception, but is able to know being that is in no way attached to individual being, that is, the being common to all beings, God. But how does this higher state of knowing compare with the intellect's natural capacity to know universal truths?

Thomas characterizes this state as a heightening of the intellect, a broadening of its powers of seeing by the influx of divine illumination. This illumination could be seen simply as a quantitative increase of illumination, since as Thomas says, "Hence also the intellectual power of the creature is called an intelligible light, as it were, derived from the first light, whether this be understood of the natural power, or some superadded perfection of grace and glory." The act of the intellect in its natural capacity is a participation in the "first light" of God, and the seeing of God's essence is made possible by a "superadded perfection". It seems that we can understand the basis of this experience by comparing it with natural reason as a perfection of the intellect's natural capacity to see universal truth. The seeing will be analogous to the intellect's comprehension of indemonstrable first principles, which appeal immediately to the intellect as true, such as the principles of logic and science. It is just that it will be able now to see more than it could before. This is one way to interpret Thomas's statement in Article five that the blessed who see God are made "deiform", that they are able to see, in some way, what God sees. What is infinitely knowable in itself will now become comprehensible to the intellect that has been raised to meet it, because the influx of divine illumination has given it a wider perspective.

There are some complications, however, that do not allow us to accept this interpretation. The intellect will never know the essence of God as it knows the principles of demonstrable science. Thomas says that a created intellect could never "comprehend" the essence of God or know it to the fullest extent to which it is capable of being known. Since the intellect is made able to see the essence of God by an influx of divine light, but the essence of God is infinite, it follows that, since the intellect cannot receive an infinite amount of illumination, God's essence can never be known as far as it is capable of being known. But this is the extent to which we say we know the principles of reason, and what we mean by "contemplation". How could a "seeing" occur of an object of thought that is infinite and unbounded? Following the analogy with reason, since the seeing of such an object would always be incomplete, it would have the character of opinion. But if this act is said to be the final end of man, does it seem right that it should have the certainty of opinion? What would be the convincing aspect of seeing God if the object of the seeing were ultimately unclear?

There are several places in Question twelve where the analogy with natural reason seems to break down, especially as regards the object of thought, and a new interpretation of "deiform" seems to be needed. Does being "like God" mean that the intellect is broadened so that any object becomes intelligible as a result? In Article four Thomas says, "a created intellect cannot see the essence of God unless God by His grace unites Himself to the created intellect, as an object made intelligible to it." Yet at other times it does not seem that God becomes an "object" of the intellect in any intelligible way. In Article five we read, "But when any created intellect sees the essence of God, the essence of God itself becomes the intelligible form of the intellect." Here he does not say that the essence of God becomes the object, but the form, the shape, of the intellect. It is not clear whether Thomas is contradicting himself or not. But the experience of seeing God seems now more complicated than a broadening of perspective for the intellect. God attaches himself to the intellect so that He may become the thinking of the intellect. But if thinking must be the thinking of something, and if God is the form of thinking or the shape of the intellect, and also in some way the object of that thinking, then such an act does not seem to be thinking, or an act of the intellect in its accepted sense at all.

The process that is described by Thomas of seeing God cannot but remind one of the act described by Aristotle of his own God, the prime mover, in the Metaphysics. Aristotle describes the prime mover's act as one of thinking, νόησις, where the object of this νόησις , τὸ νοητόν, is the mover itself. But since the mover is nothing else but its act, its thinking is of thinking, and the act is the same as the object of the act. This seems to be similar to what the intellect's act would be if God attached Himself to it as both form and object. The act of the intellect would then be inseparable from the essence of God, and the intellect would not see the essence of God, but in a sense participate in the being of the essence of God. It is not for sure if this is what Thomas really means, but at least it extends some hope about reason being able to attain to God, if not by its natural powers, then in some other conceivable way.

Yet what a fleeting appearance. Article eleven comes as a surprise in reading Question twelve, and is a puzzle which makes the whole of the question even more of a puzzle. The Article asks "Whether anyone in this life can see the essence of God," and the answer that Thomas gives is "It is not possible, " he concludes, " that the soul in this mortal life should be raised up to the highest of intelligible objects, that is, to the divine essence." What then is the significance of the whole question? What is Thomas getting at in describing a process that he does not think is possible? It seems that the question of the first article, whether it was possible for man to see the essence of God, had to be answered affirmatively, for reasons having to do with God being man's end. Yet the description of what the experience is turns out to be, possibly, of what it would be like were it possible. It is not clear why Thomas chose to affirm and deny what appears to be the same thing. But the hope that man could somehow reach God through some alteration of the intellect, seems now to be quashed, as was the hope that man could really know God through his natural reason. Any way to God via the intellect, whether natural or graced, seems blocked. Or at least Thomas pulls back the lure of seeing God with a rational basis at the last moment for unclear reasons. But with that retraction, with his blocking of the path, the opportunity for a new focus reveals itself.

We have gone, perhaps, as far as we can go, perhaps farther, with reason and with intellect in relation to God. It seems that our new focus would have to be non-rational and non-intellectual if we hope to go on with our inquiry about God. And now that we have exhausted, in a sense, our ground of reason, it seems that we could have a better perspective on faith.

But how is the transition to be made, and how can we truly leave our ground in reason? What do we hope to achieve by examining faith, and where has the examination of reason's efforts to reach God taken us? For one thing, the examination has taken us to the point where faith seems to be necessary for the inquiry to go on, for the inquiry that can be traced in Thomas. But whether choosing to look at the idea of faith at this point will really enable us to go on with the inquiry or not is uncertain. Because a non-rational ideal like faith is not hindered by the rules of reason, is it too much of a temptation not to use this idea to solve our own difficulties?

We would like faith to help us with two things in Thomas's statement that "man is directed to God as to an end that surpasses the grasp of his reason." An examination of reasoning about God has shown to an extent why such an end is beyond reason. Ideally, we would like to learn from the idea of faith why God is said to be man's end in the first place, and how he is to achieve that end if not through reason.

To some extent we have answered the question, "Why faith?", by seeing reason's inability to deal with God. Any construction where the mind actually perceived God proved to be untenable. The knowledge of the being of God could not be fit into any epistomological mold. But faith does not entail any perception, and although it is spoken of as a way of knowing, that knowledge is very different from any that comes from reason. We cannot make an analogy about seeing with faith. While the convincing aspect of reason's knowledge is that something is revealed, faith's "knowledge" is a belief in something that remains hidden. To make the transition, faith must have an analogously convincing element to it. Faith cannot merely follow as an answer after reason has failed to treat of God, or at least run into seemingly irrevocable difficulties. How faith can actually come about must be explored.

For Thomas, faith is something necessary for salvation, for man to attain his end. Because reason fails to bring man into contact with God, or because there are some things necessary to believe about God that reason could never come to, it is necessary that he believe what his intellect itself does not recognize. In Question four, Article three of the "Secunda Secundae", Thomas says that faith does reside in the intellect, since faith determines one to something that is true. But what determines the intellect to recognize truth has nothing to do with the intellect itself; the intellect is not convinced by the object of faith, which it is blind to, but by the will. In Thomas's construction, this will, which overcomes the intellect to determine it to truth, is a necessary element. But where does this will to believe originate?

Thomas's answer, in Question six, Article one of the same part, says that the determination of the will comes from God. Faith, which is an act of the will that overcomes the intellect, cannot come about through an internal process. "Faith," he says, "as regards the assent which is the chief act of faith, is from God moving man inwardly by grace." Faith, which seems to be Thomas's choice of how man is to attain God, cannot be effected by man and must be made possible by God. Man's end, then, can only be reached by it becoming his means as well. What leads Thomas to conclude this? In the same article he says, "for since by assenting to what belongs to faith, man is raised above his nature, this must needs come to him from some supernatural principle moving him inwardly; and this is God." What "raises man above his nature" is the overcoming of the intellect. Thomas cannot allow that man should overcome his intellect by himself, for the intellect is what man most essentially is and the highest part of him. For man to overcome his own intellect would be something akin to a rejection of himself. Thomas's great reverence for the intellect would not let any other part of man determine truth for it. The only vindication for the overcoming of the intellect could come from God. So it is something that happens to man rather than something he does. But must this be so? Must we conclude like Thomas that there is nothing in man that could determine him to faith?

In the same passage quoted from above, Thomas presents his own version of the view of the Pelagians on faith, who said that man himself chooses to believe, to have faith. It seems that this view, where the will be believe that convinces the intellect comes from man himself, is more along the lines of what we are looking for. Thomas's answer that faith comes through grace does not seem to be the answer when we are looking for why the idea of faith came about in the first place. But it remains to be seen how man could choose to believe, how belief could come about from another part of man if not from the intellect.

Thomas gives us an idea of how a will to believe could originate in his treatment of grace. Divinely revealed knowledge is not the only thing that God must impart to man because man cannot reach it himself; God must also intercede in a moral way for man to reach his end. In Question 109 of the first part of the second part, Thomas argues that grace is necessary for man to reach God in his actions. In Article eight he says that it is impossible for man to avoid sin without the help of God. The fundamental cause of this is that man, since the banishment from the garden, is composed of two natures, a "higher" and "lower" nature. His higher nature can more or less avoid the sin it is prone to, the graver mortal sin, because of the control of the reason. But man's lower nature what Thomas called his "corrupted nature", cannot be satisfactorily controlled in its penchant for venial sin. Reason can indeed suppress any desire, but not every one, since reason's control over the desires is not absolute. Hence, for man to overcome his lower nature and avoid sin, it is necessary that God endow him with the ability beyond his present nature to master this part of him.

Thomas's image of man fundamentally divided in his nature gives us a much more vivid example of a need for God than anything we explored in relation to man's intellect. In that part of our discussion, it seemed we were forced to fit God into the structure of the intellect, and He did not seem ever to fit. It was not clear whether the intellect ever really required a being like God. But in the area of ethics and morals, a need seems to clearly arise. If Thomas's assessment of man's nature is correct, it would point to a deep disparity between man's knowledge of moral principle, his ethical beliefs, and what he is actually able to effect in his own actions. If this disparity is really a part of man's nature, a fundamental flaw within himself that he can never hope to repair, then a will to believe in a being that could heal him could conceivably arise. It is perhaps in this situation that the determination to faith could arise internally, and man could choose to believe.

It seems clearer, perhaps, why Thomas says that God is man's end. If God is a necessary element in man reaching the end in regards to his own nature, in the mastery of reason over the sensual appetites, it seems more explicable to say that God is man's end. As to how he is to attain that end, it seems that we are now justified in saying he does so through faith. The abandoning of the intellects sovereign capacity to identify truth, and its determination to something that is not apparent to it, that is, faith, could come about by man's realization of his own incapacity to heal the rifts within his own nature, and his need for a being endowed with power and mercy to make him whole. The convincing element of this experience, what could possibly overcome the intellect, depends on the deepness with which this need to be healed is felt. If the need is felt deeply enough, the choices for man seem to be either a belief in a healing God and hope, or resignation to the inalterable disparity of his nature and despair.

It is hoped that a plausible explanation of the need and inspiration of faith has been presented; how faith seems possible following reason's inquiry into God; and how faith, belief without proof, could conceivably originate in man himself. (For this writer, this inquiry was necessary to come to some sort of understanding of Thomas's ideas.)

Limelight: the Story of a Ballerina and a Clown
—Chaplin

Carlos Chamberlin

Camera 3, eager, operational, and passionate, swept down from above gently, emancipating the audience into applause. It came to rest six feet away from him, he who was standing, acknowledging his audience. The hands clapped till the aisles ran red with blood, ha, ha, so it seemed to him. The hands were pummeling themselves for him, for the show, this show of shows, his, conceived in the mind of some visionary at programming, who once read Boethius. Lightning blazed, and the guy said: "It'll be a game type show, there'll be this wheel, see, a wheel of fortune, and maybe there'll be good luck, and maybe bad, and lots of questions and lots of answers." And then the prophet shut up for a while, and then he asked for some coffee, and then he said, "We'll call it The Consolation of Philosophy." Everyone thought this was great. Really great.

And so did he. Really great.

She said she came from Montana, and there was no reason to believe her. She was made up well enough to provide color to a nation of black and whites, and to him there was irridescent beauty, and an aura of pasteurization. Her father, she said, was a rancher, (ah) a dairy farmer (Ah!) Once again there was applause, as the audience was assured of the contestant's humanity and Americanness. She was a dancer, I could dance all day, couldn't you? Pleasantly, he yessed, not at all tired of the babbling of the contestant's river of life, as it flowed through the studio, out the delta of television, and into a million homes. She took his mind away, and the weird contestants began to clamor subtly for attention. The violinist with his psychological approach to botany, and of course, the marine sergeant, who loved all kinds of soups. This show was the future, and the future was widely regarded as a strange and happy place.

Fortune was lucky that night. She won. No surprise there. And so did Maxine, which was the name of the dancing challenger. They went out to a restaurant, late at night, after even the satellites had all gone away, and talked like this:

"You're very intelligent."
"Thank you...uh."
"Do you watch the show often?"
"Every night. Every night that it's on."
"So do I. Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha".

So the inevitable happened, and this alignment of values pushed them ever so gently in the direction of that abstract king, Love, who gave them their money's worth.

And then there was another night, another Consolation of Philosophy, and Maxine answered the questions that were put to her correctly, winning again, and spent the evening ensconced in the arms of the grace of television, whose name was Ray, whose fans were the well-informed, the well-entertained, the majority. And on this second night of passion/love, they were found at a newspaper, reading aloud to each other, transcending the sexual act with taste and intellect.

"Would you look at this guy, twelve murders and so he says he wanted some peace and quiet."
"I wonder why he did it, he lived in a suburb."

"That's quiet."
"Not quiet enough."
"it seems like..."
"what?"
"...all true stories are desperate."
"uh-huh."

Ray couldn't sleep at all. He took some sleeping pills and an amphetamine, and drove to the T.V. station. It was really dark. He walked to the room where they kept the questions, and searched for the ones for that night's Consolation of Philosophy. Then, he went to the room where they kept all the answers. The door was locked. He sat down. He lacked keys. So he took the door off of its hinges, and swept into the room looking for the respective answers. He was eager, and he found and copied them.

Then he fell upon a great solution. He rested the door against the wall and made a sign. WET PAINT. He disappeared into the night.

Dawn hit as his car drove him to the hotel where Maxine was staying. "Good Morning". He smiled. He handed over his presents, and kissed her. "For me?" she asked. "Yes," he said, "they're the answers to tonight's show." They spoke briefly on important questions of morality. Finally Maxine accepted, not because she was essentially evil, but because they were running out of time.

"Ray," said Mike, who ran the station, "somebody broke into the room with all the answers." "So change the lock," said Ray helpfully. "I think we'll have to change the answers," said Mike, running the station.

All around the world (that is, the U.S.) people prepared for the Consolation of Philosophy by eating a warm home-cooked meal and ignoring their wives and husbands and children. Ray and Maxine ate nervously, stagnant chicken salad and french fries.

"Whatever happens, Maxine, I'll always love you."
"Me, too."
"Whatever happens, don't do anything desperate."
"O.K.."

Ray would always love Maxine, unaware that such a statement was like saying that you would always have lunch with the loved one: a nice thought but practical as a toothache. Ray felt the cameras go on somewhere. He stood up, and held out his arm; A gallant and his intended quit the diner and Ray and Maxine followed.

Regular watchers of the Consolation of Philosophy watched as the pretty girl from Montana was defeated by a magenta femme fatale, who, lacking beauty, had read books. They then watched Ray, who stepped closer to the camera until his face filled the screen, and said:

"That's it."

Maxine ran up to him, and said: "This is Ray, and he loves me." Ray agreed. "I love her," he said. The audience went crazy, despising Ray for falling for the loser. They stopped clapping. There was absolute silence. Ray had never used a gun before. He fired into the air. The audience was still. "Traitor!" someone yelled. The program director came on the intercom, saying, "Ray, this is live T.V. and you can't do this." The logic of this nearly killed Ray. He grabbed her hand, and they they ran like lovers, away, leaving the audience desperate and unappreciative.

Outside, (in the parking lot) the car wouldn't start, and it was raining, so Ray and Maxine walked.

Thus love is the limelight, like being, for a moment, on television.

So, the Consolation of Philosophy shot out into the ionosphere for one last time, bouncing endlessly in the heavens. One October, in the nineteen seventies, it returned to earth, to the television set of Charles Augustus Gardiner, who, at the time, held the roy rogers chair for the humanities at Princeton. The police were called.

Ripeness is All

Renee Bergland

My best friend's mother committed suicide. Six years later, when we were both eighteen, my friend Rachel asked me to spend the summer with her in the house where it had happened, which was also the house where Rachel's mother had spent every summer of her childhood. Rachel herself had only been there a few times before her mother's death. In the years between, the neighbors had mowed the lawn and kept an eye on the place, but no one had stayed there. We spent the first week scrubbing out the kitchen and a bedroom, and camped in the rest of the house all summer. When the bare minimum of cleaning was done, we divided our time between the rocky beach in front of the house and investigation inside it. We paged through her mother's third grade notebooks, and we scattered snapshots of relatives we weren't certain about into piles on the living room floor. We hung her mother's kindergarten drawing on the fridge. We talked constantly about Rachel's mother's family, though we knew next to nothing about them. In August, Rachel and I searched out her mother's grave. She bought a tombstone for it, and on the stone she had three words cut:

RIPENESS IS ALL

I wasn't sure of what the sentence meant. When I asked Rachel, she said she liked the sound of it, and she knew her mother had loved Shakespeare.

I had read King Lear before my summer with Rachel, and my eyes had passed over the phrase without noticing it. When I read the play later, I recognized the words from Rachel's mother's gravestone and began to cry. The whole sentence moved me.

> Men must endure
> Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
> Ripeness is all. (V, ii, 9)

My tears were not an incidental stinging. I sobbed until my roommate threatened to take me to the hospital, and then I went outside and wept my way into silence. I was not simply crying for Rachel or for her mother. I wept for myself, for the hopelessness of my relationship with my parents, and for the hopelessness of the children I might have. That night chasms opened around me, separating me from everyone I loved, and most definitely from my parents. The nature of the chasms and the tears mystified me.

My despair sprang from the first line and a half, from the idea that all of us must only endure our births, that having been born is as great an affliction as having to die. It sprang at the same time from the awful coupling of unlooked-for birth and longed-for death. In eleven words, Edgar told his father that it is human nature to want to die and to regret having been born, and that it is each human's deep responsibility not to acknowledge or act on either of these feelings. My horror at these lines was also caused by seeing a son assume his father's foolishness, and by recognizing the naturalness of the father's dependence on his son. I saw the inevitability of the responsibility for both of their lives and their deaths, especially for his father's death, being thrust upon the son. I saw that Edgar owed an unrepayable, though unwillingly incurred, debt of life to his father.

Perhaps the most upsetting words of all were the last three, "Ripeness is all." They were offered as the supreme consolation of the play, and they seemed almost meaningless. The phrase is so ambiguous that it borders on nonsense, and it is the only phrase of hope we are offered in King Lear. Since my night of tears, I have often wondered about ripeness. I have always wanted to know what it could be, and how it might be all, in both birth and death.

Rachel and I lived across the bay from my father that summer and I was not welcome in his house, the house of my childhood summers. I am not welcome there yet. Years pass between our meetings, and when we meet, my father is angry and imperious, and I am wooden. I have often thought about ripeness between us, and have felt certain that it is a laughable hope, made completely ridiculous by the fact that I have no real idea of what ripeness would be for us, or how it would be a balm. I am faced with the question of whether I am able to endure my own birth, to accept it and the parents who gave it to me. I know that in spite of the pain he has caused me, my father is very much my father and always will be. I must endure my birth. I have less choice in this matter even than I have in the matter of my death. Where shall I search for ripeness?

My own ambiguous feelings about my birth have made Edgar's lines important to me. Their comfort is strange, narcotic, and mysterious. I have taken the same numbed comfort from the words when facing death.

On the way to my cousin's funeral we stopped at the house where the Quakers who were going to direct it live. It was hot. I went into their living room, which was walled with books, and searched out King Lear. I remember being happy that the people in charge of Sam's funeral had such wonderful, worn books in their living room. It was cool with the cool of farmhouses. I sat in the back of the car with my brother and sister crunched next to me. I searched and searched through the play for my favorite lines; I knew them by heart anyway, but I wanted to know where they were. It was the stupidity that mercifully accompanies grief which made this search take up the car ride and all of the time of sitting on the porch of the old meeting house, waiting for the service. I wanted to read the lines and say that I didn't know what they meant.

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

Did they say that my twenty-eight year old cousin had been stupid and wasteful to kill himself, that all we can hope for is ripeness, and that we can never decide our own deaths? Is suicide like plucking unripe fruit, does it make everything useless and meaningless? Was our shared despair at Sam's death the only appropriate reaction? Or perhaps the lines implied something else, that every human death is equally appropriate, that there is ripeness in all and for all. Perhaps it is impossible to die without being ripe, and we ourselves are in touch with our own ripeness and our own deaths. I wanted to say both because I felt it was somehow dishonest to make only half the speech. But it would have been a speech. Sam's childhood neighbors and college roommates were weeping together and it was not the time to be abstract or academic. I didn't say anything. I listened to my family's muffled weeping, I wondered whether ripeness was a comfort or a warning, and I wept myself. All summer and on into now I have thought about ripeness and loved its ambiguity. I have wondered what it is and might be, and whether I should hope.

Long before we can read, we know some words of Shakespeare and some from the Bible. We hear them on the lips of our parents, and we have repeated some of them hundreds of times before we even wonder about their meaning or their context. The

kids in my neighborhood screamed, "To be or not to be" every time they acted out a particularly dramatic death scene. My mother hissed, "How sharper than a serpent's tooth to have a thankless child!" at every occasion. Shakespeare's words often hold as much power and meaning for us in our own contexts as they do in his context. At St. John's, we study Shakespeare for the sake of learning about Shakespeare, read and discuss King Lear in order to better understand King Lear. But I have read Shakespeare outside of school as often as in it, sometimes for the beauty of his words or the fun of shouting beautiful words out loud, sometimes for mere distraction, and other times for myself, seeking wisdom and healing for my own sorrows without a thought for the sorrows in the play. All of the meanings which these words may have, and all of the ways we may read them are important. They influence each other immeasurably.

I have spoken about Edgar's words in the context of my own life because I want to establish exactly what is at stake for me in my examination of the words. The sentence is as important to me in my own context as it is in the context of the play. Nonetheless, I will use the play rather than my past to explore the ideas of endurance and ripeness. This exploration is bound to shed as much light on the play as on the sentence itself, and may well shed much light on my own situation. But the light it casts for me on personal matters is secondary, and for the most part I will keep it private. I am not writing an autobiographical essay or a self-analytical one. My hope is that the meaning of the lines can be established on the strength of the play, and that I will come to a clear idea of the sentence and especially of ripeness, which will help me to see myself. I am neither Cordelia, nor Goneril, nor Edgar; my father is neither Lear nor Gloucester. I do not read the play as an analogy to my own experience. However, I do believe that what is wisdom on the printed page and on the lighted stage may well be wisdom in my cockroach infested kitchen.

I will discuss Edgar's words and their significance to the rest of the play in the order which the words themselves outline. First I will talk about the phrase, "Men must endure", then about going hence and coming hither. All of this will be in the interest of ripeness, of deciding what it may be, and how it may be all.

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

Edgar speaks these lines to his father as words of comfort. He prefaces them by asking, "What, in ill thoughts again?" (V, ii, 9). We are reminded of his recent attempt to cure his father's despair. That time, Edgar let his father think that he had attempted suicide and told him that "the clearest gods, who make them honors of men's impossibilities have preserv'd thee." (IV, vi, 73). Those words reminded Gloucester to hope. These are intended to lead his father to hope again, even to admonish his father to hope. At the same time, they are the bitterly clear-sighted words of a man leading the father who disowned him before being blinded. They are words of hope well informed by despair.

Edgar tells Gloucester that, "Men must endure". I assume that when he says "men" he means men and women. The sentence would be weak if it were gender-specific. The first word's meaning is at least reasonably clear. But Edgar says, "Men must". If all human beings must do a single thing, it is clear that there is a common human nature which unites all human beings. This human nature is tied up with their common obligation. "Must" is a funny word. The nature of the common obligation is confusing. If everyone really did do what one "must", Edgar would have said, "Men do endure". If we had a choice, Edgar would have said, "Men ought to endure". By choosing "must", Edgar makes his statement into a sort of conditional: if we are to be

human, then we "must".

If we are to be human, then we must endure. With these three words, Edgar has made it clear that morality is part and parcel of human nature; that our humanness entails an obligation which we must not shirk. This obligation, as we first see it, is to endure. What we endure is important, but before looking at what we endure, we must examine endurance by itself, so that we will be clear about precisely what we must do.

I see two important possible meanings of "endure". The simpler meaning is to undergo. When Edgar says, "Men must endure", he means that every human being must suffer the things he speaks about, that they happen to everyone, and that in order to be human everyone must let them happen. Even in the "undergoing" sense of "endure" there is the implication that what we undergo is unpleasant and that we would avoid it if we were given the choice. The second meaning of "endure" gives it more force. I would phrase it, "Men must stand firm in the face of". This is probably the most important sense of the word in these lines. We must not run toward things, and we must not run from them. We must stand where we are, in full knowledge of where we are, and we must not flinch.

"Endure" is a transitive verb. It makes little sense without an object, without something unpleasant to endure. Edgar offers us two things to endure, going hence and coming hither. In the greater context of the play, human beings are called on to endure the physical natural world as well. Lear has shouted, "Pour on, I will endure!" (III, iv, 17), to the storm, and the idea of suffering and standing firm in the face of the natural world is strong in the play. Taken alone, the words "Men must endure" are words about human nature and about physical nature. They are words about nature.

The word "nature" is key in King Lear. Nature is invoked by almost everyone who speaks (the notable exceptions are Edgar and the Fool) and means as many things as there are lines which use it. I have grouped the "natures" into three basic meanings. "Nature" can be the natural physical world, where cause and effect govern every event, where storms blow and furmiter weeds grow. This is the nature where "the younger rises as the old doth fall." (III, iii, 23). However, "nature" can also be human nature, the opposite of the natural physical world. Human nature is precisely what distinguishes us from planets or from plants. It accords (in theory) with natural moral law. In the play, human nature and human natural law are usually mentioned in reference to the natural lawful love between parent and child. When Gloucester calls Edmund a "loyal and natural boy" (II, i, 84), and when Lear tells Regan that "she better knows the offices of nature" (II, iv, 174) than her sisters, they are speaking of this human nature. Thirdly, nature can be used to describe one person's disposition, the unchangeable qualities with which a person is born and which establish individual identity. When France says that Cordelia has a "tardiness in nature" (I, i, 235), and when Lear says that this tardiness "like an engine wrenched my frame of nature" (I, iv, 257), they are speaking of the daughter's and the father's individual natures.

Each character's individual nature is revealed by his or her talk of the other two natures, physical and human. Before I go on to the motion of the play, the going hence and coming hither, let me draw clearly the fathers and their children, bad and good. I will describe where they stand by their own natures, in relation to the physical natural world, and to moral human nature.

King Lear mentions nature twice as often as anyone else in the play. His first fateful mention is his proposal to extend his largest bounty "where nature does with merit challenge" (I, i, 52). Lear thinks he is king enough to set up bouts in which human nature is just another contestant, and to judge the contest himself. The whole play falls out of his mistaken notion, and this notion falls directly out of Lear's own nature. He was born king. He is king of the country's lands as well as of the

state. Shadowy forests, champaigns rich with plenteous rivers, and wide skirted meads are his to bestow on whom he chooses. He speaks to the storm as if it were a political ally turned treacherous, calling the elements "servile ministers" (III, ii, 21) to the wishes of his daughters the queens. He seems to assume that they were his to command before he gave up his crown but have recently changed loyalty. He thinks he is king of human nature as well, that he can command his daughters' love above and beyond the natural love of child for parents, and that he can bequeath his property and his power without going through the natural ritual of dying. He also thinks he is king over individual nature, that he can settle the matters of his heart from his throne, before his court. He expect his own heart and nature to bend to his royal power just as he expects the hearts and natures of his subjects to do so. Lear's nature is a king's nature. His ignorance springs from his dominion over nature, imagined though it may be. His gradual awakening happens as he goes hence to nature and discovers his subjection to every aspect of it.

Gloucester is an earl rather than a king, and he is as aware of nature's power over him as he is of the king's. Gloucester's first mention of nature is far more respectful than the king's: "though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects." (I, ii, 99). The wisdom of nature is human knowledge of the natural world, and the scourged nature is human nature itself. The problem here is the one which Edmund points out. Gloucester believes that physical nature is all powerful, and that human nature in general and also in particular can have no effect at all on the events of the world. Gloucester betrays his excessive faith in cause and effect over and over: first when he laughs about the biology of Edmund's birth without a thought for his listening son, again when he bemoans the astrology of the day without a thought for the grave human mistake which Lear has made or for the characters of his own sons. Later, most horribly, Gloucester trusts gravity to take his life, without a thought for the natural human antipathy to suicide. It is amazing that Gloucester can be so completely in the dark about human nature. Although he manages to decide that Regan and Goneril's behavior is unnatural (after Lear has been tossed onto the nearest heath), he misjudges his own sons as completely as possible. Edgar is his "unnatural, brutish villain" (I, ii, 73), and Edmund his "loyal and natural boy" (II, i, 84).

Although Gloucester calls Edmund a "natural boy" as a compliment, we cannot help but be reminded of Edmund's illegitimacy. He may be a natural son, but he is so by biological nature rather than by moral human nature. Edmund's first mention of nature is the most emphatic in the play: "Thou, Nature, art my goddess," (I, ii, 1), he shouts. He is singleminded and clear. He operates purely on the level of natural physical laws unadulterated by human principles. This is not to say that Edmund does not understand the human sorts of nature. He sees them as clearly as anyone else in the play, but he chooses to reject them. He rejects the human moral nature which distinguishes human beings from animals because it is not in his nature. Edmund was born because his mother was fair and there was "good sport at his making" (I, i, 21). He knows his own nature perfectly and states it clearly in his first speech. He also sees the natures of his brother and father clearly, describes them perfectly ("A credulous father and a brother noble!" (I, ii, 68)), and manipulates them with ease. Although Edmund is certainly evil, Edgar accuses him only of treachery, and there is something fair about this. Edmund behaves reasonably, according to the reasoned principle of the natural world, that "the younger rises when the old doth fall." (III, iii, 23).

Regan and Goneril are completely different from Edmund. He serves a nature of physical laws and reasonable principles. The evil sisters, on the other hand, bring a general curse on nature (IV, vi, 205). They are monsters. If Edmund's treacherous nature is a result of his base birth, Goneril and Regan's natures are results of

their gender. In his madness, Lear says of all women that:

> Down from the waist they are Centaurs,
> Though women all above.
> But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
> Beneath is all the fiend's.
> There's hell, there's darkness, there's the sulphurous pit;
> burning, scalding, stench, consumption. Fie, fie, fie!
> pah, pah! (IV, vi, 124)

This is the most hellish image of female genitals I have ever read. It clearly shows women's connection to something which is much farther from human moral nature than Edmund's rational physical nature is. Women are connected to fiends and to monsters, to darkness and to mystery. There are deep abysses in them, and even they cannot reasonably explain the dark workings within those abysses. The mysteries are not wholly evil; creation and birth are among them. But the womb is a dark place nonetheless, and it connects women to the real power and mystery of nature in a way which makes them far more horrifying than any reasonable villain can ever be.

All women might be monsters: France asks if Cordelia's offense is of "such unnatural degree that monsters it" (I, i, 219), and one of Regan's servants mutters that "if she live long, and in the end meet the old course of death, women will all turn monsters" (III, vii, 100). (Foolish Gloucester, who knows nothing about human nature, even goes so far as to wonder if Edgar is a monster. (I, ii, 90)) Not all women are monsters, though everyone in the play is afraid that if Goneril and Regan succeed, all women, and even all humanity, will lose not only their human principles, but even their principled physical world.

Regan and Goneril are not aware of the mystery they carry or the horror they instill. They understand the natural world, human nature, and the natures of individuals fairly well; they understand themselves insofar as they know their own desires. They cannot understand themselves completely or rationally because they are mysteries. They are connected to a nature which is deeper, darker, more threatening than any other nature in the play. Their willing connection to primordial nature (they seize power, lust after the same man, and murder each other) has the potential to completely destroy the world.

Lucky for the world, Lear has "one daughter who redeems nature from the general curse which twain have brought her to" (IV, vi, 205). Cordelia is as separate from primordial nature as her sisters are close to it. She is guilty of "no vicious blot, murder or foulness, no unchaste action or dishonored step" (I, i, 227), and she is swayed by no passion, by nothing unreasonable. When Lear asks for her profession of love, she gives him a mathematical formula, calculating what she owes him as a loyal daughter against what she will need to pledge as a faithful wife. She is as inhuman as she is good, but her unnaturalness and unhumanness lie in her total devotion to the morality inherent in human nature, and in her success at subduing physical nature and her own personal nature to that general morality. Cordelia's vision of nature in all its aspects is as clear as either of her sisters'. But it is less personal and more just than any other. She is not shallow. Her "smiles and tears" (IV, iii, 17) at Kent's letter betray deep feeling and strong love. But even as she reads the letter unaware of her observer, she is "queen of her passion, who, most rebel-like, sought to be king oe'r her" (IV, iii, 13). The fiends may inherit everything below a woman's girdle, but the gods possess everything above it. Her sisters' sex make them able to be purely evil; because she is a woman, Cordelia is capable of being purely good.

Finally, we come to Edgar. Edgar never says the word "nature", perhaps because he does not oppose it as the others do. Edmund says that Edgar's nature is "so far

from doing harms that he suspects none" (I, ii, 169), and naivete is certainly a dimension of Edgar's nature. However, Edgar is not as simple as his father or as singleminded as his wicked brother. Edgar is as strongly connected to the physical natural world as is Edmund, but Edgar's connection is different. Edmund remains in the human world and lives by the standards of the natural world. Edgar flees to the natural world and lives in it according to the standards of human moral nature. Edgar is the man who is able to say, "Edgar I nothing am!" (II, iii, 21), and to mean it, to give up his own individual nature in order to survive in the natural world without betraying his moral nature. When Edgar claims to be Tom o' Bedlam, he becomes Tom o' Bedlam. On the heath with Lear, Edgar has no purpose but to save his own skin. He is nothing more than a lunatic beggar who keeps a mad king company. He is comfortable as unnaccommodated man. As unaccommodated man he leads his father, but while he leads his father he becomes himself again. At the start he is Mad Tom because he is shocked at seeing his blinded father and because he is not sure how to tell his father that the beggar who stands unseen before him is the son he disowned. As he leads Gloucester toward Dover, the madness becomes a tool. In the end, this madness is the tool he uses to save his father from suicide, and to try to teach him to endure, even to hope.

Edgar tells Gloucester that,

Men must endure their going hence.

In the literal sense, this going hence is simply going outside,leaving what is familiar to us and facing what is "out there." In each of the first three acts of King Lear, at least one major character is forced to leave home. Lear's banishment is the most poignant example of this sort of going hence. The others suffer in going hence, perhaps as much as he, but their sufferings serve to underscore and compound Lear's. Leaving behind the castle, its comforts and its conventions, is the major motion of the play. The things which humans face, unprotected from the whims of a powerful and threatening nature are dangerous. Kent says, "Man's nature cannot bear the affliction nor the fear." (III, ii, 49).

The play builds up to the crescendo of Lear on the heath in the storm. The rhetoric of fear begins when Lear banishes Kent, but allots him five days "to shield thee from disasters of the world" (I, i, 174). Even in his rage, Lear is not cruel enough to ignore the terrible threat which the natural world poses to unaccommodated man. Disasters lurk everywhere "out there".

Kent's farewell to Cordelia, "the gods to their dear shelter take thee" (I, i, 182), adds power to our notion of shelter as a real human necessity. Cordelia's going hence is slightly different from the other departures in the play: she leaves her father's castle for her husband's. Nonetheless, she has been banished as much as Kent. She cannot come back. Cordelia's going hence may be natural insofar as she is a daughter who leaves home to be married, but it is frightening and unnatural because she leaves for good and is left dependent on strangers outside the castle. If they fail her, as is quite possible, she will be without shelter, alone against the opposing elements of a cruel nature.

Edgar's going hence is the third of the play and the third time the point is made. Edgar resolves to become Mad Tom, "and with presented nakedness outface the wind's and persecutions of the sky" (II, iii, 12). Edgar's embracing the outdoors is presented as a form of self-mortification and insanity. The sky is a persecutor. Being beneath it is an affliction. When human beings face the natural world alone, without roofs, the power of the natural world and its unthinking malevolence to anything small, weak, and naked is certain and deadly. Lear makes the best statement of

the weakness of humanity in the face of the natural world during his confrontation with it:

> Poor naked wretches, who so e'er you are,
> That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
> How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
> Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
> From seasons such as these? (III, iv, 28)

Lear describes well the wretchedness of Kent, Cordelia, and Edgar. It is strange, though, that he speaks these lines about other people outside when he himself is enduring a terrible storm, unprotected. A few lines later, Lear tells his pomp to take physic, to "expose thyself to feel what wretches feel" (III, iv, 34). Water streams across his face as he speaks, but it does not occur to him that he is also passive, suffering the storm as helplessly as any other wretch would. Lear does not know that the winds and rains and thunderbolts scorn royalty as well as poverty.

These speeches are among the most powerful and angry speeches in the English language. They are as saddening as they are anger-filled. Lear sounds absurd and old. His assumption of control which he does not really have makes him look senile and silly. At the same time, Lear's anger and confidence are impressive. He speaks nobly and bravely. The king has been thrown out into the storm, so he commands the winds to blow and the rain to spout. Gloucester says, "yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain." (III, vii, 61). The king's tears join with the raindrops in watering the earth, but more important than that, he becomes the storm, joins forces with it. The sky manifests the power and tumult in his own mind even as it beats his body down.

At the very moment that the triumph of physical nature over human nature is made complete, the battle between Lear's human nature and his royal one has hardly begun. He is still a king when he resolves to feel what wretches feel, in order to teach himself to "shake the superflux to them and show the heavens more just" (III, iv, 35). This kingliness of Lear is what gives his endurance on the heath its power and its absurdity. We, audience or readers, already know that the storm is greater than the king and the man Lear. Lear, however, decides that the storm shall be greater. When he sees Mad Tom's abused flesh he murmurs that it is appropriate because the flesh begot the daughters. When he sees Tom's bare forkedness, he shouts, "Off, off, you lendings! Come, unbutton here." (III, iv, 103). Lear decides to be overwhelmed by nature and actively renounces his coverings. As a king, he declared himself not-king of his country when he gave up his power to his daughters. He acts as king again in the storm and declares himself not-king again, this time not-king of the unaccommodated man within himself. With his declaration he goes mad, but in his madness he becomes even more conscious. Lear's woes don't lose themselves, as Gloucester thinks. In his madness, Lear the man has learned what Lear the king commanded him to learn. He has given up his throne, even his shelter, and has exposed himself to feel what wretches feel.

In Act IV Lear crowns himself with rank fumiter and furrow weeds, and he celebrates his own new state. Lear is a king in accord with the natural world, and as such, he is nothing more than a man. This is not merely a victory of the natural world over a king, but also the victory of human nature and of Lear's own individual nature over a king. We are left with the impression that nature triumphs because the king decides it ought to.

Going hence in the first sense, going hence by leaving home, is something which we must endure if we are to be human beings. Lear's endurance, and the humility and humanity he wins by his endurance (at the price of his sanity), are certainly somehow part of ripeness.

Although going outside is the literal meaning of "going hence", dying is the obvious meaning. "Going hence" is a terrifying term for death because it is so appropriately vague and shadowy. "Hence" is not a place; it doesn't specify a destination or imply any kind of completeness. The great power of the play is its ability to show horror and grief unflinchingly without tempering them, to make every death an awful one. No one in King Lear is put to rest. We are glad when the villains die, but we do not get a sense of fulfillment or completion from their deaths. They are cut off, and we are left wondering why they lived at all, rather than being relieved that they live no more. We are sorry when the characters we love die, but more than we are allowed to mourn, we are forced to wonder why they have died, and where they have gone. Death in King Lear ends life by cutting it off. It does not complete it.

Gloucester is the only character in the play who wants to die. His blind baffled reunion with Edgar, the son he cannot recognize, is confusing and pathetic. His son's choice to deceive his father into thinking that he is led by Tom o' Bedlam and, far worse, into thinking that he has leapt from a cliff, is horrible. Everything in these scenes is unnatural. Even Edgar says that he is trifling with his father's despair (IV, vi, 33) in order to cure it. We must watch him trifle.

On the other hand, Gloucester's desire to end his life by leaping from a cliff is an awful, unnatural desire, and his confession of this desire to his son is an awful confession. When Edgar sees his blind father stumbling toward him he says, "World, world, O world! But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee, life would not yield to age." (IV, i, 10). The sight of his sightless father immediately makes Edgar think of death as some sort of comfort. His father's misery is almost too much for him to endure and to watch his father endure. This situation has gone beyond the pale of reality. It happens somewhere out there where everything is completely strange and unnatural, where death really does look tempting.

It is strange and unnatural for Edgar to be betrayed by Edmund, for Gloucester to believe Edmund, for Edgar to decide to be Tom o' Bedlam, for Edmund to betray Gloucester, for Gloucester's eyes to be put out by Cornwall, and for blind betrayed Gloucester and his betrayed beggar son to meet and journey together toward a cliff from which Gloucester plans to leap.

These events don't necessarily exceed the limits of credibility. In fact, they result naturally from the original situation. However, every one of them violates our sense of what would be natural for humans to do and to suffer. Edgar seems to think that he acts unnaturally because he is in an unnatural situation; that to obey his human instincts during this unhuman afternoon would be to doom his father and himself. He seems to think that suicide is such a serious crime against nature (against all three natures: physical, human, and individual), that to interfere with it in a regular human way would be to fail his father. Only supernatural creatures can fight battles outside of nature's realm.

When Edgar meets his father at the foot of the imaginary cliff and speaks to him in the new persona of a gentleman, he tells Gloucester that he thinks Gloucester was led to the cliff's edge by a fiend. Although Edgar is deceiving his father about his own identity, he is honest here. Two fiends stand at the top of the cliff. One is Gloucester, a man who refuses to endure his life and tries to break every natural law by killing himself. The other is Edgar, his son, who leads him to that imaginary cliff without revealing himself, without begging his father to reconsider. Edgar makes the cliff imaginary when it could have been real, but he must act as a fiend to lead his father to an imaginary suicide. Hoping to save his father by doing it, Edgar plays the fiend.

I respect this. It makes sense to assume that suicide is something a person must face alone, to decide that although it may be unnatural and evil, suicide must be private as well. Edgar interferes with Gloucester as much as he dares, but he

lets his father risk his life alone. It is a brave and perhaps foolhardy thing to do.

Defiance in the face of nature runs in Gloucester's family. Edmund defies human moral nature in service of his own physically natural desire for wealth and power. Edgar defies normal human nature and his own individual nature in service of his superhuman concern for his father. Both defiances spring from their father's strange willingness to turn nature on its head. Gloucester's willingness, in turn, springs from his own conviction of helplessness and uselessness. He is the man who said,

> As flies to wanton boys are we to th' gods.
> They kill us for their sport. (IV, i, 37).

This view of things is defensible. I could argue that the two lines are the theme of the play, that everything which happens in it is just this sort of wanton, meaningless sport of the gods. But somehow, in Lear, Cordelia, and Kent's cases (and perhaps finally in Edgar and Gloucester's), the depth of our suffering and the acuteness of our misery give meaning to meaningless events. Gloucester says that he envies the king's ability to lose his woes in his distraction, but he is absolutely wrong in attributing this ability to the king. Lear may be mad, but he is not forgetful. Gloucester, on the other hand, actually has the ability which he envies Lear. Gloucester is able to decide not to endure, to somehow numb his feeling of sorrow. Where Lear shouts, "Pour on, I will endure!" (III, iv, 17), Gloucester instead thinks up a scheme which will release him from enduring. His resolve to kill himself is an unnatural response to suffering. He takes unnatural comfort in the notion that his "misery could beguile the tyrant's range and frustrate his proud will." (IV, vi, 64).

Gloucester sees his situation a little more clearly when he is blinded and realizes which son is actually a "loyal and natural boy" (II, ii, 84) and which is an "unnatural, brutish villain" (I, ii, 76). This does not mean that his spiritual sight is fully restored. The Gloucester who decides to kill himself cannot or will not look his own misery full in the face. He does not see that human beings must "bear affliction till it do cry out itself, 'Enough, enough!' and die" (IV, vi, 75), until he has tried to end his enduring and has failed. He fails in his suicide attempt because Edgar, his son, will not let him kill himself. By this failure, Gloucester is brought to his knees, forced to endure what he would rather avoid. When Edgar finally tells Gloucester the whole truth, and Gloucester faces his life with nowhere to shrink back to, he dies. Gloucester knew when he tried to kill himself that he would never be able to bear his sufferings. What he did not and could not know or see was that by being forced to bear them, by living on till fortune killed him, by enduring his own going hence rather than trying to force it - by and through all these things he would finally achieve the only triumphant death of the play. Gloucester sees everything before he dies, and when his heart bursts, it bursts "smilingly...twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief" (V, iii, 198). Gloucester's growth into awareness kills him, for he is not made of stuff stern enough to bear clear sight. But while awareness kills him, it also saves him in a way that no one else is saved. Gloucester feels deep grief at the end of the play, but he feels joy as well.

Gloucester's death is vastly different from the numbed, twisted comfort he would have had from suicide. Rather than tricking his fate, his fate has tricked him into full awareness and a full death. However, although it is full, it is still the death of a man who, if he had lived, could have been happy. His death may be a supreme moment for him, but even in Gloucester's case we do not feel that it is a completion, that it is a solid, meaningful end. Gloucester has gone hence as much as anyone and faces as much uncertainty. Gloucester's triumph is his awareness of the great joy and the great grief which human life and death must be.

After Edgar tells us of Gloucester's death, Regan and Goneril kill each other, and Edmund is borne off the stage fatally wounded. We do not see any of them die. At this point, Oswald's miserable little death is the only one we have acutally witnessed. Goneril and Regan's bodies are briefly displayed, and then Lear enters with his dead daughter in his arms. Howl, howl, howl!!!

Edmund held the fates of Cordelia and Lear in his hands and hesitated on the verge of death and on the edge of goodness. He decided to confess and try to save them, but he decided too late. If Edmund had been faster, Cordelia would have lived. This tragedy of timing has gone on throughout the entire play. In Cordelia's death it is manifested most clearly. If human ripeness is some sort of a goal, then timing is obviously crucial. It is hard to die young and ripe. In the sense of ripeness, Cordelia's death is the most tragic in the play.

Cordelia's going hence by leaving home is a sad moment because she cannot return freely. However, the sadness is not unbearable. It is natural for children to leave home, and although their being thrown out is hard, it is also fairly common. Lear's banishment, on the other hand, is unbearably hard. Fathers are not often thrown out of their homes. When it happens, nature has been turned upside down in a frightening and tragic way. Fathers are supposed to die, and their children to survive them. Although fathers' deaths are sad, and the violent suffering deaths which fathers endure in this play are unnatural, they are humanly bearable. For a father to bear the death of his daughter is much harder than for a son to bear his father's. The death of any child is a more shocking and disturbing loss than the death of any parent. Cordelia's death is unbearable and unnatural because she is not a parent but a child.

Even in the realm of death, Cordelia's suffering remains mute. Lear suffers when he is banished, and suffers again when Cordelia dies, even though the death is hers. Lear dies with his daughter's body in his arms. We witnessed the first death of the play, Oswald's, and we watch the last. Though we see a few of the dead bodies, Lear is the only important character whose death we watch. Not seeing the others lends much mysterious power to death. We have no notion at all of what it is, why it happens, or where these people go. Lear's death does not help us with any of these questions. In some ways it is a relief when he is finally allowed to die after everything he has cared about, wrapped in Cordelia's body, is gone. In another way, it is the most frustrating moment of the play. He doesn't enlighten us. For the first time in the play he seems really mad, to the point of unawareness. Kent says "The wonder is he hath endured so long. He but usurp'd his life." (V, iii, 316). Lear's death is at once the saddest moment of the play and the biggest relief in the play. However, his death is no end at all. He dies telling us to look at something we cannot see. Perhaps it is an illusion of life in Cordelia's corpse. Perhaps as he joins her in death he sees that her immortal soul is really alive. Perhaps he has finally turned into the confused old fool who, in our bitter moments, we suspected he might be. We do not know. Certainly though, Lear's death is not a conclusion. It is as vague and shadowy as any other death, and because we watch it, we know for certain that it is not any sort of achievement, in that Lear finds no peace in it.

The inconclusiveness of his death is not Lear's tragedy. Every human being dies an inconclusive death. The younger a person dies, the more meaningless and inconclusive the death. It is a general tragedy of the human race that we die and that our deaths are mere "going hences" to be endured, rather than final blasts of glory to be savored and remembered by all who survive us.

We endure death in two ways: We endure the deaths of those who die while we survive, and we endure our own. Being left behind is always inconclusive and lonely, and in this respect every death in King Lear rings true. However, the manner in which we endure our own deaths is not nearly so uniform. Gloucester's death is almost triumphant for him. He is ripe and ready to go. Cordelia's death is absolutely horrifying because she is young and green, completely unready and unripe. Lear is

somewhere in between. He does not want or even expect to die. He has not become all he could have become. He is not fully ripe.

Edgar tells Gloucester that

Men must endure their going hence, even as their coming hither.

It is not as easy to distinguish between the literal and metaphorical meanings of coming hither as it was with going hence. If going hence does have a literal implication of going outside, coming hither may mean something like coming inside, coming into a situation which is already happening. The word "hither" means "here". Edgar must either be talking about here, this world, or here, underneath this particular tree during the unfavorable outcome of this particular battle.

I cannot generalize about coming inside the way I did about going outside because Edgar speaks the line outside. Everyone in the play has come outside in order to get to Edgar's here, the final battle. Instead, I'll talk a little about this absurd battle. The play would be very different if Cordelia's army had won the day. The villains would still have ample opportunity to kill each other off, and the likelihood of the happy survival of Gloucester, Cordelia, and Lear would be good. It makes sense that Regan and Goneril's forces would beat Cordelia's, but then it also makes sense that Edmund would defeat Edgar in a duel. The latter does not happen. The former then, must be more than a victory of good warriors over a good daughter. Instead, it is the inevitable result not of Lear's daughters' natures, but of Lear's own nature. Gloucester's ability to die twixt two extremes of passion, joy, and grief, to die the best death in the play, is the ability which his sons have inherited. Their plot does not conclude perfectly - Edmund hesitates too long before repenting - but it does end well. The good, lawful son inherits and the bad son dies repentent. Lear's family is not able to manage things so tidily. They all die, leaving no heir but the milk-liver'd Albany, husband of the most villainous member of the family. It is appropriate that the man whose own death is unambiguously tragic should have a family which ends as ungracefully and as completely tragically. However, Lear's family's ends are much more honest, much more appropriate to themselves than the ends of Gloucester's family. The "hither" which Edgar might mean literally is a battle illustrating the meaninglessness of everything which happens in the family of the king. The warrior sisters' armies win the day, and at the same time one sister poisons the other and is stabbed by her. Their servants unthinkingly murder their father and sister, even though they themselves "desperately are dead". The whole thing is gruesome. Edgar may have saved his father from suicide, but he has led him hither, to a battle which cannot possibly end well. This is not Edgar's fault. Men must endure their coming hither, and living in England at the end of Lear's reign necessarily means being involved in the bloody demise of Lear's family.

The real and important meaning of coming hither is not the literal one. Edgar's words to his father are strangely double edged. "Don't worry, Dad," he is saying, "you must endure your death as I had to endure my birth. I cannot do anything about being your son, and you cannot do anything about dying." The order and the emphasis of Edgar's words imply that it is harder to endure birth than death, that being born is a greater burden. The idea that having a father can be a tragic event is definitely central to the play. There are few mentions of mothers in King Lear. Gloucester mentions Edmund's mother when he blames her for conceiving Edmund and having a baby for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed (I, i, 13). Almost every mention of mothers is connected with adultery and illegitimacy. When Gloucester is told of Edgar's treachery, he says of Edgar, "I never got him" (II,i,80). When Lear arrives at Gloucester's castle in pursuit of Regan, he says

if Regan is not glad to see him, he'll "divorce her mother's tomb, sepulchering an adultress" (II, iv, 132). It is frightening and funny to note that Edmund is the only son whose fatherhood is never questioned. The only other mention of motherhood is Lear's curse on Goneril, where he hopes she has a child of spleen that she may feel "how sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child." (I, iv, 278).

I mention the lack of mothers because I am certain that a mother on the cast would throw the play into a completely different dimension. Mothers have a natural physical connection to their children which fathers, who do not carry their children, can never have. The bond between father and child must be more social than that between mother and child. Fathers love their children according to human moral nature and to their own individual natures rather than according to any real physical bond (though raising someone from birth creates a strong bond).Though fathers by nature love their children, the bond between father and child is not necessarily an indissoluble bond, or at least not an unassailable one. Gloucester and Lear have reared their children alone. The children have grown up in situations where the animal nature of families has been easily forgotten and where the bonds of nature alone have been set up as standards, weaker for the lack of physical natural bonds.

Every child in the play suffers from having a father. This is probably because of the two particular fathers. Both Gloucester and Lear reveal an almost total lack of understanding of and concern for their children. It is as likely in other human situations to suffer from having a mother, but that suffering would be different. It is not described in King Lear. This is not to say that the sufferings of children in the play are the same. Edmund must bear his father's scorn. His father conceived him for sport, mocks him in his presence, and sends him away for nine years at a time, all without a second thought. Edgar must suffer the same man, who does not know or care about him, and who believes treason of him without a second thought. Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia must bear a very different father, a king who treats his daughters as subjects and their love for him as a matter to be debated in court. Lear offers his daughters complete material independence, but he offers it at the price of complete emotional devotion or of flattery. When Goneril and Regan buy their kingdoms with deceitful tongues, Lear must know that they are doing so. He has reserved the best portion for the daughter whose genuine love he is certain of, and he has set the situation up so that his bad daughters can make their graceful, lying speeches without having to do anything to prove the matter of their words. The price Cordelia pays for being Lear's daughter is far greater than the honor which Goneril and Regan give up. If Cordelia were to swear her complete devotion to her father, she would keep her word and wither and die without a life of her own. Her other choice is to not promise the emotional subjection which she does not want to offer, and to suffer and die without her father's love or approval.

Edgar has endured his own coming hither, accepting his father for what he is, and behaving as the loyal, natural boy Gloucester thinks Edmund is. Regan and Goneril also endure their coming hither fairly well. Lear does not ask them to love him, but to make fine speeches about love in his court. They do as he asks. They are savage and cruel to Lear, but this compounds rather than constitutes Lear's tragedy. In fact, although he toys with the notion of their illegitimacy, Lear is certain that Goneril and Regan are his daughters. He muses that torturing his own flesh may be the most appropriate response to his daughters' treachery, since his is the flesh which begot those peculiar daughters. There is something to this. Goneril and Regan are probably more cruel than Lear, but he has as little reason for banishing Cordelia and Kent as they have for throwing him outside. They are definitely Lear's daughters and they do not do anything to challenge or to try to change the relationship to Lear into which he puts them.

Edmund and Cordelia are the two who are unable to endure the situations they are

born into. Edmund cannot endure his bastardy. His lack of control over the circumstances of his birth continues, because of those circumstances, into every moment of his life. He does not and cannot believe that his being twelve or fourteen moonshines lag of a brother affects his nature in any real or meaningful way. Although he uses his father's love for him as one more proof of his own merit, he is willing to subvert that love to a purpose which, in his eyes, is much higher. He will do whatever he must in order to take control of his circumstances. We get the feeling that if things had been slightly different, if Edmund had been born twelve or fourteen moonshines earlier, and had been born legitimate, he might have been able to endure his birth and his father's failures. Everything might have been vastly different.

Instead, Edmund decides, "Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit; All with me's meet that I can fashion fit." (I, ii, 176). In the eyes of a bastard, legitimacy is simply a legalistic notion. If the human morality is nothing more than "the curiosity of nations" (I, ii, 4) in respect to the primary important matter of his own birth, to decide that morality is no more than ridiculous law-making in every other respect is not difficult. According to these ridiculous laws, Edmund ought to have nothing and be nothing. At the same time, these laws predict that he will be lawless and base. Edmund defies the expectations of his powerlessness by grabbing for all he can get and by ruthlessly betraying his brother and his father. But even as he betrays the men whose existence nullifies his in such a complicated way, he is playing the role of the outlaw, the bastard. To take action to try to reverse the circumstances of his birth is certainly to stop enduring it. However, in that Edmund is at the same time completely affected by the circumstances of his birth, he is in some way trapped into bastardy. He is responding according to the outlaw nature a bastard is born with. We are not meant to despise Edmund; his speeches are too attractive for that. The timing is off, though, as it is in every other facet of the play. And so Edmund is forced to be base, to be unnatural by moral human nature at the very moment he is natural by physical nature. Edmund is by definition an outlaw. The whole problem with being the child of a thoughtless father is brought out by Edmund's situation. His birth is his biggest affliction, and he has carried the brand of it through every moment of his life. He cannot unbirth himself, and he cannot even really regret the fact that he has been born. He owes his father his very life, and at the same moment, his father is responsible for every misery in that life. Because his father begot him at all, Edmund is bound to love him and obey him; because his father begot him in the manner he did, Edmund must betray him.

Although Edmund rebels against the circumstances of his birth, he does notrebel personally. His quarrel with his coming hither is for the most part material rather than spiritual, and his betrayals are motivated by his longing for land and power rather than by any feeling of deep moral and emotional wrongdoing. It is the base material nature of his motivation which decides Edmund's villainy. His father and his brother have not tortured him after all, nor have they asked him to betray himself in any way which would force him to rebel, to stop enduring. Instead, they have, justly or unjustly, deprived him of the wealth and power he craves. We cannot judge Edmund according to normal laws because he was born outside of them. However, we know that he is aware of his family's love for him, and that he refuses to endure his birth in spite of their love for him and in spite of his for them. Edmund betrays his family's love for the sake of their money, and in doing it, he becomes "a most toad-spotted traitor" (V, iii, 139).

Cordelia is the other child who refuses to endure her birth, to obey her father, to take from him what he offers her, or to promise him what he asks of her. Her circumstances, of course, are very different from Edmund's. She is the favorite daughter; Edmund is the unwanted son. She is offered the most wealth and power in the

kingdom; Edmund has been promised nothing. Cordelia's father demands that her love for him be a matter of words and ceremonies, that what is most privately important to her be demonstrated in his court. She endures this by standing firm in the face of it, but her firm stance is also a rebellion. She cannot do her father's will because he wants her to promise him every bit of her love. If Edmund suffers because his father will not give him enough, Cordelia's suffering is tied with the much more painful and destructive fact that her father demands too much from her. To give him what he asks would be to deny her honor and to lie. It would be to betray the relationship between them or to deny her own life and every freedom she has ever had, thus betraying herself. She chooses to stand firm, to maintain her honor and her loyalty to herself. By doing this, she fails her father and rebels against him.

Cordelia rebels against her father because she loves him. She cannot bear to see Lear the man subsumed by Lear the king. She is deeply hurt that Lear her father refuses to think of her as his daughter and instead tries to make her into a flattering courtier. Her rebellion, based on these offenses against humanity and fatherhood, starts the tragedy, but her rebellion is not really an active one. She is trapped by circumstance as much as Edmund is. She must love her father and she must be true to him. In order to do so she must betray the king, Lear, and disappoint the man, Lear. Although she rebels against her father and the circumstances of her birth, Cordelia does not betray either. In fact, she does nothing until she returns to invade her homeland and reinstate her father. It is clear that she does not want him to force his kingdom on her. When he wakes from his sleep in her care, she asks, "How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?"(IV, vii, 44).

Cordelia's decision to speak in words of the court means two things. First, she wants Lear to know that he is king and must be king until he dies, and that she will not take his kingdom from him, no matter how insistently he offers it. At the same time, she is finally capitulating, speaking to him as king rather than as father. She does not do this because she thinks of him as king rather than as father, but because she knows he wants her to, and she is determined to obey him. When Lear is convinced that she is real, he thinks that she is mocking him. Here is another tragedy of timing. Just when Cordelia sees her way clear to being her father's subject as well as his daughter, speaking to him in the royal language he once demanded, Lear sees the foolishness and impotency which have come out of his royalty, and renounces them. He says he has given her cause to hate him, and Cordelia denies it. "No cause," she says, "No cause." (IV, vii, 75). She tells the truth here. Lear's unnatural demand for a pledge of total devotion and his unnatural offer of an inheritance before he actually died, forced Cordelia to rebel against him, and to disobey him. He banished her to a husband who loved her. Although her father's anger and her own banishment must have caused her real grief, it was her father's foolishness and the certain failure of his plans which saddened here the most. She has worried about him and wept for him; she has not suffered much in her own fate. Lear seems to see his mistake here. He has learned that he is a man as well as a king, and that the two are separate. He has even gone so far as to decide that his manliness is more important than his kingliness. If the play ended with this reunion, it would not be a tragedy. Of course, it goes on. Lear and Cordelia are taken as prisoners.

The words I am writing this essay about are the last words we hear spoken between Edgar and his father. The scene which follows Edgar and Gloucester's last is Cordelia and Lear's last scene together. The tenors are drastically different. If I find hope in Edgar and Gloucester's last scene together, it must be severely tempered by the despair with which the next scene fills me. Lear's speech in this scene is beguilingly beautiful, and I have often heard it referred to as the happy ending of the play. For me it is a final horror. Cordelia and her father are taken captive. Cordelia speaks words of selfless comfort to her father, and calls him "oppressed king" (V, iii, 5) rather than "dear father" or any other name which expresses af-

fection. Her words and her tone here sicken me. She has not stood firm in her determination to be Lear's daughter rather than his subject. She speaks words as wooden as her first, but these, her last, are also false. She speaks a hope which she does not feel, she makes a final attempt to compete with her sisters and proclaim her love for Lear, she falls into the courtly language she despises. Here, for the first time, Cordelia endures her fortune in the weak sense of the word: she meekly suffers it. Here, for the first time, she does not endure her circumstances by standing firm in the face of them. At the very last, Cordelia weakens. Her weakening fills me with despair. I take little comfort from thinking that she may be standing firm in the face of her going hence, because these words are for her father. Whatever implication they may have concerning Cordelia's death, it cannot outweigh the horrible blinding of Lear which these words effect. Lear's speech in response to Cordelia's last words is beautiful, and it is ghastly.

> No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison.
> We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage.
> When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
> And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
> And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
> At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
> Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too-
> Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out-
> And take upon's the mystery of things,
> As if we were God's spies; and we'll wear out,
> In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones.
> That ebb and flow by th' moon.
>
> Take them away
>
> Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
> The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
> He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven
> And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes.
> The goodyears shall devour 'em, flesh and fell,
> Ere they shall make us weep! We'll see 'em starv'd first.
>
> (V, iii, 8)

Although Lear has learned the wisdom of humility and humanity and the uselessness of royalty, he has not learned to be a father. He rejoices in the prospect of his own captivity because it will also be his daughter's captivity. He started the tragedy by scheming to catch Cordelia, to force her to declare her love for him, and to arrange things so that he could spend every minute of his old age with her. He thinks he has accomplished his goal here, and he crows with joy while Cordelia begins to weep with dismay. Surely, he will ask her forgiveness continually and be glad to get it. But Lear will never regret anything now that he has "caught" Cordelia and can command her constant attention and devotion. This is the saddest moment of the play. It is the moment where a story which might have been about a good but foolish king learning wisdom through suffering becomes instead the story of a man who never learns anything until it is too late, and who never escapes or even comprehends the fault which causes his suffering.

This is also the moment when Cordelia must endure her father in a way that few people are called upon to endure their parents. She must directly face the fact that her father will never be a father to her. He will always be someone who plots and schemes in his effort to catch her, to have her all to himself, and to be cared for by her. If Gloucester's great and horrifying unnaturalness is his effort to end his own life, to enforce rather than endure his going hence, Lear's horrifying unnatural-

ness is his effort to demand from his daughter the love which a father ought to bestow on her.

Edgar tricks his father out of suicide into seeing all that has happened to him clearly and dying in an honest response to his clear vision. This deceit is appropriate and effective. However, Cordelia has no weapon against her father's unnatural demands except her honesty. She can only refuse, and after fortune goes against them, she cannot even refuse her father's unnatural desires. (There is no evidence that these are incestuous desires.) Instead, Cordelia dies, a victim in every respect, having only been able to endure her birth, and now merely enduring her going hence. She is hung while her aged father fights a desperate battle for her and Edmund deliberates about whether to stop her hanging. Her death is completely pointless insofar as it advances no one's cause. There is no real reason to kill her. Her death is also the most piercing event of the play. Cordelia cannot and does not die ripe, because she is young and because she does not expect to die. Her death may or may not help her father to attain some sort of awareness and ripeness. It seems that it thrusts him into madness, that he is never made aware of his terrible fathering, that he dies miserably not because he has wronged his daughter and she has suffered deeply, but because he is alone again. His only chance of reunion with Cordelia and of getting the love he craves from her is to follow her into death. There is something evilly beautiful about Lear's selfish passion for his daughter, but there is nothing comforting about it. Although Lear's last speech, in which he humbly asks for help with his button, shows how far he has come from the king on the heath who decided to be unaccommodated and then commanded his servant to unbutton him, nonetheless he has not made the final important step. Lear has learned to be a man, but he remains hopeless as a father.

Edgar says to his father,

> Men must endure
> Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
> Ripeness is all. (V, ii, 9).

Ripeness is offered as a result of, or a comfort in, the face of the things which precede it: our endurance of nature, of going hence, and of coming hither.

Ripeness is a natural image, one which we would not ordinarily connect with human beings. Let me look briefly at ripeness in the physical natural world in order to try to get a clear definition of the word in its most basic sense, before going on to try to talk about ripeness in a human context.

The ripeness of a peach is not the peach's achievement. Peaches have no will and cannot achieve or even act. Peaches are capable of being created, plucked, and eaten. All of the activities of a peach are passive. However, not every peach ripens to full flavor. The reasons for a peach not being ripe is either that it is still green or that it has become rotten. In the case of a peach, ripeness depends on the weather, and, far more, on the passage of time. In time, every peach will ripen. Given too much time, any one will go rotten. When a peach is ripe, it has reached its peak. It tastes best to us, but our taste echoes nature's perfection rather than deciding it. Ripe fruit is ready to fall, ready to rot for the sake of nourishing the seed it bears and continuing the cyclical life of the plant which bears it. Ripeness is a fruit's perfection, but is is not earned by a fruit. Peaches do nothing but wait to be ripe.

Of course, people are not peaches. Our souls are not vegetable souls. Ripeness for humans is more than the simple physical maturity which results from the passage of time. Nonetheless, Shakespeare compares us to plants when he tells us that ripeness is all. Ripeness in humans must be mostly a result of the passage of time. Whatever ripeness may be, it is not something which human beings can strive for or make strides toward. What we produce is not important to Edgar or to Shakespeare. We are not fruit-bearing creatures, but rather we are fruits. What bears us is beyond our control, and so is what plucks us. The task of a human being is merely to endure, most fully, all that confronts him or her. One is ripe only when one has endured patiently and bravely everything which will be endured and is completely ready to be cut off from this life of endurance, to part from one's children as they will part from theirs, because it is time.

This is the physically natural sense of ripeness in humans. We must also look at ripeness according to human nature and to individual will. Earlier, I mentioned two kinds of endurance: plain passive endurance (undergoing) leads to the natural ripeness I have described. But endurance can also have a stronger meaning: standing firm in the face of. We must stand firm in the face of nature, of going hence and of coming hither.

Standing firm in the face of nature is best illustrated by King Lear on the heath in the storm. He shouts, "Pour on, I will endure!" (III, iv, 17) and he does, remaining fully aware of himself and at the same moment, forcing himself to be fully aware of the natural world which opposes him and to be honest about its power over him. Lear's final ripeness is not complete. He does not stand firm in the face of his death in that he does not really know he dies. He does not stand firm in the face of his fatherhood; standing still is vastly different from standing firm. His inability to change is an inability to endure because it is an inability to face himself and his circumstances squarely. However, in spite of his failure as a father and his failure in death, Lear's firmness in the face of nature is triumphant. In respect to the natural world and his awareness of his place in it, Lear grows ripe. When he dies, he is, in at least one respect, fully ripe.

Lear on the heath is also a good example of enduring our going hence, in the out-of-doors sense of going hence. Lear is not alone in his endurance of banishment and of the things "out there". Kent, Cordelia, Gloucester, and Edgar all endure banishment, each in a slightly different manner. Being banished and going hence is the most certain and most common way in which people ripen. Everyone in the play seems to be able to stand firm in the face of their banishment, and all of them grow wise because of it.

The other meaning of going hence is dying. Gloucester has more trouble facing his death than any other character. However, when his "heart burst smilingly, twist two extremes of passion, joy, and grief" (V, iii, 198), Gloucester has endured his death as no other character has. In spite of himself, Gloucester waits for death to claim him, and he endures it by allowing it to happen to him rather than by seeking it. But his real triumph is in his standing firm in the face of his death, looking his death and all of his life full in the face, and dying completely aware of what his life has been and of the fact that there is as much to be glad about as their is to mourn. This is ripeness in death, this readiness combined with this hesitancy and, above all else, with this awareness.

Ripeness in regard to our coming hither is most fully evinced by Edgar. He acknowledges his father's weaknesses and goes to great lengths to help his father overcome his faults without shrinking from them or allowing them to remain. In the course of doing this for his father and for himself, Edgar is the most enigmatic character in the play. His mystery results from the fact that he is able to completely fulfill the advice he has given to his father. Edgar is somehow able to accept nature, death, and birth. He is able to outface the winds and persecutions of the sky, to lead his father to a false suicide thereby risking his father's actual death, and to act always in accord with his responsibilities to and his understanding of his father.

Edmund cannot endure as well, perhaps because Edmund's original situation is harder to endure than Edgar's. Cordelia cannot do it either, perhaps because she is too caught up with virtue, somehow. She cannot improvise in her dealings with her father or in her response to her situation. Edmund is too flexible. He gives up any effort at endurance and makes his own rules without a second thought. Cordelia, on the other hand, is too stiff and wooden, too caught up in her passive endurance to finally stand firm. She is too devoted to some rigorous standard of purity to be able to respond as her situation demands and help her father and herself to ripeness. Edgar's ripeness is interesting to me because he seems to know about ripeness from the start and to teach it to his father. It is as if he knows that the only possible repayment he can make to his father for having given him life is to give his father death, not by murdering him, but by leading him to the point where he can die completely ripe. Somehow the ripeness of the son results from the ripeness of the father. I think that the same possibility existed for Cordelia and Lear: if one had been ripe in regard to the other, the other might have been led to ripeness. Their tragic failure is a mutual one, as Edgar and Gloucester's success is mutual.

Ripeness is offered by Edgar to Gloucester as a comfort. It is a comforting idea because it is not an impossible one. Being ripe does not require being completely satisfied or completely happy. Ripeness is a comfort because it grows naturally out of our sorrows and our joys. In order to be ripe, we must simply endure. Endurance is not completely passive; it is quite possible to live through many joys and sorrows without being ripened by them. However, endurance is not an impossible demand at all. We must simply force ourselves to be aware of what is happening to us and force ourselves to respond naturally.

Ripeness is as much a result of our suffering as it is a comfort in the face of it. The less we experience, and the less fully we allow ourselves to experience the events in our lives, the less ripe we will grow. On the other hand, we can be shown the truth of our experience after it has happened, as Gloucester is. Ripeness depends upon time, but is not subservient to time. Although we cannot be ripe without experience, we can become ripe long after our experiences. There are many kinds of experience as well; if we look long and hard at the books we read, we can be tempered by our experience of them and grow more ripe because of them.

There are two ways to read "all" in "Ripeness is all". "All" may be some sort of limiting word, saying something like, "Ripeness is the only thing we can hope for. It is all we can achieve." Ripeness may be a statement of fulfillment and completion: "Ripeness is all we need to achieve. To be ripe is to be a complete human being." Both readings make sense without contradicting each other. Ripeness is all that a human being can hope to accomplish, and ripeness is the fulfillment of a human being. When we are ripe, we are complete.

I spoke at the start about my hope that my exploration of Edgar's words to his father would be useful to me in my own context as well as in the context of the play. I will not see how this exploration has changed or will until time has passed and the changes have happened. Ripeness is something I can hope for, but not strive for.

Rachel spent that summer in her mother's house in an attempt to learn about her mother and to face the circumstances of her own birth and of her mother's death. Rachel is my age, and she has much growing, learning, and experiencing before her. I am certain she will continue to endure bravely, and I respect her resolve.

I am still bitter toward my father, and he toward me. I do not know whether there will be ripeness between us, but I know that the way toward ripeness is endurance with integrity. I know that I will ripen if I do not resent, and if I can keep myself from being at odds with the situation and from denying it.

Five years have passed since the summer I spent with Rachel across the bay from my father. I have needed these years to sift through and begin to see clearly the things which happened then. Some things will always be foggy for me. The two

foggiest are Rachel's mother's death and my cousin Sam's death. What they endured, whether they were ripe, whether their decisions were informed by clear vision or by hopelessness, I will never know, and I have no way of finding out. I am certain though, that Rachel and I have hope of ripeness, in respect to those who have left us and to those who gave birth to us. We will endure, and we will grow ripe, and our ripeness will be enough.

To Molly in August 1986

David Walter

As if we know sin too well
We blind the eyes with darkness
And let benign fingers do the seeing;
Because fingers desire, above all,
     to feel what they see;
But eyes desire, above all,
     to see what they feel.

As if we know sin too well
We turn our backs toward it--
Like Perseus, tracing the translucent
Image of Medusa in the smooth, handpolished
Cavity of his inverted shield--
Because eyes,
     seeing, may turn desire to stone.

And I imagine my hand returning to the lamp--
Retracing its path in the just-darkness:
Wait, I want, for an instant to see
The obscured shape of ecstasy.

An Examination of Aristotelian Awareness

Fawn Trigg

"All men by nature desire understanding. A sign of this is their liking of sensation "(Metaphysics 980a 20).

This juxtaposition has always puzzled me. Why does the observation that we enjoy sensations illuminate the claim that we are of a certain nature, and that this nature is to want to understand? Aristotle examines the question of our nature as men not so much in the Metaphysics as in the third book of De Anima. The initial task of De Anima is to find what is common to all living things as living, to ask what it means to be alive.* In the third book Aristotle focuses his search on what is common to all men as men, to ask what it means to be a man. Since man alone has an intellect, and "intelligence, above all, is man," (Ethics 1178a 7), the question of what it means to be a man reads more specifically in De Anima as what it means to have an intellect. Aristotle examines this question using the method of inquiry set out at the beginning of the Physics (184a 17-21). He proceeds in De Anima from what is more known and clearer to us, sensing, but also common to animals, to what belongs only to men, knowing. Sensation's role in coming to know is brought to light by his search and so sheds some light on what it means to be knowing.

The stage is set for one of the comparisons between the simply animate and sentient souls in the last chapter of Book II. Aristotle had discussed sensation in terms of a general definition: sensation is the receiving of the forms of sensible objects without their matter (424a 18). In II.12 he asks what is the difference between our being warm in the sun and plants' being warm, since in both of these cases we could say a sensible form is received without its matter. To feel warm is different from being warmed, since in feeling warm we must sense, or be aware, that we are being warmed. The sentient soul is not only affected, but also senses that it is. In III.2 he asserts that "we sense the fact that we are seeing or hearing." (425b 12). The question for Aristotle is not "do we sense sensing?" but "what part of the sentient soul senses sensation?* But to "sense sensing" he tells us, has several meanings. While the ability to sense sensing is involved in the distinction between what it means to be an animal and what it means to be a plant, it is not clear what this awareness actually is.

This question remains. In III.4 Aristotle asserts, "the intellect is intelligi-

*If, indeed, there is something in common. The definition of the soul at 412b 4-6 takes the form of a conditional sentence: "If, then, there is something common to be said about every kind of soul, this would be: the first actuality of a natural body which has organs."

*A question for which he gives two answers: in De Anima III$_2$ ". . . so we should assume that this first sense [vision or hearing] senses itself." (425b 18) and in Sleeping and Waking "each sense possesses something which is special and which is common . . . special to vision, for example, is seeing . . . but there is a common power which accompanies them all, in virtue of which one senses that one is seeing or hearing." (455a 12ff).

ble," (430a 2), and only explains when the intellect can know knowing, which is "after it has become several of its objects." (429b 10). He mentions in the Metaphysics in what way we come to sense that we sense and know that we know: "knowledge and sensation are always of other objects and only incidentally of themselves." (1074b 35-36). It is not clear what this awareness is. Is this awareness of knowing vital to what it means to be a man as a man and not as an animal, as sentient awareness was vital in II.12 in distinguishing between an animal and a plant?

Just as Aristotle does not explicitly discuss awareness, he does not explicitly compare sensing sensing and knowing knowing. To find what sensing sensing and knowing knowing could be, to be able to compare them in the context of this question, we need first find out what kind of sensing and what kind of knowing Aristotle says we sense and know.

Sensing sensing and knowing knowing are mentioned in discussions focused on one kind of activity. This activity is the being at one of the objects of sense and knowledge with the faculties of sensation or knowing.* In II.2 after he asserts that we sense sensing, Aristotle discusses the activity of sensing: "The activity of the sensible object and the activity of sensation [of it] are one and the same." (425a 26). He makes a similar conclusion in III.4, before stating we can know knowing, that the "intellect becomes each intelligible object." (429b 6). Late in the chapter Aristotle explains that "the intellect is intelligible," (430a 2), by saying, "that which thinks and that which is being thought are the same." (430a 4).

This actuality of being at one rests on Aristotle's notion of the potentiality and actuality of the soul. The faculties of sensation and intellect exist in a state of potentiality (417a 7, 429a 23). The sensible object is a particular which exists apart from the soul; the knowable object is a universal which exists in the soul in some manner (417b 23). The potentially sensing faculty and the potentially knowing faculty are in some way similar to their objects and are affected by the activity of their objects (429a 17-18). The activity occurs in that which is changing from potentiality to actuality. The activity of the object is the activity of the faculty. They are one in that activity.

This change from the faculty existing potentially to becoming actual is a particular kind of change, because the faculty even while existing potentially is complete. So when actualized, it is not altered (431a 5-8). The faculty's change from potentially sensing to actually sensing is like the change a hammer undergoes when it is put to work. The hammer is not added to or subtracted from. The hammer is complete, but becomes actually a hammer, because it is at work being a pounder of nails. This kind of change is contrasted with the change of motion which "is the actuality of what is incomplete." (431a 7). The change involved in the pile of lumber in the process of being built into the house is a motion (Metaphysics 1066a 7).

The activity of being at one is the same for the sensing and knowing souls, except the different faculties apprehend different kinds of objects. Nonetheless, the objects are analogous, insofar as they are objects of which apprehension can never be false. Aristotle distinguishes two activities of the intellect, the forming of propositions which may be true or false, and the apprehension of indivisibles. The second is neither true nor false, except by equivocation. Apprehension of them would be true, non-apprehension would not be true, and neither could be otherwise (Metaphysics 1051b 22-26). Aristotle draws the comparison between this infallibility of the

*Because the intellect "must exist without being blended" (429a 19), and sense cannot, the faculty of sensation's being at one with an object entails the actualization of both an organ and a faculty, which are one in that actualization "numerically ... but the essence of each is different." (424a 25).

intellective soul and that of the sentient:

> An assertion, like an affirmation, is of something about something else and in every case it is true or false. But the intellect is not in every case of this sort. If it is a whatness with respect to essence, it is true, and is not something about something else; and just as seeing a proper sensible is true, whereas that the white thing is a man (or is not a man) is not always true. (430b 27-31)

Knowing is then like sensing when apprehending, for they are both identical with the object about which there can be no mistake.*

Then is knowing this kind of knowing similar to sensing this kind of sensing? Perhaps it is acceptable to begin with a tentative yes, since sensing and knowing are similar ways of being at one. The activity would have itself in activity as the object of its own activity. That is, the sentient and intellective souls can be self-aware.

There are problems with this account. Since the first and second activities can be simultaneous, how is it possible for the sentient or intellective faculty to be both the object of the faculty in its being at one and the faculty which is also aware of the object? Is this not demanding the faculty to be both one and two at the same time?

Aristotle considers and rejects the possibility that there is a second faculty which is aware of sensing. If a second faculty is required to sense the second, ad infinitum (425b 17-18). In rejecting this, Aristotle shows that he considers sentient and intellective awareness as, necessarily, self-awareness. If being aware of sensing and knowing were the only consideration, he could have ended the regression by positing a single faculty which could be aware of sensing and knowing, but not of itself.

The alternative is strange, that the sentient and intellective soul be necessarily both one and two at the same time. But Aristotle, in the same chapters in which he mentions awareness, discusses the discriminating faculty which also requires the soul to be both one and two at the same time. "The faculty which asserts difference must be one" (426b 20) and two for "it is impossible that the same faculty should be moved at the same time by contrary movements." (426b 24). The faculties of sensing and knowing could be of this same fundamental doubleness. Insofar as the faculty is at one with its object, it is one faculty; insofar as it is both the object and the faculty it is two. Without this doubleness, sensation would be nothing more than the receiving of the forms of sensible objects without their matter, and

*Perhaps the reason for their respective infallibility could be something like this:

We know "the intellect should be related to the object of thought in a manner similar to that in which a sense is related to its sensible object, (429a 17-18), and the faculty is actualized insofar as it is like the object in activity.

The sense faculty and direct sensibles are essentially blended with matter. Indirect sensible are essences of objects which are directly sensed. Since essence is not essentially material, although not separate or separable from material things, the apprehension of it by the essentially material faculty could be false.

Objects of the intellect are undivided or indivisible universals and immaterial, whether by abstraction or as "the dispositions and attributes of sensible objects." (432a 5). The intellect also exists as simple and unblended with matter. Affirmations and denials are not simple, so the assertion of these by a fundamentally simple faculty could be false.

there would be no difference between being warmed and feeling warmed, or between being animate and sentient. Is it possible for the sentient soul to be warmed and not feel warm; that is, is it necessary that the soul be aware of its activity?

Aristotle answers this directly in the case of the intellect: "whenever the intellect has become several of its objects. . . then it is capable (δύναται) of thinking of itself." (429b 5-10). Although Aristotle does not make the analogous statement for the sentient soul, it is not difficult to provide examples of sensing without being self-aware. City dwellers become oblivious to street noise, and are not aware of it until a snowfall when everything is quiet. I can be absorbed in a book and not hear my name called nearby. We are not necessarily knowing knowing when knowing and there seem examples of not sensing sensing when sensing. If awareness is not necessarily concomitant with apprehension, does the original understanding of what it means to be aware require broadening? Is actual apprehension even necessary for awareness?

The answer seems characteristically Aristotelian, for it seems both yes and no. Aristotle gives an example of awareness of the soul when not at one: when we do not see, it is by vision that we discern darkness (425b 22). The city dwellers are aware of the absence of noise. The intellective soul has analogous experiences: I know I do not know how to fix my car. I need not be successfully apprehending to be sentiently or intellectively self-aware. What could I be aware of when aware of non-apprehension?

Comparing these awarenesses of non-apprehension to unawareness of non-apprehension makes this clearer. An example of the latter is that I do not sense that I am not seeing ultraviolet light. Another is that I would not have known that I did not know about automotive mechanics if I had lived before there was such a thing as an automobile (and its internal mishaps). I would not have known that I did not know about automotive mechanics. I do not try to sense ultraviolet light and I would not have tried to know how to fix cars before there were such things. When I am aware that I do not see or do not know, I am aware of trying and failing. I try to see light; I do not; I call it darkness. I try to know how to fix the car; I do not; I call it ignorance. I must hold the actual seeing of the light and knowing of mechanics to be possible in order for me to try to see or know. To be aware of these attempts as failures, I must be aware of having actually sensed or actually known.

It is possible to be aware of having sensed or known, because after sensation a sense impression or image remains in the soul even after the object is gone (425b 25). After knowing, the soul possesses knowledge. The soul is a certain way after apprehension, which although different from its apprehending way, is not nothing. Actual apprehension is necessary for awareness, even the awareness of non-apprehension.

The soul seems to have two opportunities for awareness, primarily in its infallible apprehension of objects, and after that in its attempts and failures to apprehend. It is not necessary to be aware when apprehending, as the New Yorker is not necessarily aware of street noise; nor is it necessary to be aware of non-apprehending, as I am not aware of ultraviolet light. The soul's awareness of apprehending or not is only potential during these activities. In On Sleeping and Walking, this awareness is a "δύναμις . . .in virtue of which one perceives that one is seeing and hearing." (455a 12). This potential for awareness is in the soul's ability to be at one with an object. The actuality of this potential seems an activity and not a motion, for awareness is complete and an end in itself.*

*Speculation about awareness being an actuality seems to demand speculation on how it came to be in activity. The change from potentiality to actuality requires there be something in activity which effects the change, something actually aware. The burden

It also seems that the awareness of apprehending and of non-apprehending are dissimilar. The soul's awareness of being at one while being at one with an object is a different awareness from the Soul's awareness of not being at one with an object. Awareness of apprehension is an awareness of two separate potentialities as one actuality. Aristotle explains the activity this way:

> The activity of the sensible object and the activity of sensation [of it] are one and the same, but the essence of each is not the same. I mean, for example, that the actual sound and the actual hearing of it are one and the same, for a man may have hearing and not be hearing, and that which has sound is not always sounding. But when that which can hear and that which can sound is actually sounding, then the actual hearing and the actual sounding occur simultaneously, and one might say that these two are hearing and sounding respectively. (425b 22ff)

An awareness of this activity would be an awareness of two as actually one, of both hearing and sounding. The awareness of not being at one is an awareness "in a different manner." (425b 22). Not seeing or knowing is still an undivided whole, but in comparison to another whole, actually seeing or knowing. At stake in these different shades of awareness are different kinds of discrimination, for Aristotle seems to find the activity of awareness as the root of discrimination. The closeness of these activities is persuaded by the fundamental doubleness required of the soul for both of them, and by their ties in the text.

An awareness of having been at one already implies a distinction between two wholes. Aristotle begins III.2 asserting sensing sensing, then explains that "'to sense by vision' does not only have one meaning, for even when we do not see, it is by vision we discriminate darkness and light." (425b 21-22). "To sense by vision" can not only be awareness, but discrimination. These discriminations between two things, such as light and darkness, are called sentient discriminations. This discriminating faculty also "discriminates things not in the same genus, [white, sweet] in the same manner in which it discriminates contraries [darkness, light]." (431a 24). The faculty also discriminates mathematical magnitudes, which for Aristotle are only aspects of sensible objects considered separately (431b 13).

There is a second discriminating power which distinguishes between a magnitude and its essence (429b 10). This faculty, when presented with triangular things can discriminate their essence as triangular, and when presented with triangles can discriminate what it means to be a triangle. Immediately after the passage in III.4 which mentions knowing knowing, Aristotle discusses this kind of discrimination. It is again explained in III.7, with a prominent discussion of the identity of the faculty and object in activity.

This suggests that the second kind of discrimination, like the first, is related to awareness. In this case the awareness, which is of being at one with the object, is an awareness of a whole without comparison to other wholes. Since this activity is the simultaneous actuality of the two potentialities, it seems possible to be aware both of the sounding of the object and the hearing of the object, which although are numerically one are in essence two. In being aware in this way, the soul

of this actual activity seems to come to rest at the feet of the prime mover, who is nothing but knowing knowing. I do not know what it means to say such a thing, and I can only observe that this actuality which seems required is already present in Aristotle's system.

is aware of an object which differs with each particular sensation, and is aware of the faculty which remains the same. This is similar to the process of discrimination between a thing and its essence. The soul presented with specific things can come to find that by virtue of which a thing can be taken as undivided. For these particulars there is one universal, which is not separate from the particulars but numerically one with them. This is the universal "being one beside the many, which would be one and the same in all of them [particular sensations]." (Posterior Analytics 100a 7-8).*

While one of these discriminations is called sentient and the other is not, both must be rooted in sentient awareness. Since all knowledge has its origin in sensation, knowable objects must be found in particular sensations (432a 5). If discrimination is what finds these knowable objects in sensation, intellective apprehension cannot be prior to it.

The question-what is at stake in sensing sensing-then receives two answers. The first is the soul's awareness of itself as sentient, of itself as animal rather than plant. Sensation is not only liked for its own sake, as Aristotle observes further in the opening paragraph of the Metaphysics, but is necessary for understanding. This second answer is that sentient awareness is necessary for discrimination and so is necessary for finding knowable objects. Sensation's part in coming to know not only provides the particulars in which we find the knowable universals, but is the foundation for the discrimination for finding these universals.

Is the question, what is at stake in knowing knowing, in turn illuminated by sensing sensing? Is it, like the fundamental meaning of sensing sensing, the soul's awareness of itself as a knower? Is it again something which rests on this activity, the way discrimination does on sentient awareness?

The text supports both questions: "only after it [the intellect] has become several of its objects . . . does it have the potential to know itself." (429b 5-10). In the second question, knowing knowing would mean knowing what it means to know. After the intellect has become several of its objects, it has the potential to discriminate between these particular instances of knowing and the universal of what it means to know.

For the first question, knowing knowing would be similar to the most fundamental sensing sensing, and would mean knowing one's self as a knowing being. The intellect must become several of its objects, not in order to have fuel for discrimination, but to become fully developed. The beginning of the sentence from which the quotation was taken reads:

> Whenever the intellect has become several of its objects, in the sense in which we speak of a scientist when he is actually a scientist (and this occurs when a scientist can exercise his knowledge by himself . . .) (429b 5-8).

It may be the case that a scientist cannot think by himself as a scientist, and consequently cannot be a scientist until he has learned and can exercise several things about science. Knowing one's self as a knower could only be the result of knowing

*I have a speculation about the analogy which Aristotle uses to illustrate this in De Anima. The analogy is as a bent line is to a bent line when straightened out, so is sentient discrimination to intellective discrimination. (429b 18). The bent line, even as an object of abstraction, can have infinite permutations, since it could incline at an infinite number of different angles. There can be only one straight line. The unbending finds within each line, not somewhere else, what is the same for all bent lines, not the particular bend but the universal line.

several things, as being a scientist implies knowing more than one thing about science.

This second explanation would be similar to the fundamental sensing sensing, if this becoming of several objects were like the sentient soul's waking up. If being awake is the sentient soul's most fundamental way of being aware, then waking up could mean becoming aware. If knowing one's self as a knower is the most fundamental way of the intellective soul's being aware, then the apprehending of these several objects is the same becoming aware. These two explanations of a more fundamental and derivative awareness are not exclusive; nothing prevents being aware of being a knower and also being aware of what it means to know.

If one of Aristotle's aims in Book III of De Anima is to ask of the intellective soul something similar to what he asks of the soul in general, he is looking for something common to all men insofar as they are men. The answer he may give is that we are men because of our intellects, but just to have an intellect is as good as being asleep.* We are awake when we know ourselves as knowers. Aristotle tells us in the Ethics that the intellect is man, and "it would seem strange if a man did not choose the life proper to himself but that proper to another." (1178a 4). This is not Aristotle's exhortation on the best life to live, but his examination of what a life for man means.

*"A man who sleeps all his life lives like a plant." (Ethics 1176a 35).

The Steeds of Hippolytos

Andrew Grablewski

The play Hippolytos by Euripides can be seen to have at its core a fundamental concern with the struggle between humanity and certain natural forces. Nature is such an important element in Hippolytos that at times the play seems to overflow with it. The imagery used is one of animals: bulls, birds, bees, and horses. We are presented with meadows, flowers and oceans. Even the gods who appear in the play seem at times to be more representative of nature's powers than of divine will. Nature's powers are the principles of creations and destruction with indifference to human concerns. What seems to emerge gradually in the play is a theory about the nature of the universe. This is what is really at stake in the play. Euripides, like Plato in the Timaeus, and Lucretius in De Rerum Natura, tries to present us with a sort of system to describe the way things work. The system is revealed through the actions of the characters, and the characters are to be judged by the extent to which they understand the essence of nature. In contrast to the other systems, however, man is in conflict with nature. The three major characters in the play are defeated, humbled, and at last destroyed by nature. At the end, however, man uses what is essential to his being to shout down the power of the gods and to triumph over the forces of nature which at first appeared inopposable.

Hippolytos is the most important character in the play. There are several reasons why this is so. It is a flaw in his personality which produces the conflict of the play. His scorn for the love of women and physical passion offends the goddess Aphrodite who induces in Phaidra, his stepmother, an insatiable passion for him. His decision to reject Phaidra's passion as communicated by her nurse leads her to suicide and a false charge of rape. Finally, in his death and reconciliation with Theseus, the play is resolved in some sense with the satisfaction of the goddess in her revenge. The character of Hippolytos is problematic. As the audience of the play, we are made to feel somewhat ambivalent towards him. However, he has in his favor many of the qualities admired in the philosophical dialogues. He appears to be a man of reason. He shuns the pleasures of the body and favors companionship with Artemis, goddess of the hunt, and the society of other virtuous men. Throughout the play, his actions at least are indisputably just, and he attempts to solve his problems through reason and persuasion. On the other hand, his dislike of women and his scorn for love do not seem like admirable qualities. In this sense his character appears unbalanced. His love of sophrosune is clearly more a love for the quality of chastity than a love for the other sense of the word as a quality of moderation and balance. Most of us prefer to see Phaidra as the sympathetic character of the play.

To me, however, Hippolytos is the sympathetic, tragic, and finally heroic figure. His flaw is not so much an imbalance as total ignorance of the laws of nature around him and within himself. He maintains this ignorance up to the end of his life. In dying, not only does he refuse to succumb to the will of the gods, but he also achieves a victory for humanity by showing the value of virtue. Phaidra, too, escapes nature, but her legacy is one of deceit and evil.

Hippolytos' ignorance of the character of nature, or more properly his misunderstanding of it, is revealed in his first speech as he dedicates a wreath to Artemis:

> I have brought you this green crown,
> goddess, fresh from the scene
> where I spliced its flowers together
> a meadow as virginal as you are,
> where no shepherd would think it wise
> to pasture his animals, a perfect field
> no iron blade has yet cut down.
> Only the bees looking for flowers in spring
> go freely through its cut grass.[1]

This passage shows his great misunderstanding. He sees the beauty of nature, but he attributes something to it which is other than its nature, that is, the human virtue of chastity. Hippolytos fails to see the bees as agents of procreation. Instead, he sees himself as being similar to an insect, attributing a quality to it which it doesn't have. Shortly after this passage he makes another revealing statement. When asked if the gods are pleased by genial souls he answers with total confidence, Yes,

> if gods and humans
> share the same inner logic.[2]

In his close companionship with Artemis, he has a false idea of both the nature of god and of man. He thinks himself above what is congruent with the nature of humanity, while assuming the gods to value human virtues. However in the universe created by Euripides, virtue is clearly a quality that has value for man alone. The gods enjoy the worship of humans and feel their slights, but to carry out their will they are just as ready to sacrifice the just as the unjust. Aphrodite states,

> That Phaidra dies
> I regret, but not so much that I
> would relinquish this great chance
> to strike my enemy.[3]

Hippolytos does not scorn the goddess completely, but he worships her distantly without emotion. To men this type of intellectual deference to the power of god may appear sufficient, but it is totally foreign to the nature of the gods who are satisfied only with,

> payment in the god's coin.[4]

Therefore, Hippolytos' nature is one of virtue. However, he assumes that what he considers virtue has a worth in the external world. He seems himself as approximating the divine through his virtue, when in fact he is virtuous only in so far as he is human. In Plato's Timaeus, it seems evident that the qualities of virtue and beauty exist externally. He seems to assume that the universe must reflect virtue and moderation, since these are the best qualities. But perhaps it is just as erroneous on Plato's part to assume that these qualities have any relation to nature at all. He assumes that these qualities are part of the nature of man which we use to order the universe rather than universal principles which man must strive to partake of in order to reach his highest state. Ironically, it is just the best part of Hippolytos' nature which brings about his doom. For it seems that his objection to the offer made by Phaidra's nurse is solely due to the shame of it being from a relative, as well as being crime against a man whom Hippolytos clearly loves and has every reason to admire. It is not due to an unnatural hatred of women, even though he expresses such a hatred in reaction to the offer. His refusal is clearly an act

of virtue. He in fact could not act otherwise, since his nature is that of virtue. So in his refusal, his artificial nature, which is virtue, triumphs over his bestial nature. His virtue seems artificial because it seems cultivated and due to the fact that he is a rational man, but this nature need not be thought of as inferior to other natures. In fact his nature, like an unstoppable flood, forces his actions as the natures of the other characters force them into action. He cannot even violate his nature to save his life.

> Here I am, revering you, gods,
> and yet it's you forcing my ruin.[5]

The tragedy of Hippolytos is that he assumes that his virtuous and rational nature will somehow save him from destruction. This does not happen because once again his view of the universal system is other than its reality. He overlooks the irrational and unjust side of nature as he had earlier refused to see its element of sexuality. Theseus, upon returning home and finding his wife dead with a suicide note accusing Hippolytos of rape, is driven by his own nature for revenge. Hippolytos pleads for law and justice:

> At least
> won't you let time lay the facts
> before you in my behalf?
> Time is our only incorruptible witness.[6]

Law and justice are perhaps the only two things that could restrain the wild onrush of human nature, however imperfectly. But in Hippolytos these do not seem to play any part in the universe as a whole or in the state. Theseus refuses even to address him in the second person; much less is he prepared to listen to Hippolytos argue his innocence. Hippolytos is heroic in his persistence. His nature will not allow him to abandon hope that reason will vindicate him, as it will not allow him to save himself by betraying his oath to the nurse. His arguments have great credibility. At the end however, not even unreasonable arguments can save him.

> If only this calm intimate house
> could speak for me and say fairly
> if there's anything vile in my blood.[7]

In effect, Hippolytos calls upon the mute to persuade the deaf, since Theseus' conclusion was reached beforehand and cannot be altered by persuasion. As Hippolytos is banished, the chorus grieves,

> When we imagine ourselves in the god's care,
> our troubled souls are immensely reassured.
> But when deep inside us we struggle to make
> rational sense of our lives
> frustration strikes from all the erratic
> crisscrossing paths of reality:
> man's life is volatile; it will not run clear
> and reveal its essence. [8]

By the failure of virtue and reason to withstand the blind force of Theseus' nature, the just man is forced out and injustice and irrationality are victorious. If these forces are supreme, the nature of the universe has been revealed. It is not as in

the Timaeus, characterized by reason, justice, and harmony, but by their opposites: randomness, disorder and irrationality. Faced with such a universe, man has two options. Either we put our trust in god or surrender to the random forces of nature. Neither choice allows us free will. Either we are dominated by the whims of the gods or by the chance outcome of blind fate. Either way, as long as we live, we are driven by the forces of nature to our final end. The course of our lives cannot be determined or revealed by reason.

In this play, Hippolytos is doomed by chance and nature. It is hard to see what actions, if any, could have saved him from ultimate destruction. He is destroyed by his nature which will not allow him to do an unjust act, and by chance external forces. It can be argued that he is somewhat to blame because of his slighting of the goddess, but her actions seem extreme and arbitrary. At the end of the play, he is destroyed by nature in a literal sense when he is dragged by his horses after they are frightened by the bull of Poseidon. Even at this point, he is convinced of the rational order of nature. He calls out pathetically to his team,

> Stop! You mares,.. you were my children!
> Stop! Don't kill me![9]

Does he imagine that even they are capable of being persuaded? Or does he endow them with the human property of gratitude? And what of the fact that he looks upon them as his children? Once again his view of nature is totally different from reality. He sees his horses as humans just as he confounds his own nature with that of the gods. He cannot see nature at large as being other than his own nature. He cannot imagine a universe in which the causes of actions are so obscure as to be either incomprehensible or nonexistent. He cannot imagine that the virtuous are to suffer along with, or even instead of, the unvirtuous.

> Well, I see my death-it's ineluctable,
> it's downhill, and it's black.
> All the good I did men through
> the love of god evaporates now.
> It adds up to nothing...
> Why me? I have not done one wrong
> act in my whole life.[10]

Only in his last moments does he come to some realization of the external powers which have destroyed him.

> I wish we men could curse god's-
> curse and destroy those killers from our graves.[11]

His impotent rage and threats reveal that he still retains his distorted view of his nature, as if the eternal gods could be destroyed by a dying man's wish. To even consider the possibility of such a thing coming to pass is ludicrous.

In contrast to Hippolytos is the character of Phaidra. Phaidra seems to realize from the beginning that the only way to defeat the passion in her nature and preserve her honor is for her to destroy herself. She is aware of

> a compulsion that's been misery
> for the women of my clan.[12]

which is her mother's passion for a bull and her sister's for Dionysios. She is equally aware of the same elements in her own nature which compel her towards forbid-

den love.

Phaidra knows her nature; her only problem is to decide whether to indulge it and remain alive, or die and preserve her reputation for virtue. Her nurse takes the position that total virtue is unobtainable. The forces that compel us forward are too powerful to resist.

> To spend your life in a neurotic drive
> for perfection is simply not worth it.
> Look at the roof of your own house.
> Is there a single timber not slightly askew?
> As a roof it's a great success.
> Sexual passion is a big rough sea
> and not something you, especially
> your frail majesty can swim through.
> The best that you, like any person, can hope for in
> life, is a little more good luck than bad.
> It's high time Phaidra, to drop your crazy talk of suicide.
> No more conceit, for it's ungodly conceit
> to imagine you can win, when you fight
> the powers who control your whole being.[13]

But the nurse's plan ends in disaster because she fails to recognize that along with the irrational driving forces that exist in the natures of most people, there is an opposite force that compels them towards virtue, or at least toward making an effort to protect their reputations. The nurse fails to recognize this trait in Hippolytos which will prohibit his accepting her offer. She also fails to recognize that Phaidra has this trait as well. Phaidra cannot endure even one person knowing the secret of her true nature, even if that person is bound by oath to keep silent. The nurse is as ignorant of this aspect of human nature as Hippolytos is of the other irrational side. Phaidra is the only character in the play who has an idea of both. Phaidra realizes that the only outcome of the conflict between the two forces in her nature is her death.

> The death will frighten me.
> On this day, gone from my life,
> I will at last delight you, Aphrodite.[14]

Only now, the forces in her nature demand that Hippolytos also die to preserve her secret and her children's future.

In Hippolytos, we are presented with a universe in which man is bowed by awesome forces beyond his understanding. But the one aspect of man's nature that allows his freedom is his mortality. Death, like nature, pervades the play, touching all the characters. It is always seen as a force for the liberation of humanity. By death man may somehow transcend nature and destiny. As the chorus says,

> It would be good to arrive in the mountains,
> poised in a secret recess on the rock face-
> a god there might give me an airborne lightness,
> make me a bird amoung the other high floating creatures;
>
> My flight will at last touch down on the
> Hesperian shore, that gentle garden where apples thrive
> and girls sing.[15]

This is clearly a wish for death. Theseus' description of Phaidra's death is very similar:

> I feel your life as vanishing
> from my cradling hands,
> leaping like a pulse of feathers,
> a bird alighting in the underworld.[16]

In both, the dead soul is compared to a bird flying in freedom from the forces of nature. And Artemis comforts Hippolytos as he dies:

> Get wings, fly off into a bird's safe life,
> to keep your feet from miring
> in this polluted anguish.
> There are no men
> who would ask you to share their lives.[17]

Death is the one quality that seems to separate mortals completely from the gods. Death is so alien to the nature of the gods that they are unable to bear even watching the death of a mortal.

In the universe of the Hippolytos, death is the only means by which the guilty are punished. Artemis cannot save the life of Hippolytos; she can only promise the satisfaction of revenge by bringing death to a favorite of Aphrodite.

Even though Hippolytos has lost his life, his death is his triumph over the forces which resulted in his destruction. For by his death we gain the realization that, though we are slaves to chance and nature, their hold over us is only for a finite amount of time. By posthumosly granting Hippolytos the status of hero, Artemis has vindicated his belief in virtue. Virtue is transformed to an external quality by the eternal honor paid to Hippolytos. In the sense that virtue continues to be honored among men, it ceases to be only a part of his individual nature and becomes the common property of all. Hippolytos' death not only results in the restoration of harmony in his family, but in a new sense of order in the world. Man no longer seems helpless in the face of the gods. Virtue has triumphed even in an irrational universe. The gods are exposed for what they are.

> Athens, you will have your splendor, but never again
> the splendor of this man you lose.
> Aphrodite, I have not heart for your graces.
> I remember only your savagery.[18]

All notes refer to the Robert Bagg Translation in the series of New Greek Tragedy in Modern Translations

1 112-121
2 153-154
3 29-83
4 176
5 1648-1649
6 1626-1629
7 1675-1677
8 1728-1735
9 1889-1890
10 2069-2092
11 2138-2139
12 525-526
13 721-736
14 1108-1110
15 1120-1137
16 1164-1167
17 1960-1964
18 2205-2208

On Reading W.H. Auden's *After Reading A Child's Guide To Modern Physics.* Too Late For Him To Answer

James Beall

You should have known that metaphors are zoos
used to cage the animals of creation.
Instead, we find confused in you
a faint nebulosity of irritation.

Caged, each moves within the finite
knots of a path--no one to lead us.
Here and there, vague symbols unite
or sprout in air as if to feed us.

If somewhere rings some law or regularity
stroking a vast sweep of remnant star
to make it sing, we might not see
it true as our own heat. Yet are

these laws not metaphors for lust?
Created in the furnace of our brains
they come to light and whirl us. In their dust,
contrite and incubating, we have lain.

Cycadia

James Beall

Cycadia, these the same
low boil into the building hiss
rising unto the jet's wail.
It the same, hence years will make

no difference. The heat encompassed
in its vail of air gathers us
like love's holding loose and slick.
Our bodies, then, are our bodies,

and love the metaphor for air.
But if insubstantial, still if fluid
yet the holding forms a strange
and cyclic music, movements remnant

of a former self, used,
translucent beneath trees.