DOCTORAL DISSERTATION SERIES

PUBLICATION: 5730

AUTHOR: Robert Gordon Shedd, Ph. D., 1953
University of Michigan

TITLE: THE MEASURE FOR MEASURE OF SHAKESPEARE'S 1604 AUDIENCE

University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1953

THE

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

OF

SHAKESPEARE'S 1604 AUDIENCE

by
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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the
University of Michigan
1953

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by Robert G. Shedd

This study has three purposes: (a) to reexamine the alleged facts concerning the play in order to separate the facts from critical opinions which pass for facts; (b) to set the play against its 1603-4 background to determine what topical values it may have held for its earliest known auditory; and (c) to relate Shakespeare's treatment of his sources to the 1603-4 background in order to discover what Shakespeare may have intended the play to mean for his 1604 audiences.

Part One establishes the framework of facts within which studies of the play should be pursued. Considered first are the relationships between scholarship and the two major traditions in the history of the criticism on the play: (1) the older view that it is an artistic failure reflecting Shakespeare's bitter disgust, and (2) the newer view that it is flawless and shows Shakespeare affirming his faith in Christian values. Reexamination of the Revels Accounts and the First Folio text reveals that the play has gained an undeserved reputation: it must have been deemed suitable for opening the 1604/5 Christmas Revels, and the text is sound and shows careful preparation for publication. Stylistic analysis reveals the play as Shakespeare's throughout. Generic analysis reveals it is unmistakably a comedy.

Part Two briefly surveys earlier attempts to uncover the topical values of the play. With few exceptions, they are found wanting because they reflect dangerous assumptions concerning Shakespeare's artistic development, the nature of the 'Jacobean Age,' and English attitudes toward James I. The events of 1603 and early 1604 are reconstructed: the peaceful accession of King James, the 1603 London plague, the prospects for peace abroad, and the new ruler's unprecedented and carefully staged display of clemency at Winchester on 9 December, 1603. These events bear significantly on the way Measure for Measure would have been received in 1604.

Part Three questions the older source-studies on this play. Scholars who have accepted the play as a cynical reflection of Shakespeare "In the Depths" have over-emphasized Shakespeare's debts to his sources at the expense of his departures. His most important deviation is his expansion of the overlord, a minor figure in his sources, into the fifth largest part in the Shakespeare canon. All of Shakespeare's alterations suggest he wrote the play with his audiences' interest in Equity and Clemency uppermost in his mind. Three other plays acted in London in 1604 are examined for reflections of similar preoccupations: Rowley's When You See Me You Know Me, Marston's The Malcontent, and the revived The Merchant of Venice.

The conclusions proceed from the fact that Measure for Measure mirrors the events of 1603-4 and a heightened popular interest in the conflict between Justice and Mercy as dramatized by James I in the first acts of his reign. In 1604 audiences would have related the dramatic pattern of the play to their own recent experiences and, thus, would not have regarded it as bitter or unduly melodramatic in its contrivances.

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PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

MEASURE FOR MEASURE — "THE PLAY ITSELF"

At this moment in the history of Shakespearean criticism, a remarkable change is taking place in the interpretation and evaluation of Measure for Measure. On the face of it, there is good reason to wonder if this play which was once — and with an impressive unanimity — regarded as 'disgusting,' 'bitter,' 'sourly cynical,' and 'one of Shakespeare's few artistic failures' can possibly be the same play now being hailed — and with a growing unanimity — as 'one of the very greatest of the plays, and most consummate and convincing of Shakespeare's achievements,' 'far from being rotten...sound to the core and profoundly Christian in spirit,' and even a demonstration that 'when he [Shakespeare] put his mind to it, he could produce a more coherent, a more independent, and in the last analysis, a more Christian piece of thinking on the subject [of equity and forgiveness] than nine out

of ten professional Renaissance theologians.'[1] Although such a radical shift in literary judgment is hardly without its many precedents and parallels, it is always sobering — when it is not merely mystifying — to chart such a revolution in critical taste. The effect in this instance is to caution oneself that the present spate of appreciative criticism may be viewed a hundred years hence with the same incredulity which marks our present response to the great body of unfriendly criticism Measure for Measure evoked during the nineteenth century.

The first fact we should list is, then, that the play now has demonstrated a notable capacity for evoking conflicting and sometimes antithetical interpretations. Without for the moment considering whether this fact is properly to be regarded as a fact about Measure for Measure or simply an unedifying commentary on the caprices of Shakespearean scholars and critics, we are entitled to accept as typical the following statements of the play's reputation:

> If there is any play, outside of Hamlet, that bristles with more problems than Measure for Measure, it is not known to Shakespeare criticism[2]
>
> It is probably true to say that Measure for Measure is that play of Shakespeare's which has

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[1] The negative (or 'older') view can be found in most standard works on Shakespeare — no source-citations seem necessary. The extolling (or 'new') view is illustrated with statements from three comparatively recent critics: F. R. Leavis (1942), C. J. Sisson (1934), and Elizabeth Marie Pope (1949).

[2] Robert M. Smith, "Interpretations of Measure for Measure," SQ, I (October, 1950), 208.

> caused most readers the greatest sense of strain and mental discomfort.[1]

> Many honest readers of Shakespeare quite frankly resent the very existence of Measure for Measure.[2]

How does such a reputation come into being? O. J. Campbell blames the play itself:

> ...a play that to Coleridge was merely disgusting, a hundred years later seems to R. W. Chambers a work full of the holy passion that is the essential spirit of Christianity. No revolution in taste could be more complete. It is obvious that such critical contradictions...must reflect contradiction in the play itself.[3]

Perhaps, however, there is as much justice in Professor Parrott's suggestion:

> There must be something wrong with the play, it is affirmed, since critics so violently disagree upon the action, the conclusion, and the chief characters. It might be suggested that there is something wrong with the critics.[4]

In all events, even the most casual inspection of the history of the criticism of Measure for Measure will confirm the suspicion that the time is at hand when we must try to look again at the play itself. Immediately,

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1 L. C. Knights, "The Ambiguity of Measure for Measure," Scrutiny, X (January, 1942); reprinted in The Importance of Scrutiny (edited by Eric Bentley), (1948), 141-150, from page 141 of which this quotation is drawn.

2 E. K. Chambers, Shakespeare: A Survey (1925), 208.

3 Shakespeare's Satire (1943), 123.

4 Shakespearean Comedy (1949), 356. Parrott's suggestion, apart from its shock value as a frank statement of a critical dilemma, has little value for one who would like to discover the ultimate truths about Measure for Measure. A helpful procedure to follow when confronted with the kind of extensive disagreements which Parrott surveys in his consideration of Measure for Measure is to ignore the critics and to reread the play.

however, the question arises, What is 'the play itself'? The play Shakespeare wrote — or wanted to write? The play Shakespeare's audiences saw — or thought they saw? The play — with all its alleged textual flaws — that occupies pages 61-84 of the First Folio as the fourth printed comedy? The play studied — with conflicting results — by scores of well-intentioned scholars during the past 250 years? The play which modern Shakespearean actors have occasionally revived — with varying, though most frequently unhappy, results — to confound the arm-chair critics by being immeasurably better or disappointingly poorer than their meticulously conceived excursions had led them to expect? 'The play itself' turns out to be the Measure for Measures created by anyone who has ever read, acted in, directed, or witnessed a performance of — 'the play itself.' No single study could, without becoming unmanageably long or unbearably prophetic, accommodate, reconcile, or anticipate all the opinions which the printed matter bearing the title, Measure for Measure, in the First Folio has already evoked, is still evoking, and will doubtlessly continue to evoke. It is significant in this respect that we are as yet without a Variorum of the play.[1]

The Measure for Measure which lies at the center of this study, the particular 'play itself,' is first and last the First Folio Measure for Measure. This is not, however, to say that I have not interested myself in any

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1 Professor Mark Eccles of the University of Wisconsin has the unenviable task of preparing this badly-needed volume.

other particular Measure for Measure, for in point of fact I have written about the Measure for Measure of a popular and courtly audience in 1604, about the Measure for Measure which appears to have resulted from Shakespeare's familiarity with an older play, and about the Measure for Measure which reflects significant changes in direction of Shakespeare's successful fellow writers of comedy. This initial emphasis and insistence on the First Folio Measure for Measure as the object of this study grows out of my determination that the half-truths and inaccuracies to be found in most of the standard editions of Shakespeare must now be checked against the original text.

The play I should most like to study is the Measure for Measure Shakespeare intended to write.[1] But

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1 Warren and Wellek (Theory of Literature, p.34) illustrate the paradoxical nature of any attempt to consider 'intention':

> If we should really be able to reconstruct the meaning which Hamlet held for its contemporary audience, we would merely impoverish it. We would suppress the legitimate meanings which later generations found in Hamlet. We would bar the possibility of a new interpretation. This is not a plea for arbitrary subjective misreadings: the problem of a distinction between "correct" and wrong-headed readings will remain, and will need a solution in every specific case. The historical scholar will not be satisfied to judge a work of art merely from the point of view of our own time — a privilege of the practicing critic, who will revaluate the past in terms of the needs of a present-day style or movement. It may be even instructive for him to look at a work of art from the point of view of a third time, contemporaneous neither with him nor with the author, or to survey the whole history of the interpretation and criticism of a work which will serve as a guide to the total meaning.

we lack the reliable evidence necessary before we can even begin to consider the Measure for Measure Shakespeare intended to write. Because, for example, we do not know when Shakespeare wrote the play, reconstructions of Shakespeare's intentions have varied according to the critics' assumptions that the play was written early or late in his writing career, at one sitting or over a considerable period of time, when he was relatively serene or relatively unhappy, before or after another play 'like' or 'unlike' Measure for Measure. When we come to consider the 'enduring' play, another Measure for Measure about which we should like to learn all that we can, we are similarly confounded. Keen critical minds have, as we have already noted, advanced contradictory claims: Romantic and not-so-Romantic nineteenth century critics who labored hard in the vineyard to prove Shakespeare never erred, threw up their hands in dismay when they came to Measure for Measure and tough-minded twentieth-century realist critics who otherwise show no hesitation in accepting the Jonsonian claim that Shakespeare wrote too fast, have elevated Measure for Measure to the stature of a Shakespearean Divine Comedy. Parrott's common-sense suggestion that there must be something 'wrong' with the critics is indeed seductive if one is inclined to regard all other Shakespearean students as imperceptive or deluded. If one is not so inclined

one is forced back to Campbell's view that the play itself is not crystal clear or susceptible of definitive analysis. The Measure for Measure on which I propose to concentrate is not then primarily the toy which, for almost three centuries, has been tossed back and forth between the critics and scholars until it bears the imprint of their virtues and defects. However, honesty compels me to admit that, if this protean Measure for Measure were not in existence, it would be more difficult to justify the present study of the Measure for Measure of Shakespeare's 1604 Audiences.

Too many modern estimates of the play depend on what seems to me the unwarrantable view that Shakespeare stood in some inimical relation to his audiences which entitles us to ignore the play as having been written to be understood by his audiences. The play an author writes is not, of course, necessarily the play his audiences see, but in a theater such as the one for which Shakespeare wrote it would seem that we can depend on a greater degree of rapport between author and audience than we might otherwise be entitled to assume. The Arden editor, H. C. Hart, wrote that Measure for Measure "can never have been popular upon the stage."[1] Robert Bridges blamed Shakespeare's failure in the play

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1 Arden edition (1905, 1925), xi.

on the concessions he made to his audiences' tastes.[1] Both views would be correct, of course, for not infrequently writers have improperly measured popular tastes and failed notably in what they were most exercised to provide. There is, however, no good evidence for either view: both Bridges and Hart accepted the nineteenth century 'artistic failure' evaluation of the play and assumed that it had always been a play which no audience could enjoy. The difference between the two views is ultimately to be traced to the assumptions concerning Shakespeare's audience on which Hart and Bridges rested. Hart was, I think, imputing too much in the way of delicate sensibilities to those audiences; Bridges, on the other hand, was not imputing enough. They were, in short, talking about two quite different Measure for Measures despite the fact that they were both talking about the nineteenth-century 'unpleasant' Measure for Measure.

In the following pages I will rely on Harbage's definition of Shakespeare's popular audiences as "a large and receptive assemblage of men and women of all ages and of all classes" which "as a whole understood and appreciated what it bought and approved," and,

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1 "The Influence of the Audience on Shakespeare's Drama," The Works of William Shakespeare (Shakespeare Head Press ed.), X; widely reprinted later, this essay was first published in 1907.

finally, that these audiences "must be given much of the credit for the greatness of Shakespeare's plays."[1] In short, Shakespeare's audience is conceived to be a group of people *at* and *for* whom Shakespeare wrote. He was not concerned to write *above* them or *down* to them. His great success in reaching them cannot be lightly set aside if we recall his capacity to reach later generations.

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1 *Shakespeare's Audience* (1941), 158 ff.

The objection may be raised that too much credit is given the audience for its part in the creation of *Measure for Measure*. It is a valid objection and one of which I have been constantly aware. I should emphasize here that Shakespeare's part in the creation of the play is what ultimately I have sought to uncover and that only the paucity of reliable evidence has forced me to approach him through his audiences.

PART ONE

CHAPTER TWO
THE REVELS ACCOUNTS
AND
THE 1604 PRODUCTION OF MEASURE FOR MEASURE

One may wonder why I have so narrowed my problem as to concentrate on Shakespeare's Audiences in the single year, 1604. There are several reasons: it is convenient to concentrate on the events of a short period; there are strong presumptions in favor of believing Shakespeare wrote the play in 1603 or 1604; historical changes of great moment make it possible to offer a definition of a 1604 audience. The most important reason, however, is that we know from the 1604-5 Revels Account that Measure for Measure had an audience in 1604. If one were to be completely scrupulous in defining this 1604 audience on the basis of existing evidence, one would be compelled to confine himself to the group of people, including probably King James and Queen Anne, gathered in the 'Hall' at Whitehall for

the play 'Caled Mesur for Mesur' by the poet 'Shaxberd' on St. Stephen's Night, 26 December, 1604.[1] However, I shall use the term, Shakespeare's Audiences of 1604, to include both this Whitehall audience and the audiences in attendance at the Globe in 1604.

The entry in the Revels Accounts provides us with our only glimpse of the play before the Stationers' Register entry of 8 November, 1623 and the First Folio. Granted the assumption that the First Folio Measure for Measure is substantially the same Measure for Measure witnessed at Whitehall on 26 December 1604, the Revels Account entry gives us our terminus ad quem for dating purposes. Most editors of the play extract the particular entry concerning this play from its context with the unfortunate result that many critics have assumed it was the only play or the first play presented at Court during the 1604/5 Christmas Revels. The entire Revels Account provides a valuable insight into dramatic performances at Court during a festive season and casts a significant light on the prominence of Measure for Measure at that time. To avoid creating the same misleading impression fostered by the play's

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1 The Revels Account was long under suspicion as another Collier forgery. The case for its authenticity is summarized in E.K. Chambers, Eliz. Stage, IV, 137-41, and supplemented in William Shakespeare, II, 330-1.

editors, I have abstracted the entire account:

REVELS ACCOUNTS[1]

The Players	1604	'The Poets which made the plays'
King's	Hallowmas Day (1 November) in the 'Banketinge house' at Whitehall - 'The Moor of Venis'	
King's	The Sunday following - The Merry Wives of Windsor	
King's	St. Stephen's Night - in the 'Hall' 'A Play caled Mesur for Mesur'	'Shaxberd'
King's	Innocents Night (28 December) 'The Plaie of Errors'	'Shaxberd'
Queen's	Sunday following - 'How to Larne of a woman to wooe'	'Hewood'
Boys of the Chapel	New Year's Night - All Fools	George Chapman
King's	Between New Year's Day and Twelfth Day - Love's Labor's Lost	
King's	7 January - Henry V	
King's	8 January - Every Man out..	
King's	Candlemas (2 February) - Every Man in..	
	'The Sunday ffollowing A playe provided and discharged'	
King's	Shrove Sunday - The Merchant of Venice	'Shaxberd'
King's	Shrove Monday - 'A Tragidye of The Spanishe Maz'	
King's	Shrove Tuesday - 'A play cauled the Martchant of Venis againe comanded By the Kings Matie'	'Shaxberd'

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1 Abstracted from Eliz. Stage, IV, 171-2, where the Revels Accounts are reprinted parallel with the corresponding accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber.

Before considering the inferences we are entitled to draw from this account, I shall have to digress long enough to consider the problem posed by the way moderns are predisposed to treat anything which relates to King James and his Court. The matter will occupy our attention at greater lengths in Part Two, but in this attempt to establish the facts about Measure for Measure, the problem must be briefly faced. James I has a bad reputation with modern writers; to some extent this ill repute is clearly warranted by existing evidence. The significance of this in the development of the criticism of Measure for Measure is that much criticism has been seriously and unnecessarily marred by unquestioning acceptance of the Macaulay James I. The bad reputation of the King has now somehow become involved with the 'unpleasantness' of the play. In this century, however, rescue-operations on James I have proceeded apace with the emergence of the 'Christian' Measure for Measure — doubtless the two developments are significantly related. In all events, caution must be exercised in our thinking about James I and a twentieth-century "good king" James should replace the nineteenth-century "unpleasant" James. There is something to be said in favor of both conceptions, but this study involves the 1604 James I, the 'good' ruler who has emerged in this century. We have heard too

much about the great number of knights James created and the private vices of James and some of his favorites with the result that it is easy to slip into the habit of envisioning a Jacobean court audience as little more than a boisterous herd of vicious Johnnies-come-lately for whom Shakespeare would have had nothing but contempt. In point of fact, however, whatever Shakespeare may have come to feel about James after the ruler's less attractive qualities become more clearly manifest, in 1603 and 1604 he had good reasons to be kindly disposed toward Elizabeth's successor. If it could be proved that Measure for Measure was written expressly for James I, there would be no significant grounds for doubt that Shakespeare devoted his best energies to the task.[1]

It will, then, be well to begin a detailed examination of the 1604/5 Revels Book entries with the 'good' James I, the twentieth-century historical construct, and

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1 The conjecture that King James may have been Shakespeare's model for Duke Vincentio was first committed to print by George Chalmers (in A Supplemental Apology for the Believers in the Shakspeare-Papers, London, 1799, 404 ff.):

> The commentators seem not to have remarked, that the character of the Duke, is a very accurate delineation of that of King James, which Shakespeare appears to have caught, with great felicity, and to have sketched, with much truth. ...The obscurity, and the uncouthness, of this speech [Act I, Scene 1, 1-22], are partly owing to the purposed affectation of the poet; but still more to the blunders of the transcribers. Knowing that King James's writings...had been, emulously, republished, in 1603, by the London booksellers, in many editions, Shakspeare could not fitly give a closer parody. With such a key to the real purpose of the poet, this declamation on the "properties of government" must appear, at once, appropriate and humourous.

Strict censorship renders the suggestion of parody inadmissible, of course.

a non-dissolute court[1] in mind. Looking at all the plays mentioned there, one is struck by the preponderance of light entertainment. Although it was the special responsibility of the Master of the Revels to select the plays for Court performances, it would appear that his choices were largely determined by what the players had been playing for popular audiences. It is on this that I base my assumption that Measure for Measure had been presented at the Globe during the 1604 season.

The 1604/5 Court Performances were, with only two exceptions, all by Shakespeare's company and, of the

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1 That the courtiers of James were capable of extraordinary behavior is well evidenced by such accounts as Sir John Harington's comments on the celebrations attendant upon the visit of James' brother-in-law, Christian IV, King of Denmark, in the summer of 1606:

> Such things [as the drunken carousing at Theobalds on 28 July 1606] greatly astonish those courtiers who knew the good order, sobriety and discretion of the old Queen's time, so that in secret they say that the Danes have again conquered England, such is the beastliness, riot and excess at Court. (G. B. Harrison, Jacobean Journal, 325)

Surviving commentaries on the 1604/5 Revels complain of the great number of festivities, but there is no suggestion of any Bacchanalia. Dudley Carleton wrote to Chamberlain between 9 and 14 January, 1605:

> It seems we shall have Christmas all the yeare and therefore I shall never be owt of matter The last nights revels were kept at my Lord of Cranbornes, where the Q. [Queen Anne] with the D. of Holst and a great part of the Court were feasted, and the like two nights before at my Lord of Southamptons... (Eliz. Stage, IV, 139-40)

company's offerings, seven were plays written by Shakespeare. 'Shaxberd' was much in evidence at Whitehall in 1604/5, a sign of the high esteem in which his works were held at this, the midpoint of his writing career.

St. Stephen's Night marked the traditional opening of the Christmas Revels and 'Mesur for Mesur' was the play performed. It is a reasonable inference that someone thought it an appropriate work with which to inaugurate the holiday season. Sir Sidney Lee, considering the possibility that the play was written for this court audience, concluded that the play contains little that "seems designed to recommend it to the Court before which it was performed,"[1] and all of the play's detractors have acquiesced in this judgment. Lee's view may well be sound in respect to the problem of a possible first-night performance at Court, but the idea will not down that someone (Tilney or Buck, Master and Deputy Master of the Revels, or the King's

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1 The Life of William Shakespeare (1898), 393. Concerning the 'bawdiness' of the play, a matter which has greatly exercised many critics, it should be said Measure for Measure can be rendered 'pure' with only a slight amount of cutting or by judicious and cautious underplaying by the actors. We do not know that court audiences had notably finer sensibilities than popular audiences; if we accept Harbage's conclusions (Shakespeare's Audience, 137-157), the popular audiences were not much different from those at Court.

In all events, if one is inclined to accept the 'Christian' Measure for Measure, one will not be inclined to make an issue of its admittly forthright consideration of fornication, prostitution, etc. The Quiller-Couch description of the play as "the locus classicus for Shakespearian bawdry" has already lost much of its point.

Men themselves) found the play suitable for getting the Christmas Revels off to a good start.

Studying the Revels Accounts as a whole, one is also struck by the fact that, of the King's Servants' offerings, only three plays can possibly have been recent additions to the Globe repertory: 'The Moor of Venis' (Othello?); Measure for Measure, and the lost 'Tragedye of The Spanish Maz'. Most of the plays presented at Whitehall in 1604/5 were plays originally written and acted some time before:

The Merry Wives of Windsor (S.R. 18 January 1602)
'The Plaie of Errors' (The Comedy of Errors?) (earliest recorded performance - 28 December 1594)
Love's Labor's Lost (see Burbage's reference to it as an old play; 1598 Quarto)
Henry V (1600 Quarto)
Every Man out... (S.R. 8 April 1600)
Every Man in... (Extensive evidence for 1598)
The Merchant of Venice (S.R. 22 July 1598)[1]

The proximity of so many revived plays places Measure for Measure in a strange light. One could, I think, as legitimately argue that it was also an old play revived as that it was a fairly recent (or even specially written) play singled out for the St. Stephen's Night performance because of its recency. Scholars applying the

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1 All of these plays were probably written well before the dates parenthesized. See, on the Shakespearean plays, William Shakespeare and J. G. McManaway, "Recent Studies in Shakespeare's Chronology," Shak. Survey 3 (1950), 22-33; on the Jonson plays, Eliz. Stage, III, 359-362.

It is, however, important to recall that any play would be "new" to the new King and Queen.

now discredited metrical and stylistic tests concluded that the style of the play is Shakespeare's 'mature' style; thus, the hypothesis that it was written shortly before the Court performance has gained support. On the other hand, there have been wishful claims for the earliness of the play in Shakespeare's career (despite the fact that it is not mentioned in Meres' 1598 list); none of these claims has been built upon the implications of the Revels Book entry.[1] Perhaps the only strong presumption for assuming Measure for Measure was new in 1604 is the difficulty of believing that all the plays were revivals. No scholar can build extensively on either inference.

Finally, the Revels Accounts contain a highly important clue to James' dramatic tastes. It is commonly assumed that when he ordered a second performance of The Merchant of Venice two days after he first saw it, James was expressing his approval. Even considering more prosaic explanations such as the possibility that the King had not been able to see its first performance, there remains a strong case for this most commonly accepted view. It should, however, be noted that there is more inference than fact in any such explanation, for the entry itself is vague. In the study of Measure

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1 This oversight is most notable in the Dover Wilson edition, for he can always be depended upon to dig out any clues which can be put to his purposes.

for Measure, the question of James' admiration of The Merchant of Venice has an obvious importance for there are many notable similarities between the two plays, perhaps more properly to be regarded as 'companion plays' than any other two Shakespearean comedies. If James did — as we cannot prove — find The Merchant of Venice to his taste, it is a warrantable conjecture that Measure for Measure would also have been approvingly received.[1]

By way of summarizing the 'facts' provided by the Revels Accounts, we might consider the conclusion of a recent article on the play as an embodiment of the Christian Doctrine of Atonement:

> Moreover, so far as we know, Measure for Measure was first performed on St. Stephen's night, 1604: it was the Christmas offering of the "King's Servants" in their first appearance at the court of their new King. Was the timing sheer accident? What better Twelfthtide gift could the Shakespearean magi bring? A comedy it must be, to be in keeping with the season; and — to fit the dignity of its chief auditor — let it be a "Mirror for Magistrates" founded firmly on Christian lore. Dulce et utile are thus joined.[2]

Although few will quarrel with its general bearings, the paragraph contains several errors. The statement, "A comedy it must be, to be in keeping with the season," seems

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1 Merely because of the 'bed-trick,' Measure for Measure has always been rather too persistently linked with All's Well That Ends Well. Essentially, of course, all of Shakespeare's romantic tragi-comedies are very much alike, but only Measure for Measure and The Merchant of Venice can be considered disquisitions on the mercy-justice theme.

2 Roy W. Battenhouse, "Measure for Measure and Christian Doctrine of the Atonement," PMLA, LXI (December, 1946), 1059.

unobjectionable until we recall that the 1607 Quarto *Lear* advertised that play, certainly not a comedy, as having been played at Court on St. Stephen's Night "at Christmas last." It should also be noted that the King's Men did not make their 'first' appearance before King James on 26 December, 1604: the Revels Accounts record payments to Heminge for plays presented during the 1603/4 Christmas Revels[1] and, of course, the abstracted entries show earlier payments for *Othello* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. As to the appropriateness of the play for the occasion, however, Battenhouse is undoubtedly on sound ground.[2]

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1 *William Shakespeare*, II, 329.

2 Battenhouse is not the first to have considered this matter. R. W. Chambers (in his British Academy lecture in 1937, "The Jacobean Shakespeare and *Measure for Measure*") had offered the suggestive reminder that "the day before *Measure for Measure* was acted, the finding out ofthat remedy [the Mercy of Our Lord] was being commemorated," but Chambers did not insist that the play was first performed at Court.

PART ONE

CHAPTER THREE
THE FIRST FOLIO TEXT OF
MEASURE FOR MEASURE

In the case of those plays which, like Measure for Measure, appear in but a single form, it is doubtful if the elaborate paraphenalia of textual analysis can yield up any very fruitful results. However, because the First Folio Measure for Measure text has gained the reputation that it is 'mangled,' 'hopelessly corrupt' and 'foul', and because this reputation has frequently been invoked by critics and scholars alike to explain away or attenuate Shakespeare's responsibility for the play, it has seemed advisable to describe, however briefly, the First Folio text as it appears to one reading it without the prejudgments of the textualists. The now largely discredited theory of assembled texts has also been applied to Measure for Measure, chiefly by Dover Wilson, and this additional fact has seemed further warrant for a reexamination of the Folio text.

After the Revels Accounts entry, nothing more is heard of the play until 1623. Scholars have found a

possible echo in a work published in 1607 but this is too late to affect the arguments based upon the Revels Accounts for 1604 as the most probable date for Shakespeare's composition.[1] The play is mentioned in the

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1 The work is William Barksted's Mirrha, the Mother of Adonis; or Lustes Prodegies (edited by A. B. Grosart in 1876), a poem more notable as an imitation of Shakespeasre's Venus and Adonis, with which Barksted unflatteringly compared his own work.

Barksted has 'echoed' one of the two passages long recognized as possible compliments to King James:

> So play the foolish throngs with one that swounds;
> Come all to help him, and so stop the air
> By which he should revive; and even so
> The general, subject to a well-wish'd king,
> Quit their own part, and in-obsequious fondness
> Crowd to his presence, where their untaught love
> Must needs appear offence. (II, 4, 24-30)

The equivalent lines in Barksted are:

> And like as, when some suddaine extasie,
> seisth the nature of a sicklie man,
> When hee's discernd to swounde, straite by and by
> folke by his helpe confusedly have ran,
> And seeking with their art to fetch him backe:
> So many throng, that he the ayre doth lacke,
> so Mirrha's thoughts confusedly did stound her,
> some adding cofort, whilst the rest confound her.

Little is known about Barksted, although the appearance of his name as author of The Insatiate Countess (otherwise published as Marston's) and a few other clues suggest that he had theatrical connections of some sort. He could hardly have borrowed from any published Measure for Measure, if the S. R. entry for the First Folio is to be believed.

We are building on sand more shifting than usual here. If Dover Wilson (and others) were right in their view that the Shakespearean passage was inserted for a Court performance, we wonder how Barksted could have known of its existence unless he were an actor in the company.

Stationers' Register entry for 8 November 1623, where it is included with fifteen other Shakespearean plays as "not formerly entred to other men." This entry yields up little useful information concerning the play. However, lest one succumb to the line of reasoning followed by those who have doubted the popularity of the play because it was not printed during Shakespeare's time, it may be salutary to list those other 'unpopular' plays unpublished before their inclusion in the First Folio:

The Tempest
The Two Gentlemen of Verona
The Comedy of Errors
As You Like It
All's Well that Ends Well
Twelfth Night
Winter's Tale
The Taming of the Shrew (not mentioned in S. R.)

3 Henry VI
Henry VIII
Coriolanus
Timon of Athens
Julius Caesar
King John (not mentioned in S. R.)

Macbeth
Antony and Cleopatra
Cymbeline[1]

In the Folio, Measure for Measure is the fourth play, following The Tempest and Two Gentlemen of Verona, two other previously unprinted plays, and Merry Wives

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1 The groupings follow the S. R. entry, rather than the First Folio, where, of course, Coriolanus, Timon, and Julius Caesar are included with the tragedies. The entry is widely reprinted, but most conveniently to be found in William Shakespeare, I, 138.

of Windsor, issued in Quarto in 1602 (and reprinted in 1619).[1] There is good reason to assume that Measure for Measure was carefully prepared for publication! The Tempest and Measure for Measure are the only Folio plays which contain all three types of the textual refinements associated with the scribal practice of Ralph Crane: (a) adequate act and scene divisions; (b) an indication of the play's setting; and (c) a list of 'the Names of All the Actors.' The last of these facts is of special interest, for only in the Dramatis Personae do we learn that the Duke of Vienna is Vincentio.[2] Even if we attempt to group only those plays which lack indications of setting but contain adequate act-scene division and Actors' Lists, Measure for Measure stands among a mere handful: The Tempest, Two Gentlemen of Verona, Winter's Tale, 2 Henry IV, and Othello.[3] It is widely assumed that Heminge and Condell intended to offer each play in the same format,

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1 The Folio Merry Wives differs significantly from the earlier editions. This is consistent with what seems to have been the editorial policy of Heminge and Condell in repudiating all earlier printed versions of the plays.

2 It should be noted here that this is a unique instance of a full character-name in the List without warrant in the text itself — unless the scribe was indulging a caprice by supplying what he conceived to be a necessary name for the major character in the play, we must assume that the copy from which the scribe worked (possibly Shakespeare's own manuscript?) contained some warrant for 'Vincentio.' However, several mute characters in the text are not named in the List.

3 Timon also contains an Actors' List, but lacks adequate act-scene divisions beyond 'Act I, Scene 1'.

including setting-descriptions and Actors' Lists at the end of each play and with appropriate act-scene divisions clearly marked. That of the seven plays which most nearly approximate this ideal, three[1] should appear among the first four plays in the Folio gives some warrant for this view. In all events, an attempt was clearly made to present Measure for Measure with the same elegancies that mark the text of only a few other plays in the Folio.

The stage-directions in our text have been described by Greg, who follows 'consensus opinion' in the matter, as 'bare and indeed inadequate, exits and even entrances being often unmarked.'[2] It is hazardous to quarrel with so eminent an authority, but I am bound to suggest that his description considerably overstates the case. Dover Wilson, with whose judgment Greg seems inclined to agree,[3] describes the stage directions more critically:

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1 The setting of Two Gentlemen of Verona and, of course, The Merry Wives of Windsor, would be apparent from their titles, thus obviating the need for a setting-description. The Merry Wives does not appear with an Actors' List, and is thus excluded from the generalization.

2 The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare (1942; 1951), 146.

3 Cf. Wilson's description of the text: "In places, not a few, it is 'maimed and deformed' beyond all hope of recovery, while its corruption frequently suggests the carelessness of some hasty transcriber concerned to catch the general sense but scarcely to preserve verbal accuracy." (New Cambridge edition, 1922, reprinted 1950, 97.)

> Beyond the necessary entries and exits, which are often lacking, the Folio text contains no stage-directions of any kind, except at the beginning of acts 4 and 5. There is not a hint of costume, e.g. it is always 'Enter Duke,' never 'Enter Duke disguised'; hardly one of those little touches which, in a good text, so frequently suggest the author's hand, or at least prompt-copy with a history. In other words, the text closely resembles that of The Two Gentlemen and The Merry Wives, except that the exits are more numerous and the entries are not grouped together at the head of the scenes.[1]

I do not know how one can determine whether stage-directions are 'bare and indeed inadequate' except by considering the difficulty a prompter or stage-manager would have in supervising the play's production. By this criterion it must be recognized that Measure for Measure is remarkably uncomplicated. To cite an example, Wilson was disturbed by the fact that in Folio I, 5 (modern editions, I, 4), no exit is indicated for the nun and no entrance provided for Lucio:

> Lucio: Hoa? peace be in this place.
> Isabella: Who 's that which calls?
> Francisca: It is a man's voice: gentle Isabella
> Turn you the key, and know his business of him;
> You may; I may not: you are yet unsworn:
> When you have vow'd, you must not speak with men,
> But in the presence of the Prioress;
> Then if you speak, you must not show your face;
> Or if you show your face, you must not speak:
> He calls again: I pray you answer him.
> Isabella: Peace and prosperity: who is 't that calls?
> Lucio: Hail Virgin, (if you be)

Wilson, like most editors, inserts an 'Exit' at the

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1 Ibid., 112-3. Wilson goes on to suggest that the Folio text is based on 'prompt-copy of a kind' which was 'made up, seemingly, in places at least if not entirely, of players' parts.'

close of Francisca's second speech and an 'Enter Lucio' before the "Hail Virgin, (if you be)..." speech; such directions are unquestionably accurate, but they are not necessary. The Lucio-actor must be in position to speak the off-stage "Hoa? peace be in this place" and, thus, to be ushered in by Isabella who, in the New Cambridge text, 'unlocks the postern.' Similarly, an 'exit' clue is hardly necessary for the Francisca-actor; it is apparent from the speech that she must disappear (which is, of course, easily accomplished while the Isabella-actor is engaged in the stage-business of 'opening the door' for Lucio).

To cite an example of a'confused' (rather than 'deficient' as described above) stage-direction, consider Wilson's treatment of the action of the Provost and the 'Justice' in II, 1. The Folio head-note for the scene is, undoubtedly, somewhat surprising: "Enter Angelo, Escalus, and Servants, Justice." The Justice (not mentioned in the Actors' List) does not speak until the end of this long scene, at which time he serves only to clear the stage:

> Elbow: To your Worship's house sir?
> Escalus: To my house: fare you well:[1] what's a clock, think you?
> Justice: Eleven, sir.
> Excalus: I pray you home to dinner with me.
> Justice: I humbly thank you.
> Escalus: It grieves me for the death of Claudio But there 's no remedy.

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1 Theoretically, in accordance with Wilson's requirements of a good text, there should be an 'Exit Elbow' at this point. It is another example in which the dialogue itself points the way, rendering supererogatory the 'Elbow goes out' which Wilson provides.

Justice: Lord Angelo is severe.
Excalus: It is but needful.
Mercy is not itself, that oft looks so,
Pardon is still the nurse of second woe:
But yet, poor Claudio; there is no
remedy.
Come Sir.
EXEUNT[1]

Concerning the head-note, Wilson writes

> it would seem that the Justice was added as an afterthought by someone who had not at first observed his presence in the scene. This is not surprising, since the mysterious Justice does not appear to belong by rights to the scene at all; he suddenly crops up at the very end, speaks ten words, and goes out with Escalus to dinner. Possibly he played a more dignified part in some earlier form of the text, was intended to be cut out, but his final dialogue with Escalus remained on the prompt-copy by inadvertence.[2]

That the direction reads '... Escalus, and Servants, Justice' instead of '... Escalus, Justice, and Servants' warrants the conjecture that someone's 'afterthought' may be involved here. To my mind, however, it is as likely to be a printer's afterthought as a copyist's; a good copyist could easily insert 'Justice' where we should normally expect it, but a printer could not rectify this oversight without resetting the whole line. This matter is, however, not susceptible of final proof. Again, I do not know by what standards other than dramatic necessity any one can determine whether a character 'belongs by rights' to a scene. The Justice-actor has an obvious enough function, as noted above. Instead, then, of constructing

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1 This simple 'stage-clearing' direction becomes in the New Cambridge edition 'they depart, followed by attendants, etc.'

2 Op. cit., 124.

'some earlier form of the text' from the fact of the Justice's appearance, I should single this out as another instance in which playhouse considerations are paramount.

In Wilson's view, Act V is "markedly free from the corruption which mars most of the other verse-scenes of the play, whence it may be conjectured that here the printed text lies closer to Shakespeare's original."[1] Yet, even here, he finds much to alter, especially in connection with the Folio 'entrances' for two mute actors in this act, Varrius (not mentioned in the Actors' List) and Julietta. First we should note that the long closing-scene (Folio Act V) actually begins with Folio Act IV, Scenes 5 and 6. In Scene 5, the Duke and Friar Peter enter, discuss their plans. During the course of this brief scene several mysterious new characters are mentioned:

> Duke: These Letters at fit time deliver me.
> The Provost knows our purpose and our plot,
> The matter being afoot, keep your instruction
> And hold you ever to our special drift,
> Though sometimes you do blench from this to that
> As cause doth minister: Go call at Flavia's house[2],

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1 Op. cit., 150.

2 These names have evoked much comment. The confusion of Flavius' and Flavia's does indeed suggest dictation is somehow involved, but it is difficult to see how Capell's original suggestion that 'Valencius' (two lines later) was a similar corruption of 'Valentinus.' The latter seems a mere editorial caprice: either way the line is extra-metrical.

And tell him where I stay: give the
like notice
To Valencius, Rowland, and to Crassus,
And bid them bring the Trumpets to the gate:
But send me Flavius first.
Friar Peter: It shall be speeded well.
ENTER VARRIUS
Duke: I thank thee Varrius, thou hast made
good haste,
Come, we will walk: There's other of
our friends
Will greet us here anon: my gentle Varrius.
EXEUNT[1]

The Varrius thus introduced to facilitate the Duke's exit is similar to the Justice created to perform a similar function in Act II, Scene 1. Varrius is mentioned again in the Folio head-note for Act V, 'ENTER DUKE, VARRIUS, LORDS, ANGELO, LUCIO, CITIZENS AT SEVERAL DOORS.' Again, however, he is mute, and therefore a challenge to Wilson:

> It seems likely that he [Varrius] was one of the more important of the Duke's 'friends,' and more than likely that his was at least a speaking part in the unabridged text.[2]

Others have, with the same high seriousness, argued that Varrius is one of the two Gentlemen to whom Lucio is found talking in I, 2. What is, of course, reasonably certain is that the Varrius-actor played one of these minor parts in the earlier scene.

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1 Most editors 'locate' this scene in the 'Fields without the town,' but the New Cambridge editors, picking up a possible clue at IV, 4, 102-4, offer 'A consecrated fount, a league below the city.' In the Globe such explicitness would never have been thought of. Act IV ends with preparations for the Duke's return and the action of the last two scenes of Act IV is continuous with Act V. Isabella, Mariana and Friar Peter were probably meant to remain on stage from IV, 6 to V.

2 Op. cit., 150.

Whether we are justified in using such evidence to deduce an 'abridged text' is questionable. What happens in the closing-scene is clear enough — to make the judgment-scene fully effective, every available actor is brought on stage. A 'massing' or crowd effect is the primary consideration. Add to this the fact that Shakespeare, although he has been able to plan the Duke's departure from Vienna without his ducal retinue, could hardly bring him back unattended; having invented a 'Varrius' to assist the Duke's exit two scenes earlier, he used him again. In modern stage-practice the counterpart of Varrius is usually unnamed, designated 'Leader of the Crowd' or 'First Citizen,' and assigned to the most reliable of supernumerary actors. Shakespeare's plays are filled with such shadowy figures about whom we need not speculate too much — our will to believe that every Shakespearean character was realized in the round and intended to be unique has made us too uneasy in the presence of such mutes called into temporary being by simple dramatic exigencies. If one were to postulate an abridgment for every such character or offstage shadow Shakespeare dignified with a name, there would be no end to 'disintegrative' studies of his plays.

When Wilson came to the Folio entry-direction for Julietta near the close of Act V, he only reluctantly retained it:

> We have followed F. and given Juliet an entry, but think it very unlikely that she was intended to appear here in the received text, since she has nothing to say. But there can be little doubt that at some period in the history of the text she had

> played a part in this final scene. We have suggested...that she was cut out of 5. 1. because the actor who took her part also played Mariana, who is of course 'on.' This theory has the merit of helping to account for another anomaly in the scene, i.e. the (dramatically speaking) inexplicable silence of Isabella on the appearance of her brother. Some kind of reconciliation between brother and sister was necessary, and the natural reconciler would be Juliet, Isabella's adopted cousin and schoolmate....To 'cut' Juliet, therefore, in 5. 1. would be to cut out the reconciliation scene between Isabella and Claudio.[1]

She has been left in, then, on the theory that she once had a useful function to perform. It must be recognized that, since having 'nothing to say' is the criterion by which non-functional 'mutes' are recognized, Wilson ought also to have included in his remarks Claudio and Barnardine, for neither of whom are there any speeches in this closing scene. As a matter of fact, however, all three are brought into the action, none more surprisingly than Barnardine who is pardoned. It is a commonplace to suggest that actors can be trusted to greet one another affectionately and wordlessly, that Shakespeare did not need to write a reconciliation-scene between Isabella and Claudio.[2] Yet what, after all, at this late point in the play, can they have had to 'say' to one another? Julietta is

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1 Op. cit., 155-6. The underlining is mine.

2 If he had known how exercised certain eighteenth and nineteenth century critics were to become over Isabella's indignant repudiation of Claudio when he asks her to sacrifice her honor to save his life, Shakespeare might very well have obliged them with the touching andmutually forgiving scene so many have obviously wanted.

brought into the Duke's final speech, in which the loose ends are, not very satisfactorily perhaps, but finally tied up:

> Slandering a Prince deserves it.
> She Claudio that you wrong'd, look you restore.
> Joy to you Mariana, love her Angelo:
> I have confess'd her, and I know her virtue.
> Thanks good friend, Escalus, for thy much goodness,
> There's more behind that is more gratulate.
> Thanks Provost for thy care, and secrecy,
> We shall employ thee in a worthier place.
> Forgive him Angelo, that brought you home
> The head of Ragozine for Claudio's
> Th'offence pardons itself. Dear Isabel,
> I have a motion much imports your good,
> Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline;
> What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine.
> So bring us to our Palace, where we'll show
> What's yet behind, that meet you all should know.[1]

Every chief character in the play, with the exceptions of Pompey, Mistress Overdone, and Abhorson the Hangman,[2]

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1 The last line was corrected in the Second Folio, which all modern editors follow: "What's yet behind, that's meet you all should know."

The New Cambridge editors are, not surprisingly, disturbed by this last line:

> This hint that the 'shy' Duke has still more cards up his sleeve, is remarkable as occurring in the last line of the play. 'That's meet you all should know' suggests something important, not merely the further honours to be granted to Escalus, referred to ... Have we here a relic of further scenes (or a second part) following at some previous stage in the play's development? (156)

This is, of course, the worst kind of distortion. The ending in which the characters retire to hear more of what has happened (all of which the audience already knows) can be found in, among others, Two Gentlemen of Verona, The Merchant of Venice, All's Well that Ends Well, Pericles, Winter's Tale, and The Tempest.

2 Perhaps the Overdone, Pompey and Abhorson actors were expected to perform a jig to send the audiences home happy!

are, thus, on stage at the conclusion, and the final pairing-off of the 'lovers' is accomplished. No other explanation for Julietta's appearance would seem necessary.

The last example of the New Cambridge editors' treatment of Folio stage-directions involves another addition. As noted earlier, Wilson was disappointed that there are no indications of the Duke's costume-changes: "hardly one of those little touches which, in a good text, so frequently suggest the author's hand, or at least prompt-copy with a history."[1] There is warrant for this objection, in the fact that there are several such indications ('Enter Portia for Balthazar,' 'Enter Rosalind for Ganymede, Celia for Aliena'). Measure for Measure differs from all these cases with respect to the importance of the disguise in the entire action, and because the dialogue is notably clear on all the costume changes. For example, it is only in the last act that the Duke-actor is called upon to appear in both guises. The Duke-as-Duke departs on an apparent whim:

> Duke: And you, my noble and well-warranted Cousin
> Whom it concerns to hear this matter forth,
> Do with your injuries as seems you best
> In any chastisement; I for a while
> Will leave you; but stir not you till you have
> Well determin'd upon these Slanderers.
> EXIT

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1 Op. cit., 112.

Angelo: My lord, we'll do it thoroughly:
Signior Lucio, did not you say you know...[1]

Approximately sixteen lines later, the Duke-as-friar returns. The Folio stage-directions are simple:

ENTER DUKE, PROVOST, ISABELLA

Escalus: I will go darkly to work with her.
Lucio: That's the way: for women are light at midnight.
Escalus: Come on Mistress, here's a Gentlewoman, Denies all that you have said.
Lucio: My Lord, here comes the rascal I spoke of, Here, with the Provost.
Escalus: In very good time: speak not you to him, till we call upon you.
Lucio: Mum.
Escalus: Come Sir, did you set these women on to slander Lord Angelo? They have confess'd you did.
Duke: 'Tis false.

In the New Cambridge text, the passage becomes:

ISABELLA draws near, in custody of the officer

Escalus: I will go darkly to work with her.
Lucio: That's the way: for women are light at midnight.
Escalus (to Isabella): Come on, mistress. Here's a gentlewoman denies all that you have said.

The PROVOST approaches, with the DUKE in his friar's habit

Lucio: My lord, here comes the rascal I spoke of — (points) Here with the provost.
Escalus: In very good time: Speak not you to him, till we call upon you.
Lucio: Mum.
Escalus (to the Duke): Come, sir! did you set these women on to slander Lord Angelo? they have confessed you did...

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1 The only change the New Cambridge editors make here is to insert the Duke's 'exit' ind cation after Angelo's 'My lord, we'll do it thoroughly.' The effect of this, while not vitally distorting, is, however, to deprive the Duke-actor of the line provided to cover his departure.

There is, of course, no reason why the Folio direction needs to be altered. Although there has been no stage-direction to indicate Isabella's departure from the stage, the Duke-as-Duke has previously called for an officer to conduct her to prison.[1] There is no reason why the Provost should not have led forth both Isabella and Angelo. Escalus sees her first and speaks to her before Lucio has time to announce that the third member is the 'rascal' he spoke of. The Folio direction is far more economical so far as staging is concerned and is, I think, preferable to complicated double-entry indicated in modern editions.

More of the same kind of gratuitous tampering appears in the New Cambridge editors' treatment of Lucio's unmasking of the Duke-as-friar, an incident for which the Folio contains no stage-directions. It is impossible to read the following as it appears in the New Cambridge Edition without noting how super-ogatory the added stage-directions are:

Escalus: Such a fellow is not to be talked withal..

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1 The action is, however, somewhat obscure. Capell, followed by most modern editors, assumed, perhaps rightly, that Isabella was to remain onstage until after Friar Peter's denunciation of her:

> First, for this woman,
> To justify this worthy Nobleman
> So vulgarly and personally accus'd,
> Her shall you hear disproved to her eyes,
> Till she herself confess it.

In this instance, I agree with Dover Wilson that Isabella was not expected to remain to hear Friar Peter's charge.

> Away with him to prison... Where is the provost? Away with him to prison: lay bolts enough upon him: let him speak no more... Away with those giglots too, and with the other confederate companion!
>
> (The Provost lays hands on the Duke)
>
> Duke: Stay sir, stay awhile.
> Angelo: What, resists he? Help him, Lucio.
> Lucio: Come sir, come sir, come sir: foh sir, why you bald-pated lying rascal...you must be hooded, must you? (he seizes the hood) Show your knave's visage, with a pox to you...show your sheep-biting face, and be hanged an hour...Will't not off?
>
> He plucks off the friar's hood and discovers the DUKE: ESCALUS starts up: ANGELO remains seated, stunned
>
> Duke: Thou art the first knave that e'er mad'st a duke...

Perhaps I have printed enough Folio passages to suggest the quality of the whole. In all events, it would be impossible to consider the Dover Wilson hypothesis in the detailed manner that would be necessary to confute it. In the last resort, I am not sure that it can be disproved _in toto_, for many of his suggestions are eminently plausible. I am even less sure that I should want to disprove it, for, although it is frequently quite wrong-headed, the New Cambridge edition of _Measure for Measure_ is the only stimulating modern edition of the play.

In brief, Wilson believes that the received text — a very poor one, in his view — represents both Shakespearean and non-Shakespearean work:

> the text of _Measure for Measure_ has come down to us stamped, as it were, with two dates: one in

> an abridged verse-scene, proving that the play was cut down shortly before Dec. 26, 1604; the other in an expanded prose-scene, proving that the play was lengthened sometime after Nov. 11, 1606. It is conceivable, of course, that there may have been later revisions still before the text reached the hands of the printers.[1]

These layers of abridgment and expansion imply, of course, an earlier text, but on this matter Wilson offers little beyond the conjecture:

> ...by 1604, the Measure for Measure MS may have had already a long history behind it, a history which perhaps stretches back to some early recension of Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra.[2]

It will be apparent at once that this is a finely spun theory assailable on many fronts but essentially

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1 Op. cit., 105. The 11 November 1606 date marks the conclusion of a 'disgraceful peace' between Archduke Matthias, King of Hungary, and the Turks at Zsitva-Torok. Wilson believes that the following passage glances at this event:

> Lucio: If the duke, with the other dukes, come not to composition with the King of Hungary, why then all the dukes fall upon the king.
> First Gentlemen: Heaven grant us its peace, but not the King of Hungary's (I, 2, 1-5)

The passage is, of course, temptingly topical, but I suspect that itis a misleading clue. Other scholars have alleged that these lines contain a veiled adverse criticism of the 'peace at any price' policy of James I. The matter will be considered at greater lengths in Part Two.

2 In 1923, a year after the New Cambridge edition first appeared, J. M. Robertson's study of the play (Shakespeare Canon, II) appeared. Robertson's methods were rather more heavily grounded in stylistic comparisons than Wilson's, but the conclusions of the two men were similar. Robertson's conclusion: 'a working recast by Shakespeare of a play drafted by Chapman on the basis of the older play of Whetstone, or perhaps of an earlier condensation of that two-part drama into a single one.' Robertson suggested Greene's name in connection with the last-mentioned version.

impregnable on all sides. That it has evoked only a modicum of animosity is undoubtedly due to the prevalent older view that Measure for Measure is not one of Shakespeare's happiest efforts, and, thus, is hardly worth the trouble of rescuing it from the New Cambridge tangles. It would be impossible to consider all the types of 'evidence' adduced here. The clues to abridgment are 'broken lines,' 'irregularly arranged passages in the verse-scenes,' and obscurities brought into being by extensive cutting. We have already glanced briefly at his consideration of the 'ghost characters,' Varrius and the Justice, and the 'muted' Julietta. Evidence of expansion (largely the work of a mysterious reviser whose favorite character was Lucio) is found in the intermingling of prose and verse, and the admittedly careless (and, thus, characteristically Shakespearean) management of time-sequence. Everything depends ultimately on the sorting of the Shakespearean (or good) passages from the non-Shakespearean (or inferior) passages, a hazardous undertaking in which the editor invariably indicates more of his own tastes than he does of the mixed bouquets that are Shakespeare's plays. E. K. Chambers, much more willing to countenance the New Cambridge hypothesis than we might expect, defined the main difficulty in assessing the merits of this view:

But in the literary quality of this [I,2] and

> other ribald scenes of Pompey and his fellows, I cannot see any marked difference between the 'sheer mud, dreary, dead' of what Wilson gives to the reviser and the 'full Shakespearean flavour' of what he spares. Of course he has picked out the best bits (i. 2. 83-118: ii. 1. 41-201; iv. 3. 1-59) for Shakespeare. But there is little of that full flavour anywhere, and even in the muddiest passages an occasional sniff of it may be caught.[1]

Finally, confronting any such tenuous but plausible speculations, one is inevitably forced back to choosing for oneself on an all-or-nothing basis. I do not doubt that Shakespeare's plays have come down to us with the marks of many other hands, but I do not believe that it is possible to 'explain' such intrusions because, by and large, it is impossible to secure general agreement as to the identity of these foreign elements. In the case of Measure for Measure, we have but one received text, a text which is — despite the grumblings of editors — a relatively good one. The text is not always lineated in accord with the principles followed by the Globe editors and there are numerous cruxes to perplex us, but it is impossible to read the Folio text without arriving at a respectful attitude toward those responsible for preparing it for the printers.

How numerous are the flaws in the text? In

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1 William Shakespeare, I, 456. It will be at once evident that Chambers is not any fonder of the play than the New Cambridge editors. His section on Measure for Measure is largely a desultory attempt to refute the New Cambridge hypothesis.

F. A. Leo's summary of the cruxes in all of Shakespeare's plays, nineteen are listed from Measure for Measure.[1] Modern editors, especially those who have been able to take advantage of the New English Dictionary, have been able to reduce the figure considerably, but many of the problems remain.

(1) Duke: ... Then no more remains
But that, to your sufficiency, as your worth is able,
And let them work: ... (I, 1, 6-9)

Elaborate but unsuccessful attempts have been made to justify the Folio text here. Perhaps the hiatus is due to some stage-business, such as the granting of the symbols of office to Escalus, but it is far more probably that the printer's eye played him tricks. Although the lines are garbled, the general sense is, I think, clear enough.

(2) Duke: I have on Angelo impos'd the office,
Who may in th's ambush of my name, strike home,
And yet, my nature never in the fight
To do in slander: ... (I, 3, 42-3)

This difficulty is partly attributable to the similarity ofthe older f and s. The Folio text seems to print fight, but I would not stake much on the certainty of this. A strong case can be made out for the modern emendation first suggested by Hanmer:

And yet my nature never in the sight
To do it slander.

The sense is clear although the poetic merits are not.

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1 "Verzeichniss noch zu erklarender oder zu emendirender Text-Lesarten in Shakespeare's Dramen," Shak. Jahrbuch, XX (1885), 149-171.

Nineteen is close to the average (17-18) for the comedies: Tempest - 27; Two Gentlemen - 8; Merry Wives - 15; Errors - 22; Much Ado - 13; Love's Labor's Lost - 23; Midsummer Night's Dream - 10; Merchant - 11; As You Like It - 19; Shrew - 13; All's Well - 35; Twelfth Night - 17; Winter's Tale -17.

(3) Isabella: Sir, make me not your story.
Lucio: 'Tis true; I would not, though 'tis
my familiar sin,
With Maids to seem the Lapwing...
(I, 4, 29-31)

I do not consider this a crux. Steevens was the first to alter Lucio's "'Tis true" to the stilted "It is true" for the sake of a regular line. Regularity is achieved, perhaps, but the Folio is a better reflection of what we should be likely to hear from any stage.

(4) Lucio: As those that feed, grow full: as blossoming Time
That from the seedness, the bare fallow brings
To teeming foison: even so her plenteous womb
Expresseth his full Tilth, and husbandry. (I, 4, 41-44).

Few modern editors tamper with this. 'Seedness,' which causes whatever trouble exists here, is a Shakespearean once-word, but its general sense is clearly either 'the state of being sown with seed' or 'the sowing of seed.'

(5) Angelo: ... what's open made to Justice,
That Justice seizes; What knows the
Laws
That thieves do pass on thieves? ...
(II, 1, 22)

Rowe altered 'What knows' to 'what know' for grammatical concord; New Cambridge prints 'who knows', arguing a printer's error from the 'what's open' in the previous line. In this case, again, perhaps there is no ideal solution, however clear the general sense is. The complexity of this difficulty proceeds from the ambiguous know, to which N.E.D. dedicates an unconscionable number of columns.

(6) Escalus: Some run from brakes of Ice, and
answer none,
And some condemned for a fault
alone.

'Brakes of Ice' is one of the most puzzling phrases in the whole of Shakespeare.

Rowe altered it to 'brakes of vice,' which most editors follow. Gollancz (Temple Shakespeare) noted the passage in Henry VIII (I, 2, 75), 'the rough brake/ That virtue must go through,' which suggests that 'brakes of vice' was what Shakespeare wrote. The New Cambridge editors, however, "see no sufficient reason for altering the Folio text" and explain the line:

> In 'Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall' Escalus appears to be contrasting the fate of Christ with that of Satan and in the line following still has Satan in mind. 'Brakes of ice' belong to the same hell as the 'thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice' (III, 1, 122). A 'brake' was a sort of cage, and, as NED quotes two references to the 'Devil's brake', such a cage was perhaps a familiar piece of furniture in the miracle-plays. (125)

Certainly the explanations of 'brakes of vice' call for far less ingenuity than similar attempts to justify the Folio line.

(7) Froth: ...it is an open room, and good for winter. (II, 1, 135)

Modern editors do not treat this comic rejoinder as a crux. Froth is such a minor character, a mere echo-box for Pompey's prattline, that it is indeed hard to know whether the line was intended to be a malapropism or merely a reflection of Pompey's outrageous misrepresentation of the 'open room' as the best sort for enduring the winter's blasts.

(8) Duke: 'Tis meet so (daughter) but lest you do repent
As that the sin hath brought you to this shame,
Which sorrow is always toward ourselves, not heaven,
Showing we would not spare heaven, as we love it,
But as we stand in fear. (II, 3, 30-34)

New Cambridge editors sense 'an unmistakable cut' here. Certainly the sense is not clear.

Perhaps, however, the line was purposely left incomplete in the realization that Julietta, quite rightfully impatient of such moralizing, should cut it off with her simple statement:

> I do repent me, as it is an evil,
> And take the shame with joy.

This must remain an insoluble problem, although it should be recognized as one which poses no real difficulty for actors.

(9) **Angelo:** Thus wisdom wishes to appear most bright,
When it doth tax itself: As these black Masques
Proclaim an enshield beauty ten times louder
Than beauty could display'd ... (II, 4, 78-81)

New Cambridge editors build heavily on these lines, which in their view were inserted as a subtle compliment to Queen Anne whose mind was very much on her participation in Jonson's Masque of Blackness (5 January 1605). The word 'enshield' thus becomes 'enshelled' in allusion to a piece of stage machinery Inigo Jones had devised for the performance. E. K. Chambers (William Shakespeare, I, 453) has punctured part of this hypothesis by noting that "although the maskers entered in a shell, they were painted black and wore no masks." The complete argument is not easily reduced to summary-form, but it is true, as Wilson points out, the troublesome lines seem an unexpected intrusion in an otherwise lucid exchange between Angelo and Isabella. There is no apparent reference in the dramatic action for these black Masques. Context indicates that 'enshield' means 'hidden.'

(10) **Angelo:** Admit no other way to save his life
(As I subscribe not that, nor any other,
But in the loss of question) that you, his Sister,
Finding yourself desir'd of such a person,

Whose credit with the Judge, or
own great place,
Could fetch your Brother from
the Manacles
Of the all-building-Law: ...
(II, 4, 88-94)

This passage contains two cruxes (the second of which was not included in Leo's summary): (a) 'the loss of question' which modern editors, following Singer, print 'the loose [freedom] of question [discussion]'; (b) 'the all-building-Law' which modern editors, following Theobald, print 'the all-binding law.' No one except Thiselton has argued for the Folio readings which are, I think, quite palpably misprints. It should be noted that there is a clustering of difficult passages here. From II, 4, 78 to II, 4, 94, in this scene which no one has denied to Shakespeare, there are three of the most vexing cruxes in the text. Significantly enough, the lines appear near the bottom of a Folio page (69) which contains an erroneous catchword. This suggests, of course, that the printer was dozing at this point.

(11) Angelo: We are all frail.
Isabella: Else let my brother die,
If not a fedarie but only he
Owe, and succeed thy weakness.
Angelo: Nay, women are frail too.
(II, 4, 121-125)

I am inclined to believe that Isabella's speech is one of the 'hopelessly corrupt' passages with which the play has been alleged to abound. Various editors have adopted various stratagems and some meaning has been hewn out, but none can be said to have solved every problem. Possibly 'thy weakness' should read 'this weakness,' as Malone conjectured, but 'thy weakness' may be justified in connection with Angelo's rejoinder, 'Nay, women are frail too.' The Student Cambridge editors gloss the lines thus:

> if he has no fellow [feodary] in this weakness but he alone inherits (succeed) and possesses(owe) it

and it would be hard to adduce an effort at

once as valiant as it is mystifying.

(12) Isabella: ...This outward sainted Deputy,
Whose settled visage, and deliberate word
Nips youth i' th' head, and follies doth emmew
As Falcon doth the Fowl, is yet a devil:
(III, 1, 89-92)

'Emmew' is another Shakespearean once-word, now recognized as 'enew,' a falconer's term for describing the downing of a quarry.

(13) Claudio: The prenzie, Angelo?
Isabella: O 'tis the cunning Livery of hell,
The damne'st body to invest, and cover
In prenzie gardes; dost thou think Claudio,
If I would yield him my virginity
Thou mightst be freed?
(III, 1, 94-99)

Second Folio substitutes 'princely' for 'prenzie' and is widely followed. The question is still unsettled, however, and some surprising interpretations of the play have been founded on this curious word.(another once-word). The matter is complicated by the comma following the word in its first appearance and by the use of the word adjectively in the second instance.

(14) Duke: That we were all, as some would seem to be
From our faults, as faults from seeming free.
(III, 2, 40-41)

The Second Folio reads 'Free from our faults,' and Hanmer inverted 'faults from.' The New Cambridge editors attribute this couplet to a reviser, but it is obviously a cue for Lucio's entry and may well be Shakespeare's work. Imbedded in the lines is, of course, a proverb, "Be what thou would seem to be," which Tilley also finds in Othello, III, 3, 126-8:

Iago: Men should be what they seem;

Or those that be not, would
they might seem none.
Othello: Certain, men should be what
they seem.[1]

There would, if we accept the expanded line in the Second Folio, seem to be no reason to regard this as a crux.

(15) Lucio: Some report, a Sea-maid spawn'd him. Some, that he was begot between two Stockfishes. But it is certain, that when he makes water, his Urine is congeal'd ice, that I know to be true: and he is a motion generative, that's infallible.
(III, 2, 115-119)

The so-called crux here is the phrase, 'a motion generative.' Modern editors note that it signifies 'a male puppet' and pass on.

(16), (17), (18)

Duke: Peace be with you.
He who the sword of Heaven will bear,
Should be as holy, as severe:
Pattern in himself to know,
(16) Grace to stand, and Vertue go:
More, nor less to others paying,
Then by self-offences weighing.
Shame to him, whose cruel striking,
Kills for faults of his own liking:
Twice treble shame on Angelo,
To weed my vice, and let his grow.
O, what may Man within him hide,
Though Angel on the outward side?
(17) How may likeness made in crimes,
Making practice on the Times,
To draw with idle Spiders' strings
Most ponderous and substantial things?
Craft against vice, I must apply.
With Angelo tonight shall lie
His old betrothed (but despised:)
So disguise shall, by th'disguised
(18) Pay with falsehood, false exacting,
And perform an old contracting.
(III, 2, 274-296)

Nothing in Measure for Measure has so vexed

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1 A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England, 591-2.

> the critics as these couplets,[1] but it is questionable whether the passage contains three real cruxes. The first has been adequately explained by H. C. Hart, who recognized 'an' in 'and' ('Grace to stand, and [= if, when] Vertue go') and gave the line a satisfactory explanation. The second crux is still a puzzle. The New Cambridge editors, apparently with great reluctance, follow Gow and hyphenate: 'to-draw.' The suggestion has the virtue of making some kind of sense, but the syntax remains tangled. The third crux is not, except in the moral sense, a crux at all; it is difficult now to reconstruct the problem the line posed for earlier editors, for the Folio pointing is a clear indication of the line's meaning.

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1 Concerning the authenticity of the whole passage, it should be noted here that perhaps 'consensus opinion' now is reversing itself. Following all the earlier editors and critics, those writing in 1900 were inclined to suspect another hand. Note, for example, H. C. Hart's quotation from Jonson's Cynthia's Revels in his notes on the passage:

> Princes that would their people should do well
> Must at themselves begin, as at the head;
> For men by their example pattern out
> Their imitations and regard of laws;
> A virtuous court a world to virtue draws.
> (V, 3, Cynthia's concluding speech)

However, with the current tendency to regard the play as a coherent 'Christian' whole has come a marked reluctance to deny Shakespeare's authorship of the octosyllabic couplets. Certainly, one can find other very similar passages in the later plays, particularly, of course, the Gower choruses in Pericles.

Hardin Craig ("Shakespeare's Bad Poetry," Shak. Survey 1, 1948, 51-56) has recently attempted to initiate a general reconsideration of such troublesome passages in an effort to understand Shakespeare's purposes in introducing such variations. There is much to be said for these couplets and their effect in summing up the action of the first half of the play at the same time as they introduce the second half, the untrussing of Angelo. However, if 'necessity' be the yardstick by which they are measured, perhaps they fall far short of their intended mark.

I am inclined to accept them as Shakespeare's, but I suspect they may well have been added for a special occasion at which it was customary to provide a brief intermission.

(19) Duke: ...That spirit's possest with
haste,
That wounds th'unsisting Postern
with these strokes.
(IV, 2, 91-2)

The difficulty here is, of course, 'th'unsisting' and it remains. Hart proposed that 'unassisting' is the correct form; 'unresisting' seems a better guess. It is another once-word, quite clearly called into being for a regularly metrical line, and its sense is apparent.

For some reason, Leo did not include such notorious cruxes as 'Our Corn 's to reap, for yet our Tithe 's to sow' (IV, 1, 76), which editors, almost to a man, have emended to '...yet our tilth's to sow';[1] 'the needful bits and curbs to headstrong weedes' (I, 3, 20), which most editors emend, following Theobald, to 'steeds' and thus avoid a mixed metaphor.[2]

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1 It should be noted, however, that a strong case can be made out for the Folio reading here, particularly in relation to the Duke's chosen disguise. However, I regard R. W. Battenhouse's justification of 'our Tithe 's to sow' as somehow over-extended:

> "Tithe" makes the Duke's proverb-like utterance carry the connotation of divine law as well as of natural law, thus suggesting both religious and secular sanction for the work that is about to be done. (1038)

His view that "Mariana's laying down of her body is as the sowing of a tithe" is carefully developed, however, and is not to be lightly dismissed.

2 The New Cambridge editors follow Walker and emend 'wills,' which is perhaps too extreme even if it "at least begins with a w." The line is strongly reminiscent of Hamlet: "take arms against a sea of troubles," another mixed metaphor which has caused critics more chagrin than is warranted.

Battenhouse builds extensively on the Folio reading (with which I have no quarrel), arguing that the line calls to mind "both the parable of the tares and, indirectly, the parable of the mote and the beam" (1039).

In all events, Leo's summary is nearly complete and, for present purposes, satisfactory. Of his nineteen cruxes, perhaps half still would be granted as insoluble problems: a new understanding of Shakespeare's capacity to invent words to suit his purposes, a greater awareness of the flexibility of Shakespeare's poetic images, and a less strict syllable-counting technique as part of the evaluation of his poetry, have all contributed to this diminution. It would be as misleading, however, to suggest that Measure for Measure is without its cruxes, as it has been to label the text 'hopelessly corrupt.' Whatever problems Measure for Measure poses for the modern student, they do not proceed primarily from the text itself.

Greg had little to say about the text of the play and, as noted above, that little is largely indebted to the nineteenth-century view of the play. It may be useful, before examining a few more noteworthy features of the Folio text, to consider Greg's remarks:

> ...the directions are bare and indeed inadequate, exits and even entrances being often unmarked. Such as they are they appear to come from the author: I should regard 'Francisca, a nun' as his, while 'Lucio within' and 'Citizens at several doors' are not inconsistent. There is certainly a good deal of dislocation, with some evidence of cuts and several mutes or shadowy characters. Careless composition has perhaps been made worse by subsequent patching. This will also account for the contradictory time scheme. I should imagine that a good deal

> of tidying up of which we know nothing may have been done in preparing the prompt-book. Scribal peculiarities point to a manuscript by Crane, but I think it must have been rather carelessly made from foul papers that had been a good deal altered.[1]

The opening scene (I, 1) has drawn much criticism because of its "abruptness quite unusual with Shakespeare" and the fact that it begins with a "broken line of verse."[2]

> Enter Duke, Escalus, Lords
>
> Duke: Escalus
> Escalus: My Lord.
> Duke: Of Government, the properties to unfold,
> Would seem in me t' affect ...

Whether this opening is really 'abrupt' is at least debatable. One must recall that <u>at least</u> four or five actors suddenly spill out upon the stage to set the play in motion.[3] In production, this opening, which to the reader seems unconscionably abrupt, requires almost a minute for taking up positions before the Duke summons Escalus. It is true indeed that no

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1 <u>Op. cit.</u>, 146. A sympathetic critic would, doubtless, reject most of this. 'Careless composition,' a key phrase in Greg's summary, will hardly go unchallenged as a dangerous <u>a priori</u> assumption in these times.

2 The quotations are from the New Cambridge edition, but every student of the play has noted this sudden and business-like beginning as un-Shakespearean. Dover Wilson believes that the present I, 1 is only the 'second half' of a longer scene in which the Duke's reasons for leaving Vienna are developed. (See pp. 116-7)

3 Alice Venezky (<u>Pageantry on the Shakespearean Stage</u>, 1951) includes this scene as one notable for the visual effectiveness of such ceremonious show.

time is wasted here, but perhaps we should avoid the word abrupt for its pejorative connotation of inartistic effect.[1]

The Folio Act I is, unlike modern editions, divided into five scenes. The long second scene of modern editions is there divided into Scenes 2 and 3, although obviously there is no change in playing area. It is reasonable to believe that this is an error to be charged against a transcriber or an over-zealous printer who automatically began a new scene whenever his eye caught the stage-direction, Exeunt. The Folio I, 2 consists of the conversation between Lucio and the unnamed two gentlemen, the arrival of Mistress Overdone, the departure of Lucio and his friends, and the arrival of Pompey.[2] The Folio I, 3 begins with

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1 Only two other plays open with 'broken lines,' and in both instances there is a considerable amount of attendant stage-business: The Tempest and Hamlet.

2 Throughout the Folio text, the Overdone and Pompey speech-headings are 'Bawd' and 'Clown.' Their names, unlike that of the 'Duke,' emerge in the dialogue. Overdone is so named in the 'Actors' List, ' but Pompey is there referred to simply as 'Clown.' Unfortunately, there are so few 'Actors' Lists' that it is impossible to guess the significance of these facts.

For whatever it may be worth, I offer my explanation. As Shakespeare wrote the play, he did not at first know what name he would attach to either 'Bawd' or 'Clown.' Perhaps he had no intention of employing them so prominently in the comic underplot. Pompey Bum's name emerges late in II, 1 under Escalus' questioning; in this same scene, we first learn the name of Pompey's employer. The names were invented when the need for names arose, but Shakespeare, having started without names, continues to indicate their speeches and entrances with the simple 'Bawd' and 'Clown.'

the entry of Provost, Claudio, Juliet, Officers, Lucio and the two Gentlemen of I, 2:

> Clown: Come: fear not you: good Counsellors lack no Clients: though you change your place, you need not change your Trade: I'll be your Tapster still; courage, there will be pity taken on you; you that have worn your eyes almost out in the service, you will be considered.
>
> Bawd: What's to do here, Thomas Tapster? let's withdraw.
>
> Clown: Here comes Signior Claudio, led by the Provost to prison: and there's Madam Juliet.
>
> EXEUNT
>
> SCENE THREE
>
> ENTER PROVOST, CLAUDIO, JULIET, OFFICERS, LUCIO, AND TWO GENTLEMEN
>
> Claudio: Fellow, why do'st thou show me thus to th'world?
> Bear me to prison, where I am committed.
>
> Provost: I do it not in evil disposition,
> But from Lord Angelo by special charge.
>
> Claudio: Thus can the demy-god (Authority)
> Make us pay down...

That this scene-division was not intended is obvious from the link between Pompey's 'identifying' speech ('Here comes Signior Claudio...') and the following action.[1] Whether Mistress Overdone and Pompey were to leave the stage or simply to retreat to a safe vantage-point is not clear from the stage-directions. Both characters have good reason to keep out of sight of the law and it may well have been Shakespeare's

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1 When, in Folio I, 2, Lucio and the two Gentlemen take their leave of Mistress Overdone, the stage-direction is 'Exit,' despite the fact that three actors leave the stage. Apparently, 'Exeunt' was used chiefly to mark the closing of the scene or act whereas 'Exit' was used in both ways, to mark the end of a scene (when only one character is left on stage) and to mark the departure of one or more characters within a scene. The practice varies to such an extent, however, as to render any generalization suspect.

intention to suggest this by having them withdraw from the stage. In all events, the modern practice of treating the two scenes as one is sensible.[1]

In Act III, however, modern editors have introduced two scenes where the Folio has but one. Apart from the doubtful convenience of being able to refer more quickly to two short scenes than to one long scene, there is no real warrant for this change. Certainly the Folio provides no evidence for believing with modern editors that the locality shifts from inside the prison to 'the street before the prison':

> DUKE: It lies much in your holding up: haste you speedily to Angelo, if for this night he entreat you to his bed, give him promise of satisfaction: I will presently to Saint Luke's, there at the moated-Grange resides this dejected Mariana; at that place call upon me, and dispatch with Angelo, that it may be quickly.
> ISABELLA: I thank you for this comfort: fare you well good father.
>
> EXIT
>
> ENTER ELBOW, CLOWN, OFFICERS
>
> ELBOW: Nay, if there be no remedy for it, but that you will needs buy and sell men and women like beasts, we shall have all the world drink brown and white bastard.
> DUKE: O heavens, what stuff is here.
> CLOWN: 'Twas never merry world since of two usuries the merriest was put down, and the worser allow'd by order of Law; a furr'd gown to keep him warm; and furred with Fox and Lamb-skins...

Without exception, modern editors alter 'Exit' to 'Exeunt,' send both Isabella and the Duke off, and, thus, since the Duke must be back on stage immediately for the next 'scene,' create an unnecessary staging

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1 Throughout this study I have adopted the Globe line-numbering and, thus, the combination of Folio I, Scenes 2 and 3.

problem. The scene-division was first made by Capell. The New Cambridge editors see no good reason for it, but follow general practice and include it. Here, obviously, the Folio text is sound (as it is not in the case of I, 2 and 3) and modern editors are in error.[1]

We are now in a position to notice one of the most remarkable facts about the text, namely that it betrays a singular concernment for economical staging. Acts III and V are both long continuous actions involving no shifts in locale. It is also questionable, despite the Folio division into four scenes, whether 'Act II' was not meant to be a continuous action. The following brief summary will clearly indicate the simplicity with which the play was to be staged:

I, 1: 'An apartment in the Duke's palace'[2] - upper stage
2: 'A street' - outer stage
3: 'A monastery' - inner stage?
4: 'A nunnery' - upper stage?
II, 1
II, 1: 'A hall in Angelo's house' - a faulty description at variance with the action, a hearing in some sort of courtroom setting. Full outer stage is needed. Presence of the Provost suggest the prison.
2: 'Another room in the same' - better 'situated' as Angelo's private chambers. Upper stage was probably used, although it could as easily have been done by employing the outer and inner stage. Presence of the Provost again suggests the prison.
3: 'A room in a prison' - no real shift of

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1 Again, because it is most convenient to follow the Globe numbering, I will refer to Act III, Scenes 1 and 2 whenever it is necessary to cite particular lines. In my more general references to Act III, however, I shall speak of it as a continuous action.

2 The settings are those adopted in most modern editi

locale is indicated; the early entrance of Provost ties this scene closely to its predecessor. A 'buffer-scene' between the two Angelo-Isabella interviews, this brief scene was probably done on the outer stage, chiefly to draw the audience's attention away from the upper stage and, thus, to assist in indicating the passage of time.

4: 'A room in Angelo's house' - same as II, 2, probably upper stage. A full day has supposedly passed since the first of these two crucial scenes.

III,1,2: 'A room in the prison' - full outer stage is required; inner stage (if there was one) must have been used to represent Claudio's cell.[1]

IV, 1: 'The moated grange at St. Luke's' - the moatedness suggests an effect best achieved by the use of the upper-stage, but it is hard to be sure of this. The song at the beginning of the scene was clearly introduced to cover the Duke-actor's movements; he has just closed Act III with the famous couplets and can not gracefully be on stage to set this scene in motion.

2: 'A room in the prison' - outer stage is required.

3: 'Another room in the same' - probably an erroneous setting, but the case in complicated: no shift in locale in indicated, but some passage of time is implicit. Duke closes IV, 2 with "Come away; it is almost clear dawn." Yet IV, 3 finds Pompey trying to awaken Barnardine. Time pointers are so negligently handled in this play that it would seem a mistake to make too much of them. In all events, this scene was probably staged as a continuous action with IV, 2 on the outer stage.

4: 'A room in Angelo's house' - we are, I think, supposedly back in the private office of II, 2 and 4. Upper stage.

5: 'Fields without the town' - see V below.

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1 Cf. Twelfth Night, IV, 2, however, for the possibility that Claudio's cell was represented by the upper stage.

6: 'Street near the city gate' - see V below.

V 'The city gate' - full outer stage is undoubtedly used for IV, 5 and 6, and this closing scene. The action is continuous.

We have no means of knowing how much (or even if) Shakespeare worried about the physical limitations of the theaters for which he wrote. Certainly, it is an error to dwell too long on such considerations unless the stage-directions are more descriptive than they are in Measure for Measure. I have introduced this hypothetical reconstruction merely to suggest that, as it stands in the Folio, Measure for Measure shows a remarkable modesty and simplicity of design. It would, I think, have been regarded as an 'easy' play to produce, one which put no great strain on any of the resources of the Globe.[1]

The Folio text contains a 'lavish' use of parentheses, a fact which seems to point to the scribal work

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1 The simplicity is more notable by comparison with the loose, meandering construction of Promos and Cassandra, the old play from which Measure for Measure seems to have derived. However, one need only compare the structure of this play with All's Well that Ends Well, Pericles, and Cymbeline to appreciate the fact that here, at least, Shakespeare seems to have worked under some sort of constraint to devise an easily staged play.

It is impossible to know the cause of this constraint. Perhaps the various suggestions that Measure for Measure was written or revised for a special occasion, perhaps at the Inns of Court or the Court itself, gain some credibility from a recognition of the play's unusual compactness.

I prefer, however, to believe that Shakespeare was intent upon achieving a more unified and coherent effect than Whetstone had been capable of achieving in the older play.

of Ralph Crane.[1] They are intelligently employed and provide another reason for respecting the Folio text. However, another feature of Crane's work, 'massed entries,' is conspicuously absent from Measure for Measure, a fact which has been used against Dover Wilson's suggestion that the Folio text was 'assembled from parts.' The 'assembled text' theory has been so discredited in recent years that it may not be necessary to consider it in any great detail in connection with Measure for Measure. Certainly it is true that the one surprising instance of scene-division (Folio I, 2 and 3) seems to have resulted from the so-called 'classical' or Jonsonian method of indicating a new scene with each new grouping of characters after the

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1 Greg, op. cit., 141. "It can hardly...be without significance that certain graphic peculiarities of Crane's work, particularly his lavish use of parentheses, are found by Dover Wilson to be characteristic both of the present play [Two Gentlemen of Verona] and of The Merry Wives, and that they are also found in The Tempest and Measure for Measure — that is, in the four plays with which the folio opens. There seems very little doubt that all these were printed from transcripts by Crane. This looks as though copies had been made for the occasion, but whether... from foul papers or from a prompt-book is less clear."

For an older view of parentheses as possibly Shakespeare's own additions, see Ashley H. Thorndike's "Parentheses in Shakespeare," SAB, IX (January 1934), 31-37. Thorndike counted 73 uses of parentheses in the Folio Measure for Measure, a 'large' but 'not excessive' number. Richard II, Richard III, and The Tempest are the other plays notable for the frequency with which parentheses are employed.

stage has been cleared by 'Exeunt.' [1]

What, finally, are we entitled to conclude concerning the text of Measure for Measure? In all honesty, the hard 'facts' we seek to establish do not emerge. The impression I have derived from my own study of the Folio text is, most embarrassingly, quite different from that which can be found in Greg, Chambers and others. I should insist that this is not a 'hopelessly corrupt' text but a relatively clean one on which special pains were taken preparatory to its publication. The text seems to rest, not on Shakespeare's 'foul papers that had been a good deal altered,' but on a playhouse prompt-book for an easily staged production. The text, then, is notable as an indication of what Shakespeare's audiences saw, rather than what Shakespeare may have written: there may be little difference between the two Measure for Measures or there may be a great difference, but the Folio text provides no clues to this. This means, ultimately, that the greatest circumspection must be exercised in viewing the text. It is possible, for example, that a considerable number of passages may have been inserted, that parts were expanded or abridged in the playhouse, but it is also possible that the text is substantially

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1 The difficulties presented by the 'assembled text' theory are well discussed by Chambers, William Shakespeare, I, 153-5.

the same as it was when Shakespeare turned it over to his fellow actors. The textual problem thus resolves itself into the usual esthetic problem, What do we think of the play itself? Despite the most vigorous efforts to evolve a completely 'objective' method of describing texts, the esthetic problem can never be dismissed in order to allow textual analysis to proceed apace on a thoroughly 'scientific' basis.[1]

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1 Greg has summed up the problems confronting the editors honestly enough in the closing pages of The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare:

> But if we have learned to approach the editing of Shakespeare in a spirit of restrained optimism, we have also learned to understand more thoroughly the complexities of the task, and still find ourselves confronted by a position both difficult and uncertain. ...There seems then in general no possibility of arriving at the perfectly finished product of Shakespeare's art, for the simple reason that he never gave it a perfect finish. It is the penalty, or if you will the limitation, of the medium in which he worked — that most vital but most incalculable medium of the theatre, in which the very tools and materials of the artist were the speech, the emotions, the personalities, of actual human beings. (156-7).

Greg's final retrospect is a salutary antidote to the impression often fostered by his tone throughout this important work; I cite it here in support of my own conclusions concerning the soundness of the text of Measure for Measure, although these conclusions are decidedly at variance with Greg's.

PART ONE

CHAPTER FOUR

MEASURE FOR MEASURE IN THE FIRST FOLIO: STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

When we turn from textual to stylistic analysis, the same blank wall confronts us. Most recent critics have been content to accept 'consensus opinion' that Measure for Measure is an example of Shakespeare's 'mature style,' but how, in the face of the overwhelmingly cool reception accorded the play before this century began, this 'opinion' came into existence must remain something of a riddle. It has, of course, always been difficult to ignore Meres' list, which did not mention Measure for Measure, and, thus, almost by default, the play was thrown among the 'middle plays.' The Court performance date set the other limit. Measure for Measure thus seems to belong somewhere in the same period, 1598-1604, which houses As You Like It, Hamlet, Twelfth Night, Much Ado, Othello, Henry V, Troilus and Cressida, and, less certainly, Julius Caesar.

It will be well to admit here that this at best only very vaguely defining phrase, 'Shakespeare's mature style,' has only been applied to a handful of passages

in the play: both of the Angelo-Isabella interviews (II, 2 and 4), the Duke's 'Be absolute for death' consolatio (III, 1, 5-41), Claudio's recognition of the horrors of death (III, 1, 118-132), and, finally, the 'Take, O, take those lips away' lyric (IV, 1, 1-6).[1]

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1 I doubt that Shakespeare wrote this beautiful song but it is the rankest heresy to deny him full responsibility for it. An expanded version of the song appears in a later Fletcher play, The Bloody Brother (c. 1616). It is, of course possible that Fletcher borrowed the song from Measure for Measure, but it is equally possible that both borrowed it from some common source. In all events, Shakespeare uses it to allow the Duke-actor, who has just closed one scene, to get in position to come on again in the next. The apologies offered for the song by Mariana underline the theatricality of the device:

Mariana: Break off thy song, and haste thee quick away,
Here comes a man of comfort, whose advice
Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.
I cry you mercy, sir, and well would wish
You had not found me here so musical.
Let me excuse me, and believe me so,
My mirth it much displeas'd, but pleas'd my woe.

Duke: 'Tis good; though Music oft hath such a charm
To make bad, good; and good provoke to harm.
I pray you tell me, hath anybody inquir'd for me...

Elaborate efforts have been made to justify the song as appropriate to the scene and Mariana's sorrows. W. R. Bowden (in The English Dramatic Lyric, 1603-42: A Study in Stuart Dramatic Technique, 1951) does not commit himself on the question of Shakespeare's authorship, but he recognizes that the song "establishes her [Mariana] at once as a typical forsaken lady and an object of sympathy" (25).

The New Cambridge editors are similarly non-committal. They publish the additional stanza of the song as it appears in Fletcher's play and quote approvingly Theobald's judgment that the stanza was omitted 'by Mariana, as not suiting a female character':

Hide, O hide those hills of snow
Which thy frozen bosom bears,
On whose tops the pinks that grow
Are of those that April wears.
But first set my poor heart free,
Bound in icy chains by thee.

The lines beginning 'Break off thy song' acquire a strange appropriateness in light of this additional stanza. The strongest presumption seems to be in favor of the view that the song was a popular favorite inserted here for obvious practical reasons — and to give the boy-singer in the Globe company some opportunity to perform.

This leaves much of the play open to the charge of mediocrity, and the great majority of critics have not hesitated, with varying degrees of heat or caution, to bring this charge against the play's stylistic merits. With the new and higher regard for the play is coming an attendant higher regard for the play's 'style' and, thus, for the pains Shakespeare took in writing it. Milton Crane has recently singled out Measure for Measure for the richness and the variety of uses to which its prose has been put,[1] Hardin Craig has sought to encourage a reconsideration of the alleged 'bad poetry' in this and other plays as possible deliberate experiments,[2] and the eulogists have all indicated an appreciation of the play's stylistic qualities that would shock their forebears.

A full stylistic analysis is beyond the scope of this study, but it may be helpful here to indicate briefly a few of the facts on which scholars and critics have constructed their efforts to locate Measure for Measure chronologically in the canon. The total length

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1 Shakespeare's Prose (1951), 110-114. This work is disappointingly naive in its approach to the theater, but it is welcome as the first full-scale effort to describe the logic of Shakespeare's use of prose for purposes other than the usual low comedy episodes.

2 Op. cit., passim. It is noteworthy that Craig should be the one to propose such a reevaluation, for elsewhere he has not hesitated to condemn Measure for Measure as a play 'hastily finished if not hastily composed.'

of the play is 2820 lines;[1] thus, it is somewhat shorter than the average of 2920 for all Shakespeare's plays, but slightly longer than the average of 2615 for the comedies.[2] We are clearly entitled to think of Measure for Measure as a medium-sized play. The prose-content is remarkably high (somewhat more than 40%), another fact which places the play quite clearly in the 'middle group': 1 Henry IV (46%), 2 Henry IV (52%), Much Ado (76%), Henry V (42%), As You Like It (58%), Twelfth Night (65%), Hamlet (30%), Merry Wives (88%), Troilus and Cressida (34%), All's Well (39%).[3] To a

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1 These figures, for whatever little they may be worth, are all based on the metrical tables in Chambers, William Shakespeare, II, 398-402. It will be important to remember that this omnium gatherum was not published until 1930, before which date most scholars relied on Fleay's tables, which Chambers so exercised himself to correct. I have used these tables only for general bearings, as I believe Chambers intended them to be used.

2 See Dover Wilson's effort to explain away the difference between Measure for Measure's length and that of The Tempest (2062), which he believes to be the normal length for plays presented at court. In his view, 1865 lines represent the play as it was abridged for its court performance and the remainder represent the reviser's subsequent expansion for public performances. There is no proof for the view that plays were cut for court, and the whole argument (see pp. lll-2 of the New Cambridge edition) hardly seems to require refutation.

3 It must be remembered that only the most general grouping is under discussion here. Generalizations are not to be inferred from these statistics, but it is notable that, except for Love's Labor's Lost (augmented in 1604?), the demonstrably early plays contain very little prose and that, for some reason, there is a decline in the amount of prose used in the last plays.

large extent, then, Crane's conclusion concerning the prose of Measure for Measure seems warranted:

> The prose in Measure for Measure, barring the comic prose and such conventional usages as Angelo's letter, centers around the Duke's disguise with its attendant complications. It is a remarkable use of prose, and the most extended example of this use in the plays. It provides an additional element of contrast..., rendering more complex the construction of individual scenes and elaborating the technical structure of the entire play.[1]

Chambers counts 89 rhymed lines and 1577 lines of blank verse in Measure for Measure. It is especially hazardous to interpret these facts. With respect to the rhymed lines, we should note that 89, although very low in relation to the average for all the plays, is somewhere near average for the plays in the 'middle group.[2] Apparently, Shakespeare was willing to play at rhyming whenever the opportunity presented itself; Measure for Measure seemed to present few such opportunities. Most of the rhymed-lines are to be found in

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1 Op. cit., 114. It may be objected that the distinctions between dramatic verse and dramatic prose are never so apparent to a spectator or auditor as they are to a reader, and this platitude has frequently been invoked in efforts to minimize the importance of Shakespeare's verse. It may also be objected that this breakdown of the verse-prose distinctions may simply indicate Shakespeare wrote Measure for Measure hurriedly or with little interest. Yet it should be noted that Shakespeare was moderately consistent in his use of prose for the Duke in disguise and of verse for the Duke as Duke. Nowhere in the play is this more apparent than in Act V, which so many critics have regarded as 'hurried' work.

2 There is, however, considerably less rhyming going on here than in Troilus and Cressida (186), All's Well (279), As You Like It (217), and Lear. (169).

the Duke's speeches, notable for a kind of sententiousness we associate with Polonius. Twenty-eight of these 89 rhymed-lines are short lines: the song accounts for six and the Duke's octosyllabic couplets at the end of Act III account for the remaining 22.[1] The remaining are 61 lines of regular rhymed couplets which appear, for the most part, where we expect them, namely to mark the end of scenes or to signal the entrance of new characters within scenes.

The most notable stylistic feature of the play is the unexpected intermingling of verse and prose. Dover Wilson builds extensively on this fact in his abridgment-expansion theory. Consider the following Folio passages:

ENTER MARIANA, and BOY SINGING

Song

ENTER DUKE

Mariana: Break off thy song, and haste thee quick away,
Here comes a man of comfort, whose advice
Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.
I cry you mercy, Sir, and well could wish
You had not found me here so musical.
Let me excuse me, and believe me so,
My mirth it much displeas'd, but pleas'd my woe.

Duke: 'Tis good; though Music oft hath such a charm
To make bad, good; and good provoke to harm.
I pray you tell me, hath anybody inquir'd for me here today; much upon this time have I promis'd here to meet.

Mariana: You have not been inquired after: I have sat here all day.

ENTER ISABEL

Duke: I do constantly believe you: the time is come even now. I shall crave your forbearance a little, may be I will call upon you anon for some good advantage to yourself.

Mariana: I am always bound to you.

EXIT

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1 These are, it is to be recalled, the couplets which most critics regard as a non-Shakespearean interpolation.

Duke: Very well met, and well come:
What is the news from this good deputy?
Isabella: He hath a Garden circummur'd with Brick,
Whose western side is with a Vineyard backt;
And to that vineyard is a planched gate...

The remaining 45 lines of the scene (IV, 1) are in regular pentameter. The scene, as a whole, is one of the most transparently theatrical scenes in the play. This is nowhere more in evidence than in the stage directions for the Duke who, after he has received Isabella's report on Angelo's arrangements, summarily calls Mariana back:

Isabella: ...for I have made him know,
I have a servant comes with me along
That stays upon me; whose persuasion is,
I come about my Brother.
Duke: 'Tis well borne up.
I have not yet made known to Mariana
ENTER MARIANA
A word of this: what ho, within; come forth,
I pray you be acquainted with this Maid,
She comes to do you good.
Isabella: I do desire the like.
Duke: Do you persuade yourself that I respect you?
Mariana: Good Friar, I know you do, and have found it.
Duke: Take then this your companion by the hand
Who hath a story ready for your ear:
I shall attend your leisure, but make haste
The vaporous night approaches.
Mariana: Will 't please you walk aside.
EXIT
Duke: O Place, and greatness: millions of false eyes
Are stuck upon thee: volumes of report
Run with these false, and most contrarious Quest
Upon thy doings: thousand escapes of wit
Make thee the father of their idle dream,
And rack thee in their fancies. Welcome, how agreed?
ENTER MARIANA AND ISABELLA
Isabella: She 'll take the enterprise upon her father,
If you advise it.

Duke: It is not my consent,
But my entreaty too.
Isabella: Little have you to say
When you depart from him, but soft and low,
Remember now my brother.
Mariana: Fear me not.
Duke: Nor gentle daughter, fear you not at all:
He is your husband on a pre-contract:
To bring you thus together 'tis no sin,
Sith that the Justice of your title to him
Doth flourish the deceit. Come, let us go,
Our Corn's to reap, for yet our Tithe's to sow.
EXEUNT

One can only wonder why this staging was so awkwardly conceived. Why was Mariana not kept on stage during the Duke-Isabella interview? It is not easy to see what advantage is gained by dismissing her, calling her back, dismissing her again to learn from Isabella what the latter has just told the Duke, and, finally, calling her back again with Isabella to confirm the obvious. The clumsiness of the whole scene is also evident in the six lines ('O Place and greatness...') the Duke-actor was expected to speak while Mariana and Isabella 'walk aside.' The lines are not relevant to the immediate action, and it is quite possible that Warburton was correct in his view that the six lines were moved from another position in the play (III, 2, 196-200):

Lucio: ...The Duke (I say to thee again) would
eat Mutton on Fridays. He's now past
it, yet (and I say to thee) he would
mouth with a beggar, though she smelt
brown-bread and Garlic: say that I
said so: Farewell.
EXIT
Duke: No might, nor greatness in morality
Can censure 'scape: Back-wounding calumny
The whitest vertue strikes. What King so
strong,
Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue?

But who comes here?
ENTER ESCALUS, PROVOST, AND BAWD.

If one inserts the six lines from IV, 1 before 'But who comes here,' one gets a coherent whole:

> No might, nor greatness in mortality
> Can censure 'scape: Back-wounding calumny
> The whitest vertue strikes. What King so strong,
> Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue?
> O Place, and greatness: millions of false eyes
> Are stuck upon thee: volumes of report
> Run with these false, and most contrarious Quest
> Upon thy doings: thousand escapes of wit
> Make thee the father of their idle dream,
> And rack thee in their fancies.

The scene, as it stands, smacks of playhouse rearrangements and we can only wonder what prompted them. In this instance, the sudden introduction at the beginning of this scene of a short prose passage is probably to be ascribed to the same reordering that is elsewhere so evident in the scene. Whether, however, the scene originally began with the song and seven lines of regular blank verse and the prose was inserted, or whether the blank verse introduction was the later insertion is beyond proof.[1]

Another instance in which prose and verse are surprisingly mingled occurs in Act III, but here we seem to be confronted with a conscious, perhaps planned, effect. The act opens with the Duke's efforts to prepare Claudio for death (lines 1-47) and the Isabella-Claudio interview (lines 48-151). All of this is

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1 The fact that the largest part of the scene is marked by regular verse does not necessarily argue for the prose interpolation.

highly charged — and it is all marked by the use of verse. Suddenly, however, there is a sharp transition to prose, a most businesslike kind of prose, made particularly noticeable because prose has not been used for the speeches of Isabella or the Duke before this point.[1] When Isabella storms off after Claudio suggests that she comply with Angelo's proposition, the Duke-friar steps out of his hiding-place and asks Isabella to hear him for a moment. The prose begins:

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1 Many critics have asserted their belief that at this point in the play, Shakespeare's vigor or interest or, even in some cases, his part in the writing of the play came to an end. Certainly, it is true that the structural climax of the play has been achieved and the movement of the play henceforward will be 'down-' ward' in the sense that it moves toward the denouement. It is my own view that every play, Shakespearean or otherwise, reaches a point at which the audience's interest has been engaged to its maximum capacity and after this point there must inevitably be a falling off in interest. The practical playwright, having posed the propelling question, must exercise his ingenuity and resourcefulness to the utmost to maintain his audiences' interest beyond this mid-point. In Measure for Measure, the Lucio-Duke episodes and the development of a new question, How will Angelo be caught out?, represent Shakespeare's attempts to maintain the dramatic interest. How well he succeeds is, of course, a matter to be judged by the individual reading or, better, seeing the play. Many have clearly found the second half of the play markedly inferior to the first half — and, thus, perhaps have been led into the error of ignoring the total effect. Others, asserting that the second half of the play is the more important because it contains Shakespeare's 'final view,' have been led into ignoring the fact that the first half contains the most subtle characterization and impressive poetry.

What is certain, then, is that the two parts are demonstrably different: the first half may be conveniently called the 'poetic' half and the second half, the 'prosaic' half. I suspect that the difference proceeds inevitably from the story itself and is inherent in the very nature of comedy.

Isabella: O fie, fie, fie:
Thy sin's not accidental, but a Trade;
Mercy to thee would prove itself a Bawd,
'Tis best that thou diest quickly.
Claudio: O hear me Isabella.
Duke: Vouchsafe a word, young sister, but one word.
Isabella: What is your Will?
Duke: Might you dispense with your leisure, I would by and by have some speech with you: the satisfaction I would require, is likewise your own benefit.
Isabella: I have no superfluous leisure, my stay must be stolen out of other affairs: but I will attend you a while.
Duke: Son, I have overheard what hath past between you and your sister. Angelo had never the purpose to corrupt her; only he hath made an assay of her vertue, to practice his judgment with the disposition of natures. She (having the truth of honour in her) hath made him that gracious denial, which he is most glad to receive: I am Confessor to Angelo, and I know this to be true, therefore prepare yourself to death: ...

Prose is employed for the whole of the Duke's interview with Isabella (through the end of III, 1 as indicated in modern editions, lines 152-281). Dover Wilson accounts for this long prose passage as "Shakespearian verse worked up into prose by a reviser."[1] Wilson's conjecture may not be without warrant, but it does not

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1 Op. cit., 136. Other criticisms of this section involve 'clumsy staging,' 'scraps of verse embedded in the prose,' and the stiltedness of the prose itself. In my view, there is nothing particularly 'clumsy' about the staging of this scene: Wilson objects to the fact that Isabella must 'stand around' during the Duke's short speech with Claudio and that the Provost is on stage 'for no ostensible reason, since the Duke dismisses him at once.' It is clear to me that the Provost-actor was expected to converse in dumb show with the Isabella-actor during this 'awkward' interval. The 'scraps of verse' are, as Chambers and others have noted, rather arbitrarily culled out by Wilson and are not really different from the surrounding prose. The last charge, that the prose is stilted, has, I think, some warrant, but this quality is not inconsistent with the manner of all the utterances of the Duke, whether disguised or not.

seem to have been conceived in the light of other possible explanations for this prose section.

First, it should be noted that this prose begins just at the point where Shakespeare begins to depart most notably from the source-play, Promos and Cassandra.[1] Shakespeare's own plot design begins to manifest itself here. I can conceive that, as he abandoned his model, he roughed out this section in prose in order to work more speedily. Perhaps he intended to return to the passage at a later time to versify it: his first consideration, however, would simply be to initiate — and explain — the new turn the plot (as he found it in Whetstone) is to take. The variation from the source requires the introduction of a considerable amount of expository matter perhaps best introduced in prose. We are in the area beyond proof at this point, but I think this conjecture gets us at least as close to the essential problem as Dover Wilson's 'reviser' theory.

On more purely esthetic grounds, the prose results in a slackening of tension after the intensity of the first half of Act III. The contrast between the Isabella-Claudio interview and this part of the act in which the Duke unfolds his plan is salutary and a thoroughly Shakespearean calm-following-the-storm effect. Even if

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1 Whetstone's play and other alleged sources will be considered in Part Three. It need only be noted here that the counterpart of Isabella in Promos and Cassandra does sacrifice her virtue to save her brother.

Shakespeare had written this material in verse, it would, of necessity, have seemed a pedestrian sort of verse after the magnificent fireworks preceding it. To read the passage in its entirety is to be struck by the appropriateness of prose as the medium in which Shakespeare worked here. What, actually, accounts for the sudden shift from tolerably good verse to a workmanlike prose is a matter on which we shall probably never be satisfied. We do not yet really know very much about Shakespeare's unconventional uses of prose. Nevertheless, the intermingling of verse and prose here in Act III seems no more to signal the hand of a 'reviser' than the same sort of startling intermingling in King Lear, Macbeth, (V, 1), and, most particularly, Othello, all plays which seem to belong to the same early-Jacobean period in which Measure for Measure is 'placed.' It will be well to maintain a caution in this matter, especially when the actual problems Shakespeare faced in reworking an older play and purely esthetic grounds can adequately explain this surprising prose-verse combining.[1]

There is little to be said concerning the blank verse of Measure for Measure. There is considerably more in the first half of the play than there is in the second: approximately 900 of the total 1577 blank verse lines can be found before III, line 152. Most

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1 It is important to qualify here Milton Crane's remarks on Measure for Measure quoted earlier. The Duke as Duke does not always call for verse, and, conversely, the Duke as Friar frequently speaks in both media. (See especially II, 3, the beginning of Act III, and Iv, 1.)

of the blank verse is 'normal' (1395 out of 1577, by Chambers' count). There is a surprisingly large number of alexandrines, the presence of which may reflect the great variety of metrical forms in the Whetstone play. The number, 65, is surpassed or equalled in only a handful of Shakespeare's other plays, and, curiously enough, these plays are relatively late plays: Othello (73), Lear (64), Winter's Tale (63). There is also a relatively large number of short blank verse lines (117), but I hesitate to interpret this fact because many of these seem close to prose. Again, however, the 'short line' appears more frequently in the middle and late plays: Lear (191), Othello (166), Hamlet (154), Troilus and Cressida (147), Antony and Cleopatra (143), Coriolanus (136), Julius Caesar (108), Richard III (100). From such comparisons one is bound to recognize again that Shakespeare, at the time he wrote Measure for Measure, had developed the blank verse line into a flexible medium. Perhaps he was writing more rapidly; certainly he was writing with a greater sense of his own mastery over his primary poetic medium. A glance at the other plays listed above indicates another surprising fact: Measure for Measure is the only comedy — with the single exception of The Winter's Tale — which shares in these aspects of the 'mature style.' There is, of course, great danger in pushing these purely quantitative counts too far, but we are

entitled to think of Measure for Measure as a play partaking of stylistic features most notably present in Shakespeare's highest achievements. If, following Dover Wilson, we are to condemn Measure for Measure as un-Shakespearean in parts because of 'mislineation,' 'broken lines,' and 'verse fossils,' we will have to ignore the eminently respectable company Measure for Measure keeps.

In respect to other metrical tabulations, the play shows little that is noteworthy. Chambers finds 377 feminine-endings, a figure which approximates the average 361 for all the plays. The most that can be said on this score is that there is a higher percentage of feminine-endings in all the middle and late plays, a characteristic in which Measure for Measure notably shares. The same is true with respect to extra mid-line syllables. Chambers finds 98, a number surpassed by only five plays, all of which are late plays: Othello (208), Lear (131), Antony and Cleopatra and Coriolanus (120), Troilus and Cressida (104). The percentage of overflows (23%) is not unusually high in relation to the middle and late plays, but it is notably higher than the average for the early plays. There are no weak-endings and a relatively low number of light-endings (7 in relation to the average 14 for all plays): these statistics indicate only that Measure for Measure is not one of the late plays, in which

overflows, and light and weak endings abound.

There is a moderately large number of verse-paragraphs, 'broken ends,' split lines, and of unsplit lines with internal pauses, and again it is evident that Measure for Measure does not belong among the earliest or, in this case, even the early-middle plays.[1] The evidence all points in the same direction: Measure for Measure partakes of the metrical qualities we associate most clearly with Shakespeare's early-Jacobean plays. In fact, if one were to choose the most nearly typical of these late-middle period plays, they would be Measure for Measure and Othello. Here the abandonment of the earlier metrical regularity is marked by the extreme flexibility of the lines, but the aberrations and the breakdown of all the earlier patterns are not so overwhelmingly in evidence as in the last plays.

Measure for Measure is more notable for the large number of once-words in the play. Again, the ground on which we proceed is shaky, but the best evidence here again suggests that Shakespeare wrote Measure for Measure at the height of his verbal power. J. M. Robertson is the only scholar who had made any effort to study the diction of the play and, unfortunately, he was interested only in discovering how many of the

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1 See Chambers' Metrical Tables IV and V, William Shakespeare, II, 401-2.

once-words in this play were 'favorite' words of George Chapman.[1] Robertson listed many of the once-words alphabetically (doubtlessly, as he had culled them out of the Concordance), and the effect of the list is to make the unwary more than a little impressed by the possibility that Shakespeare here reworked a Chapman play. However, when one compiles a list of Measure for Measure's once-words according to their appearance in the play, one finds such a wide distribution of the words as to preclude the possibility that Measure for Measure represents a Shakespearean overlay or reworking on any separate parts.[2] Robertson found many traces of Chapman — and occasionally of Greene — in Measure for Measure, but I incline to the view that Chapman, as one of Shakespeare's most proliferous rivals, was, like Shakespeare himself, a mirror of the linguistic changes going on at the time. Chapman may as well have been echoing Shakespeare as Shakespeare reworking an older play by Chapman.[3] Doubtlessly, Chapman and Shakespeare borrowed from one another just as they borrowed from others and were, in their turn,

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1 "The problem of Measure for Measure," The Shakespeare Canon, II, 158-212.

2 See Appendix A, "Once-words in Measure for Measure.

3 Parrott's 'accepted' chronology for the Chapman plays is as tentative as the accepted chronology for Shakespeare.

lenders.[1]

The virtue of studying a list of once-words is always to recognize at once the special features of the language of the play. Despite the reputation of the play for lubricity, there is little unique in the diction of this play to substantiate the view: groping (for trouts in a peculiar river), common houses, 'bad woman' (in Elbow's genteel manner), hothouse, uncleanliness, splay, whoremonger, bawd-born, virgin-violator, concupiscible, carnally, sheep-biting, flesh-monger.[2] What is most notable in this connection is, however, the homeliness of a large number of these

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1 George Coffin Taylor has compiled a list of words for which Shakespeare was indebted to Florio's Montaigne, and many of Robertson's 'Chapmanesque' words appear there: concupiscible, institutions, nicety, paralleled, plausible, rebate, remissness, remonstrance. (See Shakespeare's Debt to Montaigne, 1925.)

2 This is not to say that, by Victorian standards, Measure for Measure is a 'clean' play. Yet, there is a surprising subtlety and, even, delicacy in the manner Shakespeare wrote the Isabella-Angelo-Mariana material. Most of the terms listed above are from the 'low' comedy characters, all of whom belong to the Falstaffian world where the language and accompanying action is far riper than it can be said to be here. The question is, however, perhaps no longer worth arguing: I suspect that the present-day audience is more like Shakespeare's audiences than any which have intervened between the early seventeenth and twentieth centuries, and we are not likely to boggle at anything we find in Measure for Measure.

It may also be appropriate here to comment on the number of writers who make elaborate comparisons between the 'brothel' scenes in Measure for Measure and Pericles, despite the fact that there are no 'brothel' scenes in the former. We 'hear' something of what goes on in Mistress Overdone's establishment (always a 'taphouse,' a 'hothouse,' or a 'house'), but Shakespeare managed to maintain a respectful distance by keeping to the streets and courthouse of Vienna.

once-words. It is always dangerous to assume that all those words which seem to us crude or plain enjoyed a similar status in Shakespeare's time, but it is hard to imagine that any of the following were any more aristocratic or bookish then than now: leavened, unscoured, dribbling, birch, snow-broth, splay, gnarled, skyey, bark, bite the nose, thick-ribbed, picklock, cry bail, go to kennel, clack-dish, shy, tundish, back-wounding, house-eaves, planched, mealed, brown paper (and ginger), touse, baldpate, sheep-biting.[1] Here we find part of the reason Miss Spurgeon found herself puzzled when she tried to classify the images of Measure for Measure.[2] She found two contradictory qualities when she examined the imagery:

> The first is that we find among them, chiefly in the speech of the Duke, some of the most beautiful, as well as the most thoughtful similes in the whole of Shakespeare. ...The second remarkable point is that out of the 136 images in the play, I feel I can classify 18 only as 'poetical,' because by far the largest group (27 in number) seem to fall under another category which I can only call vivid, quaint, or grotesque. It is this which is the most noticeable feature about the quality of the images as a whole. Often these latter ones are poetical as well, from sheer force and

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1 This feature becomes even more remarkable when we add those words Shakespeare used but rarely, two or three times, in his career: giglet, scarecrow, tickle (adj./adv.), kersey, milkmaid, trot (noun), clod, punk, peach (verb), stockfish, bastard (wine), carman, tilter, fallow (noun), grope, skin (verb), bark (verb), trout, goad, palsied, gravel, perch (noun), tongue (verb), hent, great-bellied.

2 Many of these homely once-words project us into some of the dominant images of the play. Perhaps 'imagery' requires a separate section in this stylistic analysis, but it can be conveniently and expeditiously approached through diction, as I choose to do here.

> brilliance...but what strikes one first is the unusual pictures they conjure up, and their touch of grimness, grotesqueness, or a vividness so piercing as to give one a shock almost as if from lightning. ...Shakespeare seems to be torn in this play, as nowhere else, save in Troilus and Cressida, and to some extent, in Hamlet, between deeply stirred idealistic thought and reflection, and a tendency to cynical bitterness and grim realism which delights in a certain violence and even distortion of speech and figure, and sometimes of incident.[1]

One may quarrel with the interpretation Miss Spurgeon put upon her findings, but the evidence she compiled is altogether consistent with my own compilation of once-words in which there is a notable preponderance. In general, this easy admixture of Latinate and 'crude' diction is more impressive in the later than in the earlier plays. Perhaps this is a mark of Shakespeare's self-liberation from the bookish traditions in which his earlier work was formed; perhaps he simply learned to write more easily and economically as he learned more about his fellow-actors and his audiences. In all events, we find in Measure for Measure more marks of the 'mature style' when we watch his word-formations at work. Nashe and Chapman may outstrip Shakespeare in the invention of new words,[2] but neither holds a

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1 Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us (1935), 287-8. Perhaps it should be noted here that, although she follows the older tradition of regarding Measure for Measure as a play written while Shakespeare was like "a man with a gnawing toothache [taking] pleasure in biting on the tooth, and thereby increasing the pain," Miss Spurgeon seems to have a higher regard for the play than most of her predecessors.

2 G. D. Willcock, "Shakespeare and Elizabethan English," A Companion to Shakespeare Studies (1934), 129. Nashe, in particular, disliked the kind of native words Shakespeare so tellingly employs here.

candle to him in putting old and familiar words to fresh and vigorous uses.

This is not to say, however, that Measure for Measure lacks its inkhorn vocabulary, much of which is obscured to us by the continued and denizened use through three centuries: denunciation, propagation (legal use), infliction, institution, renouncement, austereness, prolixious, stricture, prompture, vastidity (lost to us), plausible, generative, circummured, gradation, disvouch, concupiscible, disvalue, confiscation, definitive and gratulate. The Latinates, however, are approximately confined to the characters with some pretense at learning: Duke Vincentio, Angelo, Isabella, Claudio; the homely words, on the contrary, are to be found in the speeches of all the characters in the play:

Duke: ...I love the people,
But do not like to stage me to their eyes...

...Now as fond fathers,
Having bound up the threatening twigs of birch,
Only to stick it in their children's sight
For terror, not to use, in time the rod
Becomes more mock'd than fear'd; so our decrees
Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead,
And liberty plucks justice by the nose,
The baby beats the nurse, and quite athwart
Goes all decorum.

Lucio: ...Lord Angelo, a man whose blood
Is very snow-broth...

Angelo: We must not make a scarecrow of the law,
Setting it up to fear the birds of prey
And let it keep one shape, till custom make it

Their perch and not their terror.

Isabella: Because authority, though it err like others,
Hath yet a kind of medicine in itself
That skins the vice o' th' top...

Claudio: Ay but to die and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod, and the delighted spirit
To bathe in fiery floods...

Mariana: ...a man of comfort, whose advice
Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.

What we notice most frequently in Measure for Measure is the surprising juxtaposition of the polysyllabic Latinate with the monosyllabic native word which, invariably for us, underlines the short word. Perhaps Shakespeare's audience was more likely to notice the long word of foreign derivation— we have no means of knowing, but they could hardly have missed the most effective of these combinations.

To a large extent, the wide use of simple, forceful diction in Measure for Measure betokens the high proverb-content of the play.[1] It also suggests the validity of such claims as those advanced by G. Wilson Knight and others for the unusual suitability of biblical lore and moral sentences in this play, for

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1 Tilley's A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England (1951) records 68 imbedded proverbs in Measure for Measure, and the figure does not include such clearly proverbial passages as that on the 'threatening twigs of birch,' that on 'the baby beats the nurse,' that on 'an o'ergrown lion... that goes not out to prey,' etc. Nevertheless, it is surprising to discover how few of the striking 'common' words found their way into Measure for Measure by association with the proverbial expressions Shakespeare so masterfully used. A separate study of the matter needs to be done. Here I can only advance my general impressions of the matter.

implicit in this homiletic overlay is, of course, the use of plain language.[1] Yet, despite the prominence of biblical allusions and proverbialisms in the language and imagery of the play, it remains true that most of the notable 'Diction of Common Life' in Measure for Measure is not to be found in the biblical allusions or the most clearly recognizable proverbial passages, just as it is not necessarily found in the speeches of the more 'elevated' characters.

Gregor Sarrazin attempted to determine the chronology of the plays by charting the words used only twice ('Dislegomena') and three times ('Trilogomena') in the plays, and although crudely and naively conceived, his study of Shakespeare's diction is not without interest.[2] Sarrazin's results are, at best, suggestive and worthy of brief consideration, chiefly insofar as they provide further evidence by which the 'disintegrators' may be refuted. It is

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1 See Knight, "Measure for Measure and the Gospels," The Wheel of Fire (1930), 73-96; Richmond Noble, Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge, and Use of the Book of Common Prayer (1935), 221-228, in which Noble is especially effective in demonstrating the errors in Johnson's commentary which were fostered by improper recollection of the Bible. Much recent criticism of Measure for Measure is deeply indebted to these two works and, indeed, it is doubtful if much has been added to our understanding of the play's special 'texture' since those studies appeared.

2 Sarrazin's tables, "Wortechos bei Shakespeare," II, Shak. Jahrbuch, XXXIV (1898), 119-169, are not as accurate or as complete as one might wish; for a sympathetic evaluation of Sarrazin's plan, see William Shakespeare, I, 255.

significant that again the general results tie Measure for Measure most securely to the middle plays. It is impossible to ignore the great number of words appearing only in the Henry IV plays, Hamlet, Othello, Troilus and Cressida, and the last plays, in addition to Measure for Measure. As with the study of once-words, we are looking only for another link in the chain of stylistic evidence.

Play	'Dislegomena'	'Trilegomena'
1 Henry VI	confutation extirp superficial	giglet (Cymb) scarecrow (1 H IV)
Titus	zodiac	new-married (H V)
2 Henry VI	tickle[1]	blasphemy (Temp)
3 Henry VI	---	fearless (R II)
C of Errors	---	---
Venus & Adonis	---	---
Richard III	encouragement	countermand (M. M.) resemblance (W. T.) unlawfully (O)
Love's L. L.	thanksgiving three-piled	demigod (M. of V.) kersey (T of S)
Lucrece	uncleanness	dreadfully (Hamlet) pollution (T.N.)
Romeo & Jul	benedicite well-seeming	---
2 Gent. V.	milkmaid	Hallowmas (R II)
Mids. N. D.	seamaid	---

1 But see Hamlet, II, 2, 337, tickle o' the sere.

Taming of S.	continency trot (noun)	kersey (L.L.L.) mistaking (Temp) witless (T & C)
King John	secondary (noun)	clod (Much Ado) newness (Cymb) supporter (T.N.)
Merch. of V.	---	burgher (A.Y.L.I.) demigod (L.L.L.) urine (Macbeth)
Richard II	admonition formally	fearless (3 H VI) Hallowmas (2 G V) personally (H VIII)
1 Henry IV	athwart confute contrarious	bastard (twice) insensible (Cor) scarecrow (1 H VI) stockfish (Temp)
Merry Wives	---	avised (twice) punk (All's Well) vehemency (H VIII)
2 Henry IV	absolutely carman healthy nine-score peach-colored	---
Much Ado	intemperate	clod (King John) malefactor (A & C)
Julius Caesar	---	observer (Hamlet)
As You Like It	tilter	burgher (M of V) Friday (T & C) opening (T & C)
Henry V	dawn (noun) envelop fallow (noun)	condemnation (Cymb) new-married (Titus)
Hamlet[1]	concerning debatement grope o'erweigh skin (verb) whensoever	bark (v.) (A & C) dreadfully (Lucrece) giving-out (O) glimpse (T & C) observer (J. C.) signet (Timon) re(de)liver

1 Some allowance should perhaps be made for the unusual length of Hamlet in evaluating these figures.

Twelfth Night	cohere	pollution (Lucrece)
	trout	profanation (M. M.)
	villanously	supporter (King John)
Lover's Compl.	---	dialect (Lear)
All's Well	reprieve	fondness (H VIII)
	unquestioned	goad (Cor)
		novelty (T & C)
		punk (M.W.W.)
Othello	accommodation	delighted (Cymb)
	accountant	depute (twice)
	conserve	exist (Lear)
	craftily	giving-out (Hamlet)
	gradation	grange (W.T.)
		statesman (W.T.)
		unlawfully (R III)
		votarist (Timon)
Timon of A.	arch-villain	meddler (W.T.)
	benefactor	sciatica (T & C)
		signet (Hamlet)
		votarist (O)
Measure for M.	shy	countermand (R III)
		profanation (T.N.)
King Lear	---	dialect (Lover's Compl.)
		exist (O)
Macbeth	---	ravin (Cymb)
		urine (M of V)
Coriolanus	audible	goad (All's Well)
	palsied	information (H VIII)
		insensible (1 H IV)
Troilus & Cress.	after-dinner	Friday (A.Y.L.I.)
	dependant (adj)	glimpse (Hamlet)
	grasp (n)	gravel (H VIII)
	serpigo	novelty (All's Well)
		opening (A.Y.L.I.)
		sciatica (Timon)
		witless (T of S)
Antony and Cleo.	adulterous	bark (v) (Hamlet)
	fallible	decorum (twice)
		dependancy (Cymb)
		malefactor (Much Ado)
		stage (twice) (verb)
Pericles	perch (noun)	---
	respite (v)	

Cymbeline	fedary	condemnation (H V)
	journal	delighted (O)
	leidger	dependancy (A & C)
	tongue (verb)	giglet (1 H VI)
		newness (King John)
		ravin (Macbeth)
Winter's Tale	attorneyed	grange (O)
	hent	meddler (Timon)
	scandalous	resemblance (R III)
		statesman (O)
Tempest	hollowly	blasphemy (2 H VI)
	sanctimonious	mistaking (T of S)
	unwonted	stockfish (1 H IV)
Henry VIII	covent	fondness (All's Well)
	great-bellied	gravel (T & C)
	jury	information (Cor)
	lay	personally (R II)
		vehemency (M.W.W.)
Sonnets	dressing	---1
	waste (adj)	

As in the case of textual analysis, when we conclude our consideration of the stylistic features which make Measure for Measure unique, we find that the kind of hard facts we seek for simply do not emerge. Conservatively, it can be said that the play shows more of the qualities we associate with the later (that is, those written after 1597) than with either the earliest or the last plays. The possibility remains, however, that the 'disintegrators' are right

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1 Alfred Hart has studied vocabulary-development in Shakespeare and his work best dramatizes the problems facing any scholar embarking on this hazardous enterprise. His conclusions do not always accord with Sarrazin; part of this disagreement results from Hart's greater interest in settling authorship problems, particularly as they relate to the earlier plays. See "Vocabularies of Shakespeare's Plays" and "The Growth of Shakespeare's Vocabulary," RES, XIX (1943), 128-140 and 242-254.

However, in the matter of the quantity of once-words ('peculiar' words, in Hart's terms) and the method of recognizing semantic (rather than grammatical) units my figures and those Hart arrived at are in substantial accord.

and that Measure for Measure, as received, represents a thorough reworking of an early play, but, by stylistic evidence, the possibility becomes untenably remote. Perhaps the most that can be said in favor of the Dover Wilson and Robertson theories on stylistic grounds is that a remarkably close kind of collaboration must be postulated in order to explain the stylistic homogeneity of the play itself and in relation to more easily dated other plays in the canon.

PART ONE

CHAPTER FIVE

MEASURE FOR MEASURE IN THE FIRST FOLIO: GENERIC ANALYSIS

Swinburne called *Measure for Measure* "a great indefinable poem or unclassifiable play,"[1] a judgment which has been gratefully echoed by subsequent critics as an excellent summation of the problems posed by the play. Whatever problems in classifying the play exist for moderns, there can, however, be little reason to doubt that it was — to the First Folio editors, at least — a comedy. We have already noted that it ap-

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1 Swinburne was, as in his other criticism, blind to the dramatic values of the play, but his rhapsodic consideration of *Measure for Measure* remains one of the best statements of the play's poetic merits.

The genre-problem, as Swinburne posed it, is not, of course, identical with the genre-problem as we normally conceive it in these times. Swinburne's problem was to decide whether *Measure for Measure* is a poem or a play, and, ridiculous as it may seem, this is the basic question in all Shakespearean dramatic criticism and one on which the individual critic must somewhere state his position. This study is based on the premise that all of Shakespeare's plays are to be most fruitfully studied as plays intended for the theatrical production by which plays are finally brought into existence. It may frequently be objected that I am ignoring — as Swinburne did not — the poetry that is *Measure for Measure*. To such a charge I am bound to plead guilty, but it would seem a more heinous offense in these times to ignore — as Swinburne did — the play that is *Measure for Measure*.

pears fourth among the Folio's fourteen 'comedies.' It is surprising to discover how few critics have been content to let this classification stand. Generally speaking, the task of defining the type to which a play belongs is not one of the most difficult tasks a critic must face. Despite the considerable effort devoted to the problem insofar as Measure for Measure is concerned, I am not at all sure that there is any particular difficulty here, but a problem has been called into being by the scholars and some brief consideration of it seems in order here.

The whole problem undoubtedly takes its origins from the old either/or proposition — tragedy or comedy, and this over-simple division has fostered a remarkable mistrust of the 'intermediate' or, more pejoratively, the 'indeterminate' form of play, to which, however, it should be noted, most plays conform. There are relatively few 'pure' comedies and tragedies in world drama, however true it may be that one can approximately divide plays according to whether they leave their spectators 'happy' or 'sad but uplifted.' This troublesome critical problem will be considered at greater lengths in connection with the types of source-plays on which Shakespeare may have based Measure for Measure. It will suffice here to note that Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra was called a 'Historye' and was divided into two 'Commical Discourses,'

and that Cinthio's Epitia was called a tragedia but, by its happy ending, qualifies more properly as tragi-comedy (or, to use a term Cinthio helped to popularize, tragedia di lieto fin). Source-study in this instance can be put to several uses in determining the genre to which Measure for Measure belongs.

That it is a 'comedy' has rarely occurred to most critics, chiefly one supposes because it is not 'funny' in the same sense as Twelfth Night and As You Like It. The realsim is too strong, apparently, and the fairy-tale world, the detachment and escapist atmosphere, is shattered. Dryden grouped the play with The Winter's Tale and Love's Labor's Lost as a work "either grounded on impossibilities or at least so meanly written, that the comedy neither mov'd your mirth, nor the serious part your concernment,"[1] and thus bequeathed to posterity a judgment from which many have taken comfort. Its importance is, of course, that it emphasizes the kind of critical impulse which has generated so many efforts to define Measure for Measure and enables us to see at once how intimately definitions depend on interpretations. In the history of Shakespearean scholarship the play has, then, been labeled:

(1) a comedy (justified by its inclusion among the Comedies in the First Folio and, occasionally, by a spectator's surprised announcement that, in the playhouse, the play turns out to be 'a merry, bawdy, and irresistible

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1 "Defence of the Epilogue," The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards (1672); widely reprinted.

evening's entertainment for audiences both critical and uncritical'[1])

(2) a tragedy manqué
(3) a tragi-comedy
(4) a problem play
(5) a problem comedy
(6) a dark comedy
(7) a bitter comedy
(8) a comical satire
(9) a morality play (or, more impressively, a 'drama of Christian Atonement')
(10) an anti-revenge play
(11) a political play
(12) a disguise play
(13) a realistic comedy

There is no good reason Measure for Measure should not also be called a 'dramatic romance,' but the strength of chronology has so far operated to prevent such a move.[2] There would be no cause for alarm if these labels had not been used as bludgeons by which one commentator has sought to beat down another's interpretation of the play. Unless we are wary, we begin to take the labels seriously as factual data instead of the mere hypothetical formulations which they so clearly are.

Critic A declares that, properly speaking, the play is improperly understood as anything but a tragedy which, for one reason or another, Shakespeare (or better, a reviser) suddenly turned into a comedy. But

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1 Cited by Smith, op. cit., 209.

2 But see E. M. W. Tillyard's final chapter in Shakespeare's Problem Plays (1949) for some indications that it may be fruitful to group Measure for Measure with such plays as The Winter's Tale, Cymbeline, and The Tempest.

this ignores, Critic B points out, its affinities with certain other plays advertised as 'tragi-comedies' which were written about the time Measure for Measure was written. Critic C, who has read his Sir Philip Sidney well and shares an aversion for 'mungrell Tragy-comedie,' rankles at the idea that Shakespeare wrote in such a 'genre,' and devises a new type on the basis of a 'close analogy' between Ibsen's problem-plays and Measure for Measure. 'Problem play' has its virtues but clarity is not among them, and Critic D offers as a palliative 'problem comedy.' This is equally misleading, objects Critic E, for to the untutored it implies that the comedy itself is the problem: Get rid of the word, problem, and call it simply a 'dark comedy' or a 'bitter comedy.' As soon as the word, bitter, comes into play, someone is reminded of Shakespeare's 'bitterest' contemporaries, Jonson and Marston, who, when the publication of 'literary satire' was suddenly banned (1 June 1599), invented the comical satire, a dramatic genre, with which they achieved an unprecedented popular success. The next step in defining Measure for Measure followed easily:

> We can perhaps best understand Measure for Measure if we regard it as a form of comical satire designed for a popular audience, as Troilus and Cressida was the version of the type suited to

the taste of an intelligent audience of barristers.[1] This in its turn caused trouble, chiefly, it is to be feared, because the Campbell thesis forces one to the conclusion that Shakespeare was a poor imitator of Jonson and Marston. The definition of 'comical satire' (and later, 'tragical satire') dwelled much on the Vice-character and his role in the old moralities, a fact which provided an attractive out for others. Critic M discovered that moralities were 'dramatically alive till after 1600' by studying the records of court-performances during Elizabeth's reign and thus were a powerful formative influence on Shakespeare's conception of Measure for Measure. The ground was now laid for the play to be called a Shakespearean 'attempt to work within the framework of the morality play' and, in its most elevated form, a 'drama of Christian Atonement,' to use Roy W. Battenhouse's descriptive

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1 O. J. Campbell, Shakespeare's Satire (1943), 139. Campbell makes light of the fact that Marston's The Malcontent, one of the 'most typical' of the new type, was entered in the Stationers' Register as a 'tragi-comoedia' and is described in Marston's introductory epistle ("To the Reader") as a 'comedy.' Harbage's study of the Shakespearean audience has thrown much doubt over the idea imbedded here that Shakespeare wrote differently for the Inns of Court than for the regular Globe audiences. It should also be noted that G. E. Bentley has, through Francis Fergusson, recently allowed his private opinion on Measure for Measure to be printed: in his view, the play was written ("possible, even probable") for the Inns of Court. (See Fergusson's Harvard lecture, "Philosophy and Theatre in Measure for Measure," Kenyon Review XIV (Winter, 1952), 119.)

label.[1] The view that Measure for Measure is an 'anti-revenge play' has been put forth by H. T. Price[2]

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1 S. L. Bethell (in Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition, 1944, 14) had taken some pains to prove that moralities 'had not quite disappeared in the boyhood of Shakespeare himself' and then built extensively upon an unnecessarily feeble foundation. A more recent appreciation of the importance of the morality in Elizabethan drama is found in A. P. Rossiter's English Drama from Early Times to the Elizabethans: Its Background, Origins and Developments (1950), Chapter V, "The Castle and the Pin."

The recognition of elements of the old moralities in Shakespearean drama is, of course, not a recent development, although we have seen a spate of such considerations in very recent scholarly journals. (See Hardin Craig, "Morality Plays and Elizabethan Drama," SQ I (April 1950), 64-72; "Motivation in Shakespeare's Choice of Materials," Shak. Survey 4 (1951), 26-34, especially 30-32; J. W. McCutchan, "Similarities between Falstaff and Gluttony in Medwall's Nature," SAB, XXIV (July 1949) 214-219; and H. N. Paul's recent study of Macbeth.) It has always been implicit in any criticism designed to demonstrate the way in which a character 'stands for' some abstract quality, a type of criticism of which Measure for Measure has had more than its rightful share. However, as long as critics were repelled by the play (and especially its ending, in which Vice is 'let off'), there could not easily be a systematic attempt to consider it as a morality, a prominent characteristic of which is the final rewarding of Virtue and the routing of Vice.

Clearly, the Duke's pardoning of the so-called vicious characters in Measure for Measure engenders the thought that the play is an anti-morality, not unlike an antimasque.

2 "Shakespeare as a Critic," PQ, XX (July 1941), 390-399. The following summarizes the concept: "In Measure for Measure Shakespeare pursues the subject [of revenge] further [than in The Merchant of Venice] and endeavors to show the necessity for forgiveness if society is to be civilized. Strangely enough, few scholars will forgive him for forgiving. I am not concerned to defend Shakespeare's art or to assert that he could not have made out a better case for himself. All that matters here is Shakespeare's intention to wean his generation from their delight in revenge....It is a fair inference that Shakespeare detested the vindictiveness characteristics of so much Elizabethan drama."

although it is not altogether clear whether a new genre is involved. That the play is a 'political play' has been rather tentatively suggested by Una Ellis-Fermor,[1] but again we have a description of the play's subject-matter rather than its formal structure. The same applies to the label, "disguise play," appropriate but certainly not distinctive enough in the sense that it differentiates a Hamlet from a Measure for Measure.

Efforts to develop a more precise critical terminology are always commendable, and there is no good reason to believe that, in connection with classifying Measure for Measure, we have reached an end in this attempt. At this remove, however, there appears to be too much quibbling for the sake of quibbling and we are entitled to ask how much has been added to what the First Folio editors provided when they placed the play among the comedies.[2] Have we learned anything to encourage the hope that Measure for Measure will no longer defy rigid classification? Clearly, it is like all the 'types' for which claims have been made — it is like a morality, it is like a 'comical satire,'

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1 The Frontiers of Drama (1946), 50.

2 We must, however, recall that Cymbeline, with which Measure for Measure shares many resemblances, and Troilus and Cressida, which has been made to march beside Measure for Measure throughout the fight over genre-classification, were placed among the tragedies. It is dangerous to rely completely on Folio-arrangement as an indication of what Shakespeare may have thought he had written.

it is like a tragi-comedy, it is like an Ibsen 'problem play,' and it may even be like a play which started out as a tragedy but was suddenly converted to comedy. Most importantly, it is like a comedy which, to the imprecise Elizabethans, covered a multitude of plays most alike in having happy endings and loud, if sometimes forced, pealing of wedding-bells. Yet, while it is all of these, Measure for Measure is none of them or we should have had no such semantic wrangling over its classification. It is, finally, a unique work of art, properly to be understood only sui generis.

Delving beneath the surface of a dispute that takes on many aspects of another dispute between the Big-Endians and Little-Endians, we find only that the old dilemma facing scholars engaged in literary studies has again been demonstrated. To consider similarities between one work and others in order to establish 'types' is, inevitably, to minimize the qualities in which the single work is unique; yet such comparisons are necessary as the only means by which uniqueness can finally be recognized. In a sense, this is the problem only E. K. Chambers had the time and money to face: he could not write about Shakespeare until he had surveyed the whole of Elizabethan drama — and he could not write about Elizabethan drama until he had surveyed the whole of medieval drama. Uniqueness and resemblance are two sides of the same coin, and neither

side can be shown without hiding the other. This study of Measure for Measure is predicated on the opinion that we must now somehow restate and, if possible, reaffirm the uniqueness of the play, that we must now concentrate on differences rather than similarities between it and the other plays it most resembles, and that we must no longer mistake our a posteriori formulations of genre for a priori principles in full awareness of which Shakespeare wrote his plays. The paradox will remain, however, and this study will have to proceed in full awareness of the manifold resemblances scholars have labored so hard to demonstrate.

A more precise knowledge of chronology and a well formulated body of literary tenets in full knowledge of which the writers of a period can be shown to have worked are tools with which students of post-Elizabethan literature have been able to produce impressive genre-studies, but the Elizabethan scholar is denied these aids. Happily, for the most part, the labels which have been most securely attached to Measure for Measure do not depend to any striking degree on chronology: 'problem play' and its variants could never be taken as anything but a reflection of modern critical responses to the

play.[1] With respect to dramatic genres during Shakespeare's lifetime, however, the problem is more complicated. Surviving critical documents simply do not provide much insight into the distinctions Elizabethan writers made between dramatic types beyond the comedy-history-tragedy division. The letters patent by which James made Shakespeare's company the King's Men refers to

> the Arte and faculty of playinge Comedies, Tragedies, histories, Enterludes, moralls, pastoralls, Stage-plaies, and Suche others like as theie haue alreadie studied or hereafter shall vse or studie[2]

but this list does not suggest how distinctions were

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1 No one has ever claimed that such terms were used by Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Actually, the terms have had a limited usefulness in describing a honogeneous group: Troilus and Cressida, All's Well that Ends Well, Measure for Measure, and, on occasion, Hamlet. The validity of such a grouping is easily challenged — why not, for example, include Othello and King Lear? — but it can be upheld on the basis of a shaky chronology which gives moderately strong indications that Shakespeare wrote them within the space of a few years. Whether those years were marked, as so many critics (see Part Two) have maintained, by some crisis in Shakespeare's private life is an extraneous and gratuitous assumption upon which a staggering amount of criticism has been constructed. In all events, one is justified in grouping these plays together — quite apart from their possible chronological contiguity — for parallels in diction and ideological bearings, to say nothing of similarly conceived characters, can be shown to exist. For a more extensive consideration of the difficulties andadvantages in using the term, problem play, see the opening chapters of W. W. Lawrence's Shakespeare's Problem Comedies (1931) and Tillyard's Shakespeare's Problem Plays.

2 The Elizabethan Stage, II., 208.

made, or maintained. In its way, it is as puzzling as the best indication that Shakespeare was at least aware of some kinds of distinctions:

> Polonius: The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited; Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men. (Hamlet, II, 2, 415-421)

Is Shakespeare here laughing at such elaborate distinctions, at Polonius for making them, or is the speech intended to be taken seriously? Opinion is divided, but the best evidence seems to suggest that Shakespeare himself paid little or no attention to such categories. We need only recall that farces like The Merry Wives of Windsor and romantic escapades with bittersweet overtones like As You Like It and Love's Labor's Lost are at one end of Shakespeare's comic spectrum and realistic romance like The Merchant of Venice and grimly psychological comedy like The Winter's Tale are at the other, and we shall see at once how difficult generic analysis of Shakespeare's comedy is. When we recall that Shakespeare's finest comic character figures in two chronicle plays, the difficulty looks almost insurmountable. We had better rely on the First Folio and treat Measure for Measure as some kind of comedy. It will be too hazardous to assume it was ever intended

to be or in its time received as anything but light fare.[1]

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1 See Chapter XVII, "Literary Genres," in the Warren-Wellek Theory of Literature, for some indications of the problems which lie in store for any scholar who undertakes genre-study, even under the most salutary conditions. The lesson to be learned is to exercise caution in evaluating literary works in terms of the evolution of literary genres (a la Brunetière). This means, so far as an 'undefinable play like Measure for Measure is concerned, that it is fruitless to evaluate the play in light of any of the recognizable Classical or Neo-Classical types as they 'evolved' during the Elizabethan-Jacobean period.

PART ONE

CHAPTER SIX

THE FACTS OF MEASURE FOR MEASURE: CONCLUSION AND PROSPECTS

In this opening section I have tried to cut beneath a mass of critical assumptions concerning Measure for Measure to the bare 'facts' on which they rest. I have not included any biographical data because it is impossible to know which data would be relevant here. I have not stated as 'fact' that Shakespeare based Measure for Measure on Promos and Cassandra or any of the other alleged sources because it is not altogether clear that he based the play on them.[1] Perhaps I have carried skepticism too far with the unfortunate effect of underlining the folly of attempting a full study of a play about which so little is definitely known. I am also concerned that I have

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1 The whole matter will be considered, at great lengths, in Part Two, where, however, I shall assume that Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra at least is somehow intimately involved in the composition of Measure for Measure.

given the impression of undervaluing the work of others who have addressed themselves to the 'problems' of *Measure for Measure*.

My intention has been, however, simply to reconstruct the home grounds on which further study must proceed. This has necessitated clearing away a good bit of opinion which has, not always without warrant, come to be accepted as fact. These facts, as they finally emerge, are:

(1) The criticism of *Measure for Measure* has fallen into two diametrically opposed sides in this century: the traditional view, which finds *Measure for Measure* a 'bitter, cynical, disgusting' play, and the twentieth-century view, which is tending to place an extraordinarily high value on the play as 'profoundly Christian in spirit.'[1] Both sides cannot be simultaneously embraced.

(2) It is not known — and as yet is not capable of proof — when Shakespeare wrote *Measure for Measure*.

(3) There is no reliable evidence for asserting whether *Measure for Measure* was or was not "popular upon the stage" in Shakespeare's times.

(4) There is no evidence for believing that the ending of *Measure for Measure* was a concession to popular tastes.

(5) The Revels Account records a performance of the play at the Court of James I on St. Stephen's Night, 26 December 1604, a fact from which it is possible to *infer* many things: that

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1 This bipolarization seems like an egregious over-simplification for which, ordinarily, some apology would be expected. In the criticism of *Measure for Measure*, however, the two extremes are so noticeable as to warrant the *schema* adopted herein. The 'traditional view' is still the pervasive valuation of the play.

it was considered in some way appropriate to the occasion, that it had been well-received on the Globe stage, that it may have been a recent addition to the Globe repertoire in 1604, that it was probably presented in the spirit of comedy and was not regarded as in any way an 'unpleasant' play.

(6) There is no evidence for the belief that Shakespeare wrote Measure for Measure with an eye toward a parody of James I who was, during the first years of his reign at least, not the dissolute pedant described in Sir Walter Scott and Macaulay.

(7) No contemporary allusions to Measure for Measure survive, a fact that may or may not argue for its popularity.

(8) The play was entered in the Stationers' Register on 8 November 1623 as 'not formerly entred to other men,' another fact which may or may not argue for its popularity.

(9) In the First Folio, Measure for Measure appears fourth among the comedies and shows reliable signs of having been rather carefully prepared for publication.

(10) Despite its bad reputation, the Folio text is a generally clean and stageworthy copy, a 'fact' which perhaps should more properly be called an 'opinion.' Certainly, the state of the text is not to be used as an indication that Shakespeare wrote hurriedly, sloppily, or unhappily.

(11) Stylistic evidence, insofar as it can be relied upon, places Measure for Measure among the 'middle plays,' between 1598 (the date of Meres' list, in which Measure for Measure is not included) and 26 December 1604 (the date of the Court performance). It is dangerous to insist on its relationship with only a trio of plays (Troilus and Cressida, All's Well that Ends Well, and Hamlet) when it is as clearly tied to Twelfth Night, Othello, As You Like It, and Henry V by the prior date and to Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra by the later date.

(12) Stylistic evidence casts considerable doubt on

the possibility that another hand is visible in the second half (beginning III, 1, 152) or that Shakespeare 'lost interest' in the second part.

(13) Generic analysis indicates little more than the fact that Measure for Measure is some kind of comedy written in a period when few dramatists took genre-formulations, especially of the types of comedy, seriously. It is like tragi-comedy, a morality, a comical satire, etc., but all of these seem to have been sub-types in the general category of comedy.

These facts do not answer even a small portion of the questions one would like answered in connection with Measure for Measure, but these facts are all that the patient research of Shakespearean scholars has yielded. In this study I have tried to work within the framework, frail as it is, provided by these facts. The wonder is, of course, that no similar study of Measure for Measure exists. I have no doubt that my study will fail to satisfy those who have willingly accepted the largely fanciful explanations of others who have accepted a great many gratuitous assumptions as facts. It is my hope, however, that the upholders of the older — and continuing — view of Measure for Measure as an 'artistic failure' will receive some sort of jolt as a result of my attempt to stick as closely as possible to the facts. It is also my hope that upholders of the younger view of the play as Shakespeare's Divine Comedy may recognize a few instances of their enthusiasm engendering folly in the seductive form of excessive praise. In all events, it will be salutary to restate the limitations — severely confining though they be — within which scholarship and criticism of Measure for Measure must be pursued.

PART TWO

CHAPTER ONE

CRITICS AND THE TOPICALITY OF *MEASURE FOR MEASURE*

Measure for Measure has never been a happy hunting ground even for those scholars who specialize in recovering the topical significances in Shakespeare's plays. This is, in the main, attributable to the difficulty so long connected with dating the play. Even now, however, when one need no longer be reluctant to believe that the play was performed at Whitehall on 26 December, 1604, H. B. Charlton, in his *Shakespearian Comedy* (1938), regards it as having been written before *Twelfth Night*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *As You Like It*.[1] Charlton's

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1 He does not, however, assign a definite date. All three plays were probably written before 1602 and, since they are not included in Meres' list, after 1598.

view gains support from, among others, Saintsbury.[1] On the whole, however, most modern scholarship is based on acceptance of the 1603-4 conjecture. The evidence for that date is so slight, however, that few have ventured to build extensively upon it.

Even more discouraging is the play itself. In the nineteenth century, we must recall, Measure for Measure was held to be not quite respectable. Prudishness about the subject-matter of the play was only thinly veiled by the view that the play was one of Shakespeare's failures. The bardolators were little inclined to write anything about the play, let alone its topical

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1 Cambridge History of English Literature, V, 214. I suspect that a good many other scholars would have been delighted to group Measure for Measure with the early "experiments" (or not very good plays) such as The Comedy of Errors, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and Titus Andronicus; the fact that Meres did not mention the play in his famous list has, however, blocked such a move. One editor of Measure for Measure, Edgar C. Morris, in the Tudor edition of 1912, was not discouraged by the Meres list:

> Certainly this is not Shakespeare's mature and careful work. At best it must be a hasty revision of an old play. Can it have been one of his own youthful efforts? In places his genius is apparent; in others the crudeness of youth is no less so. It is a great temptation to wonder whether this can possibly have been the lost play mentioned by Meres in 1598 as Loue labours wonne. (xvi)

significance.[1] This nineteenth-century attitude was magnificently summarized by Edward Dowden in whose still widely accepted 'four-period' hypothesis it has remained

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1 Many twentieth-century critics have sought to undo some of the damage wrought by Coleridge's undeservedly famous judgment that Measure for Measure was "the most painful-- say rather, the only painful -- part of his genuine works." Those who defended the play could at least take solace from Coleridge's belief that it was "Shakespeare's throughout," but the early twentieth century has also been notable for the 'disintegrators,' those scholars who would deny even that. J. M. Robertson, assuming that no one really cared any longer what happened to Measure for Measure, 'proved' it a revision by Shakespeare of a significant revision by Chapman, possibly of a still earlier revision by Greene, of Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra. Dover Wilson argued, in the New Cambridge edition of 1922, for a history of revisions only slightly less complicated than the one Robertson's inventiveness had spawned. Curiously enough, Fleay had never suspected Measure for Measure represented a rehandling by Shakespeare of earlier work. (See E. K. Chambers, "The Disintegration of Shakespeare," Proc. Brit. Academy, 1924-5, 92.)

Needless to say, Robertson disagreed with the New Cambridge editors' revision-theory, thereby providing the best reason for mistrusting all such finely-drawn speculations. Dover Wilson has had his followers (e.g., Robert Wilson, "The Mariana Plot of Measure for Measure," and perhaps Charlton), but, in the main, recent students of the play have ignored his fanciful hypothesis as they have also dismissed Robertson's.

This whole striking reversal in the critical evaluation of the play was recently described by Tillyard (Shakespeare's Problem Plays, 1949). Tillyard, however, opposes both the old "realistic" or Bradleian approach and the newer error of "seeing nothing wrong with the play," an error made, in his judgment, by R. W. Chambers and others who "go straight to ideas or allegory or symbols." Tillyard's own final view is the one most frequently encountered in these times: "recent critics, in their anxiety to correct old errors, have in fact gone too far in the other direction and ignored one of the prime facts from which those old errors had their origin: namely that the play is not of a piece but changes its nature half-way through." See also Clifford Leech's article, "The 'Meaning' of Measure for Measure," Shakespeare Survey 3, 66-73, for this "common-sense" view.

to plague modern critics. To Dowden, Measure for Measure was an unpleasant play redeemed from failure only by a few magnificent bits of poetry (the same 'highly quotable' bits Robertson was concerned to salvage for Shakespeare). Now, according to Dowden, Shakespeare never 'failed' unless something painful happened to him, so he must have been in a 'painful' period when he wrote this 'painful' play. The line from Coleridge to Dowden (and, ultimately, to most contemporary critics) is clear. To such scholars, "topicality" signifies "autobiography" for, in their view, the plays are most arresting as chronicles of Shakespeare's spiritual ups and downs.[1]

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1 The Dowden concept is singled out for consideration here because of its continued pervasiveness. However, it would be equally possible to illustrate the dangers in attempting to reconstruct a playwright's personality from his works by considering any of the subtle variations or counterproposals which the Dowden hypothesis has fostered. The implications of, for example, the G. Wilson Knight, Battenhouse, Bradbrook and Leavis studies of Measure for Measure have not as yet been systematically explored for the 'light' they shed on Shakespeare's biography. It is reasonable to conjecture that in time we will be told that the play is the product, not of Shakespeare "In the Depths," but of Shakespeare in his "Period of Brilliantly Christian Illumination" or something closely akin to this.

The fallacy of reading Shakespeare's plays and characters as mirrors and mouthpieces for his political, religious and social attitudes is, happily, now widely recognized,[1] but, unhappily, all student-texts are incrusted with older interpretations and evaluations which go back to the Dowdenites. It would be futile to launch still another over-generalized diatribe against the deadweight of nineteenth-century criticism, but it may not be amiss to note how some of the most meticulous scholars of our times have too easily succumbed to past judgments. E. K. Chambers, despite his deadly circumspection, clings to the Dowden vine and, by his overwhelmingly authoritative position in Shakespearean scholarship, perpetuated the standard view of Measure for Measure:

> Whatever the explanation, the fact remains that for a period in Shakespeare's history near the beginning of the seventeenth century his rose-red vision gave place to the grey, and that, if he still wrote as an idealist, it was as an idealist into whose imagination had passed the ferment of doubt and the

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1 It must be admitted that authors (Shakespare included) must inevitably reveal much of themselves in everything they write. However, one must know a good bit more about the facts of an author's life than we as yet know about Shakespeare's before we can interpret his works with any surefootedness for their bearings upon his biography. We should also know a good bit more about the psychology of the artist in relation to the society which produces him and which, in turn, is affected by him.

> bitterness of disillustionment. And so Measure for Measure wears the rue of comedy with a difference.[1]

Sir Walter Raleigh quoted Halliwell-Phillipps' ironical remarks on the "Period" Shakespeare, but then aligned himself with the older view:

> "One wonders," says Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, "what Heminge and Condell would have thought if they had applied to Shakespeare for a new comedy, and the great dramatist had told them that he could not possibly comply with their wishes, he being then in his Tragic Period." What they would have thought may admit a wide conjecture; what they got is less doubtful. If they asked for a comedy when he was writing his great tragedies they got Measure for Measure or Troilus and Cressida; if they asked for a tragedy when he was writing his happiest works of wit and lyric fantasy, they got Romeo and Juliet.[2]

Even Granville-Barker, who never concerned himself greatly with Measure for Measure but whose critical discernment would lead one to expect otherwise, seems to have absorbed the Dowden view:

> Is this why in Measure for Measure, which probably was his next play/after Hamlet,/ we find Shakespeare confining himself within the bounds of a symmetrical story, done at normal length? But we find too, I think, that for all the beauty and

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1 Shakespeare: A Survey (1925; reprinted 1935, 1947, 1948, 1951), 210. See also his section on the play in William Shakespeare, I, 452-457.

2 Shakespeare (1907; in the widely reprinted English Men of Letters series), 131.

> ruthless wisdom of the play, he is not working happily. And in doing his duty by the plot, his characters have to suffer violence at the end.[1]

However congenial Dowden's view has seemed to most Shakespeareans, it has not gone without its challengers, one of the earliest of whom was Lytton Strachey.[2] Strachey asserted that the late plays, those labelled by Dowden as 'plays of serenity and reconciliation', were not markedly different from the earlier 'dark comedies'; unfortunately, it was not altogether clear whether Strachey meant to restore or bury **Measure for Measure** by insisting on its affinities with The Winter's Tale and The Tempest, two plays Strachey felt showed nothing so clearly as a Shakespeare completely bored and disenchanted with the whole moonlight-and-roses atmosphere of romantic

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1 "From Henry V to Hamlet," Proc. Brit. Academy, 1924-5, 296. The last sentence points to Bradley's complaint about the ending of Measure for Measure (in Shakespearean Tragedy, 78): "We know well enough what Shakespeare is doing when at the end of Measure for Measure he marries Isabella to the Duke -- and a scandalous proceeding it is..."

2 Strachey's essay, "Shakespeare's Final Period," was most widely read in his popular Books and Characters (1922) where, however, it is dated 1906. Recently, C. R. Sanders (in his "Lytton Strachey as a Critic of Elizabethan Drama," PQ XXX, Jan. 1951) claimed it was read at Cambridge as early as 1903.

literature.[1] W. W. Lawrence approached the Dowden 'periods' more obliquely than Strachey. A salutary (but incidental) effect of his Shakespeare's Problem Comedies (1931) was to make it less easy to ignore the evidence that Shakespeare had significantly softened most

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1 Comparison of the "dark" comedies with the "dramatic romances" is central in any attempt to assess the dramatic merits of Measure for Measure, but here it is considered only for its bearings on the Dowden hypothesis. Strachey's essay had the predictable effect of outraging the traditionalists, none of whom was willing to part with the highly romanticized view of The Tempest as the crowning glory of Shakespeare's career. No one was surprised when John Middleton Murry took up the gauntlet, but when Murry's ranks were joined by Dover Wilson, it was obvious that Strachey had indeed sinned against the light. The controversy is well and amusingly reconstructed in Sen-Gupta's Shakespearian Comedy (1950), 216-8.

By 1929, Strachey's temerity was paying off. G. Wilson Knight defended Measure for Measure by, among other ways, pointing up the parallels between Duke Vincentio and Prospero ("Measure for Measure and the Gospels"). Twenty years after Knight's essay appeared, D. A. Traversi seemed to be defending The Tempest by developing the same parallels ("The Tempest," Scrutiny, June, 1949). Also in 1949, Tillyard (Shakespeare's Problem Plays) was pointing out the similarities between Measure for Measure and The Winter's Tale, concluding that

> Shakespeare had Measure for Measure in mind when he wrote The Winter's Tale; and I suspect that he was resolved to redeem that splendid failure. (150)

Another recent explanation of the 'differences' between the early and late comedies was offered by G. E. Bentley ("Shakespeare and the Blackfriars Theatre," Shakespeare Survey 1, 1948, 38-49). Bentley accepts Dowden's "differences," but denies that scholars can account for them by turning "to Shakespeare's sources, or to his inspiration, or to his personal affairs, or to the bucolic environment of his Strafford retirement." Instead, the differences are to be traced to the acquisition in 1608 of the Blackfriars Theater by the King's Company and their "subsequent brilliantly successful exploitation" of its stage and the sophisticated audience attracted to that private theater. This view is a variant on Thorndike's theory of the Beaumont-Fletcher influence on the later Shakespeare.

of the repellent elements in his sources for Measure for Measure. Obviously, the politesse and ingenuity Shakespeare exercised to preserve Isabella's chastity hardly squared with the older "In the Depths" view of the dramatist. Lawrence tried to render other material less offensive to modern audiences by recognizing it as the meat and drink of Shakespeare's audiences, a group sharing with him in the heritage of medieval romantic literature. Essentially, Lawrence was repeating, more eruditely and less irritatingly, Robert Bridges' earlier eloquent apology for Shakespeare by blaming Shakespeare's 'failure' in Measure for Measure on the deplorable tastes of the paying customers. Such a view could be --and has been-- accommodated to the Dowden view.[1]

Shakespeare's "dark period" coincides roughly with Elizabeth's declining years and the first years of James'

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1 Bridges printed The Influence of the Audience on Shakespeare's Drama in 1907, but, like the heretical Strachey essay, it was not widely known until it was reprinted in 1926 and 1927. The Dowdenites welcomed Bridges' view by insisting that only a misanthropic or 'pained' Shakespeare would deny caviar to the general. The Bridges view, which has much to recommend itself, has recently been attacked by J. I. M. Stewart (Character and Motive in Shakespeare, 1949) who invokes Havelock Ellis and Freud, and defended (indirectly) by Arthur Sewell (Character and Society in Shakespeare, 1951) who goes after Stewart's Freudian scalp with a vengeance.

reign. Those who were suspicious of the view that a dramatist writes tragedy or 'bitter comedy' when his mood is tragic but who remained equally suspicious of Measure for Measure took comfort from an historical label. As a 'Jacobean' play, it reflected the 'spirit of the age,' a spirit closely akin to that twentieth-century 'blues' spirit which was supposedly typified in T. S. Eliot's The Wasteland. It was an age blighted with "Marlowe's tragic thought" and a "bitterly cynical individualism" resulting from careless reading of The Prince. The supposedly noisome character of King James I brought to a head a "mood of spiritual despair" which was

> reinforced still more effectively after the turn of the century by the apprehensions and the disillusionment that spread through political and social life with the death of Elizabeth, the accession of James, the influence of his court and the instability of the first years of his reign. This mood, culminating as it did in and about the year 1605, took the form for public and private men alike of a sense of impending fate, of a state of affairs so unstable that great or sustained effort was suspended for a time and a sense of futility of man's achievement set in. One immediate corollary of this is a preoccupation with death where the Elizabethan had been in love with life. Even when the actual threat was removed, those who survived found the great age gone and themselves the inheritors of poverty of spirit.[1]

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1 Una Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama, 2.

This description of the Jacobean age had been resoundingly expounded by Macauley, fictionally enshrined in Sir Walter Scott's The Fortunes of Nigel, rendered theatrically effective by Henry Irving, and diligently documented by scores of scholars long before Miss Ellis-Fermor summarized it so effectively.[1] However, it was a bald generalization and, as such, it invited trouble. The trouble was a long time coming, but in his British Academy Lecture in 1934, C. J. Sisson addressed himself to the "Mythical Sorrows of Shakespeare" and gave a severe jolt to the standard view of the Jacobean melancholy Shakespeare writing Jacobean melancholy plays in the Jacobean melancholy age:

> ...the whole notion that the early years of the reign of James were years of cynicism and of disillusionment is a feat of the delusive imagination, working backwards from a knowledge of the break-down of the Stuart monarchy under Charles, and encouraged by rhetorical distortions of the real personality of King James. All England is made to shamble with the shambling James, who is also accused of slobbering. It is true that King James was not a public-school boy. But then neither was Queen Elizabeth. The most recent study of King James, by a competent historian, opens with the words: 'Justice has never been done to James I, whether as a statesman

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1 One of the few who had disagreed with Macauley was C. H. Firth whose "The Ballad History of the Reign of James I" (Trans. Royal Hist. Society, Third Series, Vol. V, 1911, 21-62) stressed the fact that James' accession was "welcomed with general joy."

> or as a thinker.' The fact is that the mill-stone of nineteenth-century Whig history hangs heavy around our necks, condemning James unheard, because he was not a Whig. King James, as welcome a king as England has ever known, actually saved England from people like Essex, from civil war, and brought peace and increased prosperity. His accession dispelled the dangerous shadow that hung over the death-bed of Elizabeth, assuring the succession to the throne firmly, not only for his own life-time but also in two hopeful young princes, his sons. He solved the century-old problem of security from the North, and in his person created the United Kingdom. He made peace with Spain, and the whole country was freed of an incubus. Under James the establishment of England's colonial empire proceeded apace. Under James the Church of England found its true via media, and could give house-room and scope to so ardent and fiery a soul as John Donne. Under James the greatness of the English genius for literature in prose, verse, and drama became more manifest than ever before in the history of the nation. And under James the true foundations of modern English thought were laid.[1]

Along the way, Sisson offered a few remarks in defense of Measure for Measure, but his main objective was to crack open a concept that had all but crystallized into a hard fact in literary studies. The fruits of Sisson's

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1 "The Mythical Sorrows of Shakespeare," Proc. Brit. Academy, 1934, 55. Sisson also wrote a magnificent apology for James, "King James the First of England as Poet and Political Writer," Seventeenth-Century Studies presented to Sir Herbert Grierson (1938). However, the old view persists; see Marchette Chute's unflattering portrait of James in Shakespeare of London (1949), 253.

researches became evident in 1937 when R. W. Chambers gave a full-dress performance on "The Jacobean Shakespeare and Measure for Measure" that owed much to Sisson's path-clearing -- by 1937, the play and the age had been metamorphosed into something "profoundly Christian" and Isabella was being called 'the finest woman in Shakespearean drama.'

The Sisson-Chambers view was more brilliantly argued than it was widely accepted. To announce with however great a flourish that liquid labeled STRYCHNINE TOXIC should really have been labeled STRYCHNINE TONIC all along is not likely to set at ease the mind of anyone who knows the properties of strychnine. It would have been more to the point if, instead of debating the character of James, someone had vigorously asserted that a single individual can never adequately symbolize the times in which he lived.[1] Ideally, perhaps, the character and reputation of King James ought never to enter into an attempt to achieve a better understanding of Measure for Measure (or Macbeth and Coriolanus, for that matter), but, whether we like it or not, James and his court are meaningfully involved in the history of this play and the

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1 Sisson asserted this early in his lecture, but proceeded to ignore his own good advice by creating a new stereotype of James as the man who 'set his seal' on his times.

truth about the nature of this involvement can become apparent only if we cast aside whatever preconceptions we have about James and the term Jacobean. Reading the play as the product of the Cynical-Jacobean age, we can find 'spiritual despair' clearly enough reflected in it; reading it as the product of the Authorized-Version-Jacobean age, we can find a reaffirmation of Christian ethics: clearly, neither connotation of Jacobean will greatly advance our understanding of the play itself. To dig for topical significance in the face of such polar-opposite interpretations of the age would seem to be courting disaster. However, even between the Ellis-Fermor and Sisson extremes, there is a significant area of agreement. In the first years of James' reign, there was what even Miss Ellis-Fermor recognized as a "short period of relief,"[1] and since in all likelihood it was during this period that the King's Men were preparing Measure for Measure for the court performance, we may more confidently assess the ways in which 1604 audiences responded or were expected to respond to Measure for Measure.

Still another major reason scholars have been little inclined to consider Measure for Measure as a topical

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1 Op. cit., 2. Miss Ellis-Fermor does not indicate the limits of this 'short period,' however. I assume it lasted for at least a year.

comedy is the fact that Shakespeare appears to have relied rather more strikingly than usual on his sources. Where the relationship between sources and derived play is so clear, one hesitates to identify topicalities as Shakespeare's. For example, a scholar accepting Dowden's "In the Depths" Shakespeare or the Cynical-Jacobean Shakespeare is inclined to wrest rancorous speeches from the play to support the view that Shakespeare was fulminating against the licentiousness of his times.[1] Others, reacting against this view, might agree that Shakespeare was very much aware of London vice[2] but would deny that he was enraged by it: the Shakespeare who wrote Measure for Measure was, like his auditors, wondering whether the new monarch would renew those perennial drives to enforce the existing blue laws with any greater diligence or chance of success than his predecessor. Instead of airing personal indignation, then, this Shakespeare was simply rendering a searchingly realistic commentary on

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1 E. I. Fripp, whose work will be studied in detail later in this chapter, provides a good example of this strategy.

2 Presumably, when he wrote Measure for Measure Shakespeare had already created the wonderful but seamy goings-on in Dame Quickly's establishment. Charlton, of course, felt that Shakespeare had to grow away from the Falstaffian world before he could write the sunny comedies -- Measure for Measure was an important step in that development.

the potential effectiveness of the Kefauver Investigations of his time.[1] Both suggestions glance at Shakespeare's 'Jacobean cynicism', but neither view looks very plausible when Measure for Measure in compared with Promos and Cassandra where the general lewdness is more emphatically and persistently developed.[2]

However, despite the many similarities, the two plays are not identical. Although we may begin by discovering that Shakespeare's play is not allusive in the way or to the extent that, reading it apart from its sources, we may have been led to believe, it would be throwing away a critical advantage to assume that there can be nothing topical about the derived play. Recognition of the exact nature of similarities and differences between the various versions may enable us to define more accurately the particular kind of topicality Shakespeare

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1 This view is implicit in Raleigh and those who view the play, with O. J. Campbell, as 'comicall satyre.'

2 On the other hand, neither view is rendered invalid. Even if he did not simply rewrite Promos and Cassandra, he must bear some responsibility for having chosen to rework the older play at the particular time he did. We must assume, I think, that he saw something in his sources which would have a special appeal -- for himself as well as his audiences -- and perhaps that special appeal will become apparent when we have a more complete picture of his activities and attitudes in 1603-4.

meant Measure for Measure to have.[1]

Up to this point I have indicated some of the major obstacles in the way of studying Measure for Measure for its topical bearings. With the exception of the problem of inexact information on the play's date of composition, all of the foregoing difficulties stem ultimately from ostensibly esthetic evaluations of the play.[2] In the following paragraphs, however, we will

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1 It may be useful here to suggest an instance in which recognition of differences may be joined to what we know of Shakespeare in 1604. Shakespeare greatly altered the Claudio-Juliet situation as he found it in Whetstone. By making their 'sin' acceptable to polite society, he added a detail quite inconsistent with the donnée of the plot: the pair must be guilty of the offence with which they are charged. Thus, Shakespeare confused the issue when he wrote the speech in which Claudio explains that he and Juliet are 'married' (I, 2, 149-57). Since this 'inconsistency' is not carried over from Whetstone, we are entitled to wonder about it. It may or may not reflect Shakespeare's own mysterious relationship with Anne Hathaway. In any case, the summer of 1604 found Shakespeare deeply involved in the arrangements for the marriage of Mary Mountjoy and Stephen Belott. Property settlements loomed large. There is some reason to believe Shakespeare actually 'made sure' (= betrothed) the young couple against the completion of arrangements. These proceedings may have been in Shakespeare's mind, causing him to develop the parallel between the two betrothed pairs. William Empson uses similarly Hotson's discovery of Shakespeare's interest in the arrangements for the marriage of Thomas Russell to the widow Digges in 1603. ("Sense in Measure for Measure," The Structure of Complex words, 286).

2 I would not except from this statement the problems which can be traced back to an unquestioning acceptance of the Dowden four periods, however much they seem to encroach on the more strictly biographical study of Shakespeare. Dowden, to say nothing of Hallam to whose writings Dowden was so deeply indebted, had to assume Measure for Measure a failure in order to go ahead on his assumption that great writers only write 'unpleasant' plays when they have gone sour on life.

consider a few attempts to come at the topical significance of Measure for Measure from the biographical end of Shakespearean study. I should point out here that, in all the biographies which I have consulted, it is not always clear when the biographers slip over the line between approaching the plays from the biography and approaching biography through the plays. As soon as this distinction becomes blurred, esthetic evaluations infiltrate as part of the biographical equipment. Perhaps this is inevitable in a situation where one has so little factual equipment for understanding an author of the first magnitude; in all events, it is a dangerous practice which I should like to avoid.

There is indeed much to invite the biographers' great interest in the play. It is regrettable that, for all their interest, they have been unable to contribute much to our understanding of the play. A case in point might well be the treatment of the play as a means by which Shakespeare worked out his own moral judgment of ante-nuptial intercourse, a matter in which his own experiences with Anne Hathaway has led many to think that he was personally, vitally interested. The pre-Frank-Harris view of Shakespeare's marriage was, to say the least, respectfully timorous. The modern view is timorous but hardly respectful. Actually, perhaps, all that we can do is maintain a healthy skepticism on the matter.

Obviously the arrangements for Shakespeare's marriage were irregular, but the absence of conclusive evidence as to the exact nature of the irregularity should be reason enough for caution. In all events, we should wonder why Shakespeare -- in 1603/4 -- should be greatly concerned about the events of 1582. The play itself is clearer on the subject than Shakespeare's biography: Claudio and Juliet admit their sin but doubt, like most of the other characters in the play, that the death penalty is a proper punishment. Even the first response of the puritanical Isabella to the news of Juliet's pregnancy is the common-sensical "O, let him marry her" (I, 4, 48).

Was Shakespeare a "moral" man? The question has plagued every student of Shakespeare. Nowhere is the question so pressing as it is in the case of Measure for Measure, the play in which Shakespeare has embarrassed us by apparently starting out to call a spade a spade but ending by calling it something else. The uncomplicated view of Sir Walter Raleigh seems the sensible approach to the truth:

> In criticisms of Measure for Measure, we are commonly presented with a picture of Vienna as a black pit of seething wickedness; and against this background there rises the dazzling, white, and saintly figure of Isabella. The picture makes a good enough Christmas card, but

> it is not Shakespeare. If the humorous scenes are needed only, as Professor Dowden says, 'to present without disguise or extenuation a world of moral license and corruption,' why are they humorous? The wretches who inhabit the purlieus of the city are live men, pleasant to Shakespeare...This world of Vienna...is not a black world; it is a weak world, full of little vanities and stupidities, regardful of custom, fond of pleasure, idle, and abundantly human. No one need go far to find it.[1]

However, as Oliver Elton pointed out, its implications leave one restive:

> After all, if not a black it is a tolerably beastly world, on the mildest interpretation; and that is why we need not go far to find it...The 'subtle and profound morality' of the poet was the original quest of Raleigh; it turns out to consist in his 'sympathy,' and this again consists in his refusal to identify himself with any one of his creatures. ...Certainly such a view saves some trouble. Nobody is damnable, if we only stare hard enough; for does not the great poet's sympathy shine on all like the sun?...Now was this really his temper and intention? We can only tell by studying his art, and, since he is a dramatist, the only point in his art that throws light on such a problem is his <u>emphasis</u>. What are the scenes, what the speeches, on which he puts forth his full power? ...His 'sympathy,' in the true sense of the word, must be more than the mere humorous and tolerant understanding, some share of which goes to every pimp and cut-throat. His sympathy is not such as to forget what they really are, or what Isabel

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1 <u>Shakespeare</u>, 165-7.

> is. It may be therefore wrong to say that his last work is critical and ironical. Who can doubt that even though Isabella has a touch of the ascetic bias, of estrangement from human frailty, Shakespeare means that she is entirely, when it comes to the crisis, in the right?...It is impossible to think of Shakespeare simply as an amiable and profound student of psychology. Being a complete man, he was also, at the right moment, as stern as Dante, as well as more widely sympathetic, so that he can strike the chord of outraged shame and justified wrath as no man has ever struck it. To leave this out is to enervate Shakespeare, or to confuse him with minds of a lighter type.[1]

Elton concludes shrewdly, "It might be argued that Shakespeare's morality is more searching and profound than Christian morality, or at least raises many an issue which it tasks Christian morality, as usually read, to meet." Unfortunately, he did not develop this provocative suggestion.

Almost fifty years later, Measure for Measure is still being treated as the vital clue to Shakespeare's moral life. Recently it has been taken to mark Shakespeare's transition from the Oedipal period (in which he created bright heroines and weak heroes subconsciously as mother and father-figures) to his second period (in which, because his incest-drive was on the wane after his father's death in 1601 and because he now became jealous

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1 "Recent Shakespeare Criticism," Modern Studies (1907), 114-118.

of his brother Edmund, he betrayed a frightening preoccupation with faithless women (= mother-substitutes) and sibling-rivalries.[1] Although the psychoanalytic reading represents little more than an amusing departure from Elton's measured sentences on the Moral Shakespeare, Harbage's As They Liked It (1947) could be cited as a work in which Elton's remarks are clearly echoed.[2] Like Elton, Harbage was dissatisfied with Raleigh's 'sympathetic' Shakespeare -- and like Elton, he failed to provide a view significantly different from Raleigh's:

> The harsh fact of existence bore heavily upon those spectators -- more heavily than upon any reader of Shakespeare today...yet, happiness was

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1 M. Kanzer, "The Central Theme in Shakespeare's Work," The Psychoanalytic Review, Jan. 1951, 1-16. One may be surprised at the suggestion of a sibling-rivalry in Measure for Measure, but Isabella's angry outburst on Claudio's fear of death contains all the evidence a good psychoanalyst needs. Because psychoanalysis does not offend modern sensibilities, Kanzer's theory may receive moderate acceptance among Shakespearean students. Less acceptable was an older view, perhaps fostered by Pater's embarrassing essay on Measure for Measure, that the play chronicles Shakespeare's 'unnatural fondness' for Southampton (= Claudio) and his consequent jealous resentment of Queen Elizabeth or Southampton's wife (= Isabella). This assumes, apart from a rather curious interpretation of the play, a more extensive body of information on the Shakespeare-Southampton relationship than actually exists. Other attempts to read the play as a personal allegory have been made, most notably by Percy Allen and others who believe in a Shakespeare-not-Shakespeare.

2 However, Harbage, in the preface of this work, surpri singly asserts that "It is highly improbable that All's Well that Ends Well and Measure for Measure were considered by author or audience as 'bitter' plays." (xii) The extent of Harbage's heresy can be measured by the braveness of his tone.

> imaginable and in a measure attainable. The plays showed its presence and absence in terms which all could understand. London must have been bleak enough outside the Globe in winter twilight, but the wise and indomitable had some kind of hearth to return to, and could, in the spirit of Shakespeare -- the exciting, the comforting popular artist -- win through to 'one feast, one house, one mutual happiness.'[1]

However far removed the psychoanalytical critic and Raleigh, Elton and Harbage seem to be, they were all pursuing the same elusive stag. The fact that the beast may not be capturable either in the jungles of the Id or the open fields of 'Common Sense' seems not to matter.

As unsatisfactory as the attempts to recover Shakespeare the Moral Man have been the efforts to reconstruct Shakespeare the Political Man from Measure for Measure. Draper felt that the play embodies the 'principle of the constant need of a legitimate monarch':

> A Duke who is a paragon of virtues rules Vienna by Divine Right; he has the loving-kindness of the sainted Duncan; and, like King James, he would not even constrain his "subjects to virtue"; he would have even the perverted Bernadine/sic/ "mend his ways" rather than be punished; and the bawd Pompey should have "instruction" rather than chastisement. King James declared that "correction without instruction is Tyrannie." In the end, this Duke shows clemency even to Angelo. Such leniency, however, at the beginning of the play, had brought law into contempt until "liberty plucks justice by

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1 Ibid., 200-1.

> the nose"; for the Duke has neglected King James's dicta to enforce laws rigorously when first one comes to power, and also that "few Lawes and well put into execution, are best in a well ruled common weale"; he has not used his power "boldly yet temperately"; in fact, he has not used his power at all; he shrinks even from popular acclaim; and he hesitates to destroy his reputation for clemency. In this exigency, he selects a statesman endowed with all the virtues...such an one could rule in the Duke's absence and restore the severity of the law; and, associated with him, moreover, is Escalus, especially learned in the "science" of government. The "severe" law that he chooses to enforce is against that "Batchler sensuality" that all Elizabethans took for granted: --indeed, even the immaculate Isabella accepts the double standard of morals. But Angelo suddenly belies his exalted character, and sins outrageously against the very law he is enforcing; and, even more than in Macbeth, this change illustrates, not inherent weakness, but rather the inability of the very most virtuous to fill the place of God's Anointed... Shakespeare's source...has nothing of temporary abdication: the Duke himself tries to enforce the law, and simultaneously violates./ Here Draper's memory plays him tricks./ So important a change must have been deliberate, and consequently indicates Shakespeare's object in the play: to show the inability of even the wisest and most upright statesman to fill the place of God's Anointed, and to illustrate the harm to himself and to others that must ensue.[1]

Draper's reading of the play is instructive but he gives

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1 "Political Themes in Shakespeare's Later Plays," JEGP, XXXV (1936), 82-4.

the impression of forcing the play into a convenient slot by ignoring the shameless way Angelo -- clearly not endowed by Shakespeare with "all the virtues" -- had behaved toward Mariana. However, although erroneous and myopic in details, Draper's essay will offend no one who knows that long before he wrote Measure for Measure Shakespeare had revealed an interest in Divine Right and legitimate succession.[1] Such a view has been unacceptable to Marxist

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1 Draper seems to have arrived independently at the same point made in Louis Albrecht's invaluable dissertation, Neue Untersuchungen zu Shakespeares Mass für Mass (1914). Albrecht had concluded, after a very systematic survey of the alleged allusions to James and events of 1603-4, that the play was "eine Huldigung für den auf den englischen Thron gelangten König Jacob beabsichtigt" (224) which must, therefore, have been written between the date of James' accession and the Christmas Revels of 1604-5.

Albrecht's work is unmentioned by recent British Shakespearean scholars. The publication-date, 1914, may account for much of this neglect, but it can hardly explain why E. K. Chambers failed even to include it in his list of published dissertations on the play (William Shakespeare, I, 453). Other less encyclopedic scholars such as Sisson, R. W. Chambers, Wilson Knight, Bradbrook, and Leavis, whose interpretations of the play are substantially the same as Albrecht's, show no awareness of his work. The New Cambridge editors ignore it.

Albrecht's work has, however, been noted by some American source-hunters, for it contains a survey of Shakespeare's possible debts to Whetstone and Cinthio.

Draper does not commit himself to the possibility that Measure for Measure was a compliment to King James, but his final view that it is a significant reflection of a major change in Shakespeare after James' accession is closely parallel to Albrecht's. Draper defines this change:

> This effort, therefore, to set forth weighty themes was apparently essential to the great change that is evident in Shakespeare's work about the time of the accession of King James I; and the similarity of these themes to the King's well-known opinions suggests that this change should in some measure be ascribed to his royal influence; and, if so, we owe largely to his tastes and

critics, who, it should be noted, disagree violently among themselves but have variously engaged themselves in creating a Political Shakespeare to fit proletarian specifications. Not surprisingly, Measure for Measure becomes an elaborate political allegory in which, although forced to pay lip-service to the monarchic ideal, Shakespeare was clearly on the side of the masses. A. A. Smirnov described the play as

> a defense of humanist morality in contrast to the hedonistic amoralism of the degenerate nobility and the narrow-minded bourgeois morality of the Puritans, whose severity in the extermination of vice engendered new vices. Lucio, and, to a lesser extent, Claudio, represent the degenerate nobility; Angelo, the Puritan tradition, and Isabella, humanist morality.[1]

Such a reading is remarkably similar to that of the St. Louis Hegelian, Denton Snider, in whose interpretation the Moral and the Political Shakespeare coalesce:

> ...disruption between secular [the Duke] and religious [Isabella] elements is overcome, and both are united into a principle higher than either taken separately; mercy becomes a constituent of the State and chastity a constituent of the Family; formal justice

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> that of his court the composition of those supreme tragedies of the third period that constitute the pinnacle of Shakespeare's art. (91)

[1] Shakespeare: A Marxist Interpretation (1936), 81-2. The Duke is merely a convenient stage-manager.

> -- or rather, injustice -- ceases, as well as the illicit relation of the sexes, in the two grand ethical institutions of man. The merciful monk returns and becomes the just ruler, while the chaste woman is made his wife. It is thus a double restoration from a double disruption.[1]

If we compare these views with that of the anti-Papist Fripp, the treacherous nature of partisan efforts to document Shakespeare's partisanships becomes fully apparent.[2] To Fripp, the ending of Measure for Measure indicated, not that Shakespeare was reconciling Church and State, but that he was rejecting the Church:

> Social problems are not solved by celibacy, nor sexual evils atoned by prayers of 'saints' and 'hermits' and 'wronged souls,' whatever efficacy may have been attributed to these in early plays.[3]

Against Fripp perhaps we should quote from any of the numerous supporters of Shakespeare's pro-Papist sympathies, but this would merely be adding to an already well illustrated confusion.[4]

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1 The Shakespearian Drama (1887), II, 436.

2 A good discussion of the chaos resulting from efforts to establish Shakespeare's political attitudes can be found in Brents Sterling's The Populace in Shakespeare (1949), 64-96.

3 Shakespeare, Man and Artist (1938), II, 618.

4 The best recent summing-up of the whole problem, is to be found in J. H. de Groot's The Shakespeares and 'The Old Faith' (1946). In a different connection, Clifford Leech ("The 'Meaning' of Measure for Measure," Shak. Survey 3, 70) has recently reminded us of the rather haphazard characterization involved in the duke's violation

There have always been a few scholars who grant the 'unpleasantness' of Measure for Measure and then proceed on their assumption that, if they dig deeply enough in the history of the times, they can explain some of Shakespeare's 'lapses of taste.' Such gentlemen belong to the Pollyanna School of Shakespearean scholarship. One such person is C. J. Sisson who gave us, in his Lost Plays of Shakespeare's Age (1936), frequently fruitful -- and always fruity -- glimpses into London's sordid side as it is chronicled in the Star Chamber Proceedings; to read Sisson's book before reading Measure for Measure is to see Shakespeare's play as an almost idealized picture

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of the confessional:

> We have reason to believe that the home of Shakespeare's childhood was one in which the old religion was adhered to: be that as it may, however, it is difficult to believe that he could look with favour on a man who deceived a condemned criminal/Barnardine/with a pretence of priestly power and who tricked Mariana into giving him her confidence.

Leech is arguing against the sort of systematic and consistent working-out of religious-political philosophy which G. Wilson Knight and more recently Elizabeth M. Pope ("The Renaissance Background of Measure for Measure," Shak. Survey 2) have attempted to uncover in the play. Leech's caveat is completely justified.

of London life.[1] Another such scholar was Edgar Innes Fripp, whose respect for facts is frequently at loggerheads with his desire to protect the reputation of Shakespeare the Man. Fripp thought that the facts compelled him to admit Shakespeare "sympathized with Claudio in face of puritan censure" even if

> less than ten years later, after experience of the indulgence and vice of the Jacobean court, he took the puritan view, at least in addressing courtiers, warning Ferdinand on his betrothal with Miranda in the mouth of the puritan Prospero. (187)

Fripp lists four couples, two from Stratford and two from court (the Raleighs and the Southamptons), who had cohabited between betrothal, which legitimized children, and marriage, which entitled one to dowry. The practice was "still widely regarded as venial," but, in Fripp's eyes, if so many indulged as his list implies, Shakespeare's offence with Anne Hathaway (= Claudio's with Juliet) is not so serious. Fripp is considerably less tolerant of Claudio, however, when he praises Isabella for her outraged

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1 Sisson's reconstruction of the lost play, The Old Joiner of Aldgate, a dramatization of a sensational case involving a young heiress and various troth-plights in which she became involved, is said to shed significant light on the marriage-customs treated in Measure for Measure. This may be true, but Shakespeare's essential 'inconsistency' still stands: if Angelo and Mariana are not really guilty of pre-nuptial transgression, Claudio and Juliet are no more so.

outburst, in which she

> clears again the filthy air, and lets in the light of Heaven -- of cleanness, perspective, sanity. Her denunciation of life that is lower than animal existence, with loss of that which is life indeed, is one of the great things in Shakespeare. (616)

Fripp also exercised himself to prove that the bed-trick would shock none of Shakespeare's contemporaries. Although he is speaking of All's Well that Ends Well in the following passage, the remarks apply to Measure for Measure as well:

> Scriptural sanction would weigh with His Majesty, as with the Poet, whose genius transformed both the story and the heroine out of Paynter... Her [Helena's] stratagem recalls Laban's trick with Leah on Jacob, and Tamar's device with Judah... Court gossip added piquancy to the play. Edward Earl of Oxford, who married Lord Burghley's daughter Anne in 1571 and was father on 2 July 1575 of Elizabeth Vere (whom the young Earl of Southampton declined to marry, Shakespeare's Sonnets I-XXVI notwithstanding, in 1590), owed his parentage of this young lady, so it was said, to his wife's resort to Helena's deceit. Young Francis Osborne calls it 'virtuous.' The King's ladies and gentlemen, as we shall see, were little disturbed by improprieties. His own punctilios were theological. (601)

Despite his valiant efforts to excuse Shakespeare for taking such a light view of the two offensive situations, Fripp concluded by taking both situations very seriously himself and approving of the 'anti-papistical' Shakespeare

who

> whatever respect he may have expressed in A Midsummer Night's Dream for the conventual life...bestows his heroine on the Duke, as helpmate to whom in his struggle with the corruption of the city she will be of greater service than in retreat, however 'enskied and sainted,' in the cloister. Social problems are not solved by celibacy...(617-8)

If Fripp entangled himself in the 'moral inconsistencies' of Measure for Measure more notably than any of his predecessors, his effort to 'see Shakespeare in his context -- to study and interpret him in the light of his environment, geographical, domestic, social, religious, dramatic, literary,' is nonetheless helpful in bringing the play alive. Because in the pages which follow so much depends on Fripp's biographical reconstructions, it may be useful to provide a brief summary of his view of Shakespeare at work on Measure for Measure. It is the most exhaustive which has yet been offered.

Fripp knew more about Stratford than anyone had ever thought it possible (or necessary?) to know. He was always concerned to uncover the 'Stratford layer' in every play. His list of 'images' from Measure for Measure which reflect the Stratford world is offered to substantiate Fripp's conviction that Shakespeare rejected London with all its corruption in favor of the good Stratford life. Fripp set the following details against Vienna/London's 'thickly splashed mud, the moral filth and falsehood, the rats, the plague, and the angry apes':

> the unfolding star that calls up the shepherd
> the unwedgeable and gnarled oak ("a veritable bit of Arden")
> fishing, falconry, and archery
> lapwings
> 'breaks'
> scarecrows
> the killing of the fowl for the season
> blossoming-time
> gardens with their violets
> roses, medlars, and the soft myrtle
> the milkmaid in love
> the carman whipping his jade
> horsemanship
> the rating of the house 'by the bay'
> much law fresh from the Stratford Court of Record
> (617)

Here Fripp is guilty of creating a romantic fiction. Biographical facts indicate Shakespeare's fondness for his boyhood home, but it is a serious error to put such conventional and, in the case of 'the carman whipping his jade,' such general details to this sort of work.[1]

Fripp accepts without reservation the 'dark period' and treats Measure for Measure as a significant product of that period when

> The Poet was sick of the rivalries and personalities, not merely theatrical and academic but political and social, which embittered the present and darkened

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1 For another effort in the same vein, see Arthur Heine's suggestion that he had uncovered the original of Angelo's garden-house somewhere in Southwark ("The Influence of Environment," SAB XX (1945), 77-81).

> the future...His fountain of merriment had run dry, and in the same measure it never flowed again. (579)

On the effect of the play as a whole, Fripp is in the main line of nineteenth-century criticism:

> If All's Well has its improprieties and lawlessness, what shall we say of Measure for Measure? With open and judicious eyes, and undismayed, the Poet would have us look on the darkest evils. Hiding nothing, he would show us the difference between convention and morality, fanaticism and statesmanship, hypocrisy and righteousness.[1] (612)

To account sympathetically for the play, Fripp suggests that Shakespeare was undone when he deliberately appealed to King James' great love of casuistry, a view which, if it could be proved, would clearly add a new dimension to our understanding of the Duke.[2] To Fripp, the Duke

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1 Cf. Quiller-Couch who had found Shakespeare "concerned with bawdry in quite a new way, and especially concerned with lechery in woman; possessed or constantly haunted by the thought of it; biting upon it as upon a wound, railing, raging upon it; laughing sometimes, but savagely, on the wrong side of the mouth" (New Cambridge edition, xxii-xxiii).

2 It would hardly explain why the character has struck so many as such an unappealing busybody unless we grant the possibility that Shakespeare was a bungler or that Shakespeare could not do what was expected of him by way of flattering the new king. Here, as in so many other details in his consideration of Measure for Measure, Fripp is not quite sure about the intention behind the characterization of the Duke.

'is' James

> partly as he is (ingenious and indirect, shrinking from contact with the populace), partly as he thinks himself to be (the wise orator and overseer, with knowledge of men and affairs, keeping watch on his officials from the background.[1] (612-3)

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1 Fripp is in good company in his identification of the Duke with the new king, but he is alone in pushing for such an extensive knowledge of James' habits of mind and such a firm prejudice as parts of Shakespeare's playwriting equipment. Tyrwhitt, Malone and Steevens agreed that two passages in the play were clearly allusions to James' famous fear of crowds. This view has had its critical going-over, but it is safe to say that most present-day scholars accept it as a means of dating the play. Chambers, as usual, is cautious:

> Allusions (i. I. 68; ii. 4. 26) to a royal dislike of crowds may reflect an idiosyncrasy of James, but the proclamations of 29 May and 6 July 1603 restraining access to London and the court, which are sometimes cited in confirmation of this, were merely normal precautions against the spread of plague. (William Shakespeare, I, 453).

Others have noted that Queen Elizabeth resorted to similar precautions many times during her reign. In the Arden edition, H. C. Hart suggested Shakespeare himself did not greatly care for crowds and was, in writing these two passages, simply giving vent to his own feelings.

We should note that early in 1603-4 James was rather handsomely not avoiding crowds except when it was necessary because of sanitary precautions or, more importantly, fears of possible assassination attempts. As we shall see, there was good reason for such circumspection.

Most importantly, the speeches have dramatic values which seem never to have been noted. The Duke must leave without 'staging himself' to his subjects' 'loud applause and aves vehement' because he is not going to leave at all. Shakespeare was probably merely trying to supply a necessary bit of motivation and to create a little suspense.

Elsewhere Fripp is even more severely critical of James:

> Those dramas [All's Well and Measure for Measure], comedies only in name, part tragedy from tragedy -- the Tragedy of Thought in Julius Caesar and Hamlet from the Tragedy of Passion in Othello and its successors...There was everything to make the Poet grave. Worse than decrepitude [Elizabeth] was maturity that is senile, talkative, dictatorial, idle, indulgent, spendthrift. At a glance Shakespeare saw the character of King James...." (621)

At another point, Fripp tells us that Shakespeare could have had no respect for James who "stuttered fulsome praise and filled his pocket" after the guarded, decorous approval of Queen Elizabeth who "had rewarded Shakespeare with thrifty recompense and rare mental appreciation". (618) Yet Fripp recognizes the fact that Shakespeare's company fared far better financially under James than it had under his predecessor. Fripp's Shakespeare would appear not to have enjoyed praise and remuneration!

If King James is the blackest villain lurking in the background of Measure for Measure, he is not, in Fripp's eyes, the only one. The other is Montaigne, "the fashionable and gifted roué, with his complacent conscience, light-hearted vice, remoteness from duty, incapacity for stern action, servitude to self, and lack of high seriousness". (597-8) The Essais constituted, for Shakespeare, "a book to quarrel with, if not to grapple with...both a stimulus to his thought and a

challenge to his righteousness". (597) Fripp singles out the 'salacious' "Upon some Verses of Virgil," in which Montaigne's kinship with the younger Bertrand Russell is all too shockingly apparent, as a means by which we can

> understand the fierce puritan cry, of which we shall hear more than an echo in Measure for Measure and King Lear, against the fornicator, 'Pluck out his eyes!' (599)

At this point, Fripp would appear to have forgotten his own attempts earlier in the book to attentuate the seriousness of the 'crimes' with which Shakespeare concerned himself in writing Measure for Measure. Nothing could so well demonstrate the futility of seeking to prove Shakespeare had a highly-developed Victorian moral sensibility.

These are the high points of Fripp's treatment of the play, the author and the 'dark period' in which he was working. Yet, however unsatisfactory in parts, Fripp's work remains the most elaborate and consistent effort to base an interpretation of the play on 'facts.' Unfortunately, the 'facts' are not always factual: nowhere does Fripp question his received 'facts' about King James and the Jacobean Shakespeare -- certainly it is important to recognize that the fictionalized James and the James misliked by Queen Elizabeth was probably not the James known either to Shakespeare or to his new

subjects during the first years of his reign. Another flaw in Fripp's interpretation involves the failure to relate the play to its sources. Ordinarily Fripp considers, usually to good advantage, sources, but in the case of Measure for Measure, perhaps because of his obvious distaste for the play, the only 'source' he acknowledges is Montaigne -- and then much too recklessly. Reverend Fripp's boldness in guessing Shakespeare's responses to James and Montaigne is perhaps admirable, but it is to be mistrusted because of Fripp's lack of awareness of his own fierce desire to make Shakespeare conform to his own moral attitudes. However, despite all these faults,, Fripp's work, especially in its clearly factual parts, is capable of being put to good use. Certainly, it comes close to epitomizing the standard view of Measure for Measure from which, in the pages which follow, I depart. Most importantly, the errors into which Fripp inevitably fell are instructive of the reasons I will leave Shakespeare's attitudes (towards James, towards puritanism, towards the monastic ideal, towards his 'age') untouched in favor of considering the probable reactions of those Londoners who, either at Court or in the Globe, were seeing Measure for Measure in 1604.

Concerning the procedure followed in the next chapter, it may be objected that everything rests on the

assumption that Shakespeare wrote the play between the time James became king and the presentation of the play at Whitehall on 26 December, 1604. This is not quite the case. In the following chapter I assume only that the play (probably in its present form) was presented at court during the 1604/5 Christmas Revels,[1] that it was chosen by the Master of the Revels and the King's Players to get the Christmas Revels off to a good start.[2] I shall

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1 I accept Ernest Law's view that the King's Players had been doing the play at the Globe before they transported it to Court, but I am mistrustful of Law's reasons:

> ...to suppose, as some have done, that it was written with a view to its being first produced before the King and Queen at court, instead of before the public at 'the Globe', would seem absolutely inadmissible, if the all too life-like humours of Pompey, Elbow, and Mistress Overdone had their place in Shakespeare's original draft. For, making every allowance for the comparative coarseness of those times, it is **inconceivable** that the dramatist would have included those scenes in a version of the play for special representation before the Queen and the ladies of her Court.

See Law's "The First Night Performance of Measure for Measure," TLS (December 26, 1910).

2 Shakespeare himself probably had little to say about the choice of plays or the sequence in which they were to be presented at Court. The Master of the Revels and the actors of the Globe company thus constitute the first board of judges that ever deliberated the (to us) vexing question of the play's bitterness. We know that they did not take Marston's The Malcontent, which they were doing in 1604, to Court -- the reasons are readily apparent when we note that Marston's play, quite unlike Measure for Measure, is permeated with jibes at court corruption which could not be excised from the play. To Shakespeare's closest associates and to the Master of the King's Revels, Measure for Measure must have passed muster as an appropriate presentation for St.Stephen's Day.

try only to suggest the way a general audience (nut-cracking citizens and aristocrats alike, as described by Harbage) may have received the play in 1604.[1] From this point of view, it does not matter greatly whether in 1604 it was new or an old play revived.

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1 Cf. a recent suggestion from G. E. Bentley with which Francis Fergusson concluded his recent Harvard lecture, "Philosophy and Theatre in Measure for Measure," (in Kenyon Review (Winter, 1952), 119-120).

> Professor G. E. Bentley tells me that in his opinion Measure for Measure was not written for Shakespeare's usual popular audience, but for some special occasion. He thinks it possible, even probable, that it was written for the Inns of Court, though he adds that there is no real evidence for that. But I eagerly seize on this possibility, and I imagine Shakespeare himself, in the role of the Duke, addressing an audience professionally responsible for the Law. I see him in the Duke's costume, known for the theatre man he was, speaking to his learned audience with urbanity and some irony:
>
> The properties of government to unfold
> Would seem, in me, to affect speech and discourse.
>
> And after this polite gambit, I like to think of him enthralling the lawyers both with his philosophy of government and with the magic of his theatre-poetry, lighting his great theme from several sides at once, yet passing it all off easily as his own hypothesis and make-believe.

PART TWO

CHAPTER TWO

SHAKESPEARE'S 1604 AUDIENCES AND THE TOPICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MEASURE FOR MEASURE

In the previous chapter I set out to explore the relationships between the older views of the play's topicality and the two major lines of development in evaluative criticism of Measure for Measure. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that topical studies have not kept pace with the almost exclusively twentieth-century view of the play as something other than an artistic failure reflecting Shakespeare's bitter sorrows. Before attempting a brief historical reconstruction of Shakespeare's play in its 1604 setting, I have thought it advisable to survey briefly the specific topical allusions which scholars, all of whom were working in the older tradition of criticism, believed they had established. It will be at once apparent that some of these allusions depend exclusively on the older view of James I as an unpopular monarch. In the main, however,

the allusions are meaningful primarily in relation to the Coleridge-Dowden view of Measure for Measure.

With the exception of the two passages which have been widely accepted as compliments to King James, no other passage in Measure for Measure has excited the imagination of the topicalists as much as the following:

> Lucio: If the duke, with the other dukes, come not to composition with the King of Hungary, why then all the dukes fall upon the King.
> First Gentleman: Heaven grant us its peace, but not the King of Hungary's (I, 2, 1-5)

Dover Wilson, noting rightly that 'this talk bears no relation to anything else in Shakespeare's Vienna,' evolved the following explanation of the line:

> ...it happens to be entirely relevant to current political events in the Austria of his Shakespeare's day. After a war of thirteen years, the Empire concluded peace with the Turks at Zsitva-Torok, on Nov. 11, 1606. This peace was signed, against the Emperor's will, by his brother Archduke Matthias, King of Hungary; it was a disgraceful peace, by which 700 villages were said to have passed under Turkish dominion, together with certain fortified towns; it was a peace which was likely to be long remembered against its author, the King of Hungary, by an indignant Christendom. 'Heaven grant us its peace, but not the King of Hungary's' -- the words, at once so pointed and so irrelevant, must be a topical allusion; and there can be little hesitation in attaching them to the peace signed at Zsitva-Torok in November, 1606.[1]

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1 New Cambridge edition, 104-5. The underlining is mine.

Largely on this alleged 1606 allusion, Wilson based his theory of a post-1606 revision and thus added another layer to the history of the Folio text. E. K. Chambers was unwilling to accept Wilson's theory, noting that the lines could as easily allude to "the peace made and treacherously broken by Sigismund of Hungary in 2 Tamburlaine, i. 2; ii. I. 2."[1] Although I am inclined to believe that Chambers' suggestion merits more serious consideration than Wilson's, I doubt if it is possible to explain the origin of the passage. The chatter of Lucio and the two Gentlemen in this short scene seems very topical in its bearings but, more importantly, it is also functional as necessary exposition to inform the audience of the way news of the Duke's departure has been received by the Viennese citizenry. Furthermore, as a device for suggesting the passage of time since the Duke's departure in I, 1 -- a device meaningful in purely theatrical terms -- the lines should perhaps not be scrutinized too closely for topicality.[2]

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1 William Shakespeare, I, 454.

2 I suspect that Armin, who I think played Lucio, may have been responsible for writing I, 2, 1-44. The talk is full of the riddling and jokes which I associate with his parts in Twelfth Night, King Lear and As You Like It. Shakespeare may well have told Armin that the play needed a brief 'cover scene' between I, 1 and Folio I, 3 which Armin provided. This hypothesis may be enough to account for the fact that the Folio text is irregularly divided at this point.

It is equally doubtful that these lines contain any allusion, as Malone and others have suggested, to King James' 'Peace at any price' policy.[1] To have suggested, even by the subtlest indirection, that peace with Spain (the treaty was signed 19 August 1604) was shameful would have been too great a risk for the King's Men to take.

One wonders if any of the alleged allusions to James would have been recognized by Globe audiences in 1604. As will become apparent later in this chapter, not many Londoners in 1604 knew much about their new ruler. That Shakespeare's 1604 audiences might be knowledgeably adverse in criticizing King James is a doubtful proposition on which to conduct a topical study of Measure for Measure. For this reason I am mistrustful of the traditional view that the following passages allude to James' 'fear and dislike of crowds':

> I'll privily away. I love the people,
> But do not like to stage me to their eyes.
> Though it do well, I do not relish well
> Their loud applause and Aves vehement;
> Nor do I think the man of safe discretion
> That does affect it. (I, 1, 68-73)

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1 The extent to which James' subjects regarded his desire to end England's participation in foreign wars as unworthy or ignoble is difficult to measure. The situation is comparable to the present ambivalence of feeling in America concerning the Korean War -- the historian attempting to define the 'general American attitude' toward the war would have considerable difficulty reconciling isolationist and internationalist attitudes, to say nothing of the feelings of parents of Korean War combatants as opposed to the feelings of those profiting from handsome military contracts.

> Why does my blood thus muster to my heart
> Making both it unable for itself,
> And dispossessing all my other parts
> Of necessary fitness?
> So play the foolish throngs with one that swounds;
> Come all to help him, and so stop the air
> By which he should revive; and even so
> The general, subject to a well-wish'd king,
> Quit their own part, and in obsequious fondness
> Crowd to his presence, where their untaught love
> Must needs appear offence. (II, 4, 20-30)

The first passage, as indicated in the preceding chapter, is explicable in terms of necessary motivation and, in all probability, bears no relation to any 1604 attitudes toward James. The Duke's speech is essentially anti-crowd rather than anti-Duke if we grant (as most older critics did not) the fact that Shakespeare intended to present Duke Vincentio sympathetically. The effect of these lines on a popular audience prepared to recognize any kind of topicality is, then, difficult to assess.

The second passage, however, strategically located in one of Angelo's soliloquies, is not so easily dismissed as a possible topical allusion. There is much in the lineation to warrant the New Cambridge editors' conjecture that the lines beginning "So play the foolish throngs" were a later addition for the Court performance. However, if indeed the lines were inserted to flatter the King, one wonders why they have remained in the text. If used in public performances, there would be at once the danger of advertising the King's supposed feeling about crowds too widely and the possibility of offending the very

people who would make up "the foolish throngs" mentioned in the passage. In fact, however, in 1604 James was still greeting his subjects with shows of affectionate regard. There is no evidence for believing that James had been guilty of "stately and ungracious demeanour"[1] on his entry into England. There would, then, seem to be no reason to regard these lines as a "courtly apology" for James' "well-advertised aversion to crowds." In addition, it has seemed to me a dangerous procedure to insist on topical allusions wherever one encounters a passage with little or no obvious dramatic function. The passage may have been inserted to cover the servant's exit to usher Isabella on stage[2] and certainly the lines

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1 Malone's Shakespeare (edited by J. Boswell), II, 383. Tyrwhitt referred to the "unkingly weakness" of James, a reference accepted by most editors. H. C. Hart (Arden editor) is, however, an exception.

We will do well to recall that Barksted's alleged echo derives from this passage, a fact that would seem to attest to the use of the passage in public performances.

2 The New Cambridge editors anticipate this possibility: "the speech as it stands is overlong for the pause before Isabella's entry, since presumably she is just outside when the servant announces her" (132) Unfortunately we have no means of knowing whether the passage is 'overlong' from this point of view. Some sort of speech is needed here for this purpose and Shakespeare, in devising one, may simply have been carried away by his own similes. He has been known to indulge himself in such poetic -- and 'extra-dramatic' -- flights elsewhere.

appropriately characterize an Angelo enjoying his role of deputy-Duke. In all events, one must thoroughly explore a presumed topicality for all its immediately theatrical functions before assuming that topicality might have been the over-riding consideration in the playwright's mind.

Malone also suggested that the so-called 'Statute of Stabbing' of 1604 is reflected in IV, 3, 1-21:

> Pompey: I am as well acquainted here as I was in our house of profession. One would think it were Mistress Overdone's own house, for here be many of her old customers. First, here's Master Rash. He's in for a commodity of brown paper and old ginger, nine-score and seventeen pounds; of which he made five marks, ready money. Marry, then ginger was not much in request, for the old women were all dead. Then is there here one Master Caper, at the suit of Master Three-pile the mercer, for some four suits of peach-colour'd satin, which now peaches him a beggar. Then have we here young Dizzy, and Young Master Deep-vow, and Master Copper-spur, and Master Starve-Lackey the rapier and dagger man, and young Drop-heir that killed lusty Pudding, and Master Forthlight the tilter, and brave Master Shooty the great traveller, and wild Half-can that stabb'd Pots, and, I think, forty more; all great doers in our trade, and are now 'for the Lord's sake.'

This catalogue must have delighted Shakespeare's audiences, but so many different types of offenses are included that

we hesitate to see an allusion to a particular royal inhibition.[1] In all events, royal efforts to put an end to duelling and stabbing hardly originated with James; the new inhibition may, however, have added extra point to the mention of Starve-lackey the rapier and dagger man, Drop-heir, Forthlight, and Half-can.

Another statute which some scholars have seen reflected in Measure for Measure involved remarriage of divorced persons while their former spouses were still living.[2] This statute is an interesting commentary on the times, but it is impossible to see how Shakespeare's audiences could have uncovered any allusion to it in

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1 Shakespeare's audience could hardly have been aware of this, but Promos and Cassandra contains a parallel. Whetstone's jail-scene appears earlier in his play (Part I, Act II, Scenes 6 and 7), and it is more strongly moralizing than Shakespeare's scene, but its general effect is the same. The existence of a recognizable source for the scene should cause us to doubt that Shakespeare intended to allude to the Stabbing Statute, but it does not affect the way audiences may have taken the passage.

2 See Introduction to the Arden edition, xi, where Hart cites -- apparently with approval -- Dowden's suggestion: "the revival in 1604 of a statute, which punished with death any divorced person who married again while his or her former husband or wife was living, may have added point to one chief incident in the play."

this play. Similarly far-fetched is the suggestion that the line, "Is't not drown'd i' the last rain, ha?" (III, 2, 51-2), is an allusion to the destructive floods of 1602/3.[1] If any topicality lies behind this line -- and it does appear in one of the suspiciously topical Lucio speeches -- it may have been the great rain and hail storm mentioned by Stow as occurring on 3 August, 1604.[2] I am more inclined to believe, however, that the line has a slangy quality, perhaps fashionable chitchat, quite consistent with the Lucio loose speech, and attempts to read too much into it are reducible to absurdity.[3]

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1 Even the New Cambridge editors are reluctant to accept this one: "All such pretended allusions to a variable climate like that of England seem to us very dubious." (140)

2 Op. cit., 844.

3 The entire speech in which the line appears is worth consideration, however, for its literarily classical allusions. The surrounding action is Pompey's commitment to prison. Pompey suddenly catches a glimpse of Lucio and sees rescue in sight: "I spy comfort; I cry bail! Here's a gentleman and a friend of mine." Lucio's greeting betokens his show-off character:

> How now, noble Pompey! What, at the wheels of Caesar? Art thou led in triumph? What, is there none of Pygmalion's images, newly made woman, to be had now, for putting the hand in the pocket and extracting clutch'd? What reply, ha? What say'st thou to this tune, matter, and method? Is't not drown'd i' the last rain, ha? What say'st thou, Trot? Is the world as it was, man? Which is the way? Is it sad, and few words? or how? The trick of it?

I suspect the length of this speech is to be explained in terms of accompanying stage business. Elbow has apparently just put a cord around Pompey's neck when Lucio arrives. Pompey's inability to answer Lucio's questions

Another alleged topical allusion to which I can give but slight credence was proposed by Albrecht, who saw in the line, "His child is a year and a quarter old, come Philip and Jacob" (III, 2, 213-4), a means of establishing a terminal date for the composition of the play.[1] This saints' day falls on 1 May and Albrecht suggests

> Vielleicht war es [1 May] gerade um die Zeit herum, also Ende April, dass Shakespeare bei Abfassung seines Stückes bis zu dieser Stelle d. h. etwas über die Mitte des ganzen Stückes hinausgekommen war. Er hätte danach, als er jene Stelle niederschrieb, etwa drei Monate: Februar,

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because of the cord binding too tightly on his throat would provide a moment of slapstick comedy. This is perhaps too obvious an explanation for some who have seen, in the mention of 'Pygmalion's images' an allusion to Marston's Metamorphosis of Pygmalion's Image, which was published in 1598 and ran into considerable trouble with the censor. It has also been suggested that the detail of Pompey led in triumph at the wheels of Caesar is an allusion to the popular play, Caesar and Pompey, but since there were innumerable plays about these two worthies, it is futile to conjecture a topicality here. J. A. K. Thomson, in his Shakespeare and the Classics (1952), says that there is "very little [in the way of classical allusion] for us in Measure for Measure" but singles out the two allusions in this speech (129). If I am right in accounting for the speech as a cover for stage-business, the allusions may well be attributable, not to Shakespeare, but to the actor who played Lucio (= Armin?).

1 Op. cit., 229.

> März und April am Stücke gearbeitet
> und es dann in den darauffolgenden
> Monaten: Mai, Juni, Juli beendet.

This is not the only means by which Albrecht attempts to establish the date Shakespeare was writing the play, but it is one of his least plausible.[1] In all events, the line could have carried no demonstrable topical significance for Shakespeare's audience.

In general, the scholar dedicated to the pursuit of topical allusions is in danger of over-weighting the topical suggestiveness of particular lines to the exclusion of every other consideration. In my study of Measure for Measure in its 1604 setting, I have proceeded on the assumption that the play would have been appreciated (or at least understood) by 1604 audiences for its general rather than any pinpointedly specific topical bearings. Inasmuch as the topical allusions surveyed above have all grown out of studies predicated on the opposite

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1 For the complete story, see Albrecht's chapter, "Zeit der Entstehung von Mass für Mass," 216-233. Other 'clues' used by Albrecht are the end of the plague danger, the peace treaty with Spain and the attendant negotiations, some mistaken information (derived from Gardiner) concerning the Kriegspartei, 'a group led by Raleigh' in favor of pushing England's war with Spain through to a real conclusion, the Statute of Stabbing, and echoes of other plays. I agree that Measure for Measure may have been written in the early months of 1604 (but admit the absence of proof) but doubt that so many of these reflections of the contemporary background are clearly in evidence in the play. Most importantly, I find it hard to believe that Shakespeare spent six or seven months writing Measure for Measure.

assumption, I have not made any special effort to accomodate them into the historical reconstruction which follows. Some of them, as I attempted to show, depend on assumptions which are purely gratuitous and have no basis in fact. Others, however, remain plausible -- indeed gain greater plausibility -- when set against the general background I have attempted to establish. To this second category I should certainly admit the two passages which may have had their origin in Shakespeare's admiration for King James.

In general, Shakespeare seems not to have had any reputation for the kind of personal satire we associate with Jonson and Marston. Perhaps his apparent tranquility was a habit of mind fostered by long and regular association with a popular theater as both playwright and actor. Whatever kept him from revealing in his plays his partisanships in any of the celebrated causes of his time, we shall never know. Yet we must consider that Shakespeare was capable of seizing upon a mood of the times, of reflecting and summarizing that temper obliquely and perceptively in the plays. It was undoubtedly this capacity which gave his plays part of their immediate popular appeal. The errors in the older topical studies of Measure for Measure have largely proceeded from an inadequate or partisan definition of the particular

national mood which may be reflected in the play. The following reconstruction is an attempt to redefine the temper of Shakespeare's 1604 audiences.

London's theaters were closed from the spring of 1603 until Easter Monday, 9 April 1604. The reasons for this long period of inactivity were in the first order sanitary and, less importantly, deferential to the death of Queen Elizabeth. On 19 March 1603, partly because of the usual Lenten observances and partly because the queen was reported to be seriously ill, the theaters had closed their doors. In all probability they had reopened Easter Monday, 25 April (three days before Queen Elizabeth's funeral) but by 17 May the plague orders had been posted. The theaters were again closed -- as it turned out, for the remainder of the year.[1]

During this period the fortunes of the acting companies took many new turns. The Globe company had been

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1 Joan Alleyn's letter to her husband, Edward, tells us that "all the companies be come home, and are well, for aught we know." The letter is dated 21 October. Despite their expectation of resuming activity, the actors were kept unemployed for more than the next five months. (Hens. Papers, 59-61.)

the Lord Chamberlain's Men when it closed in 1603; when it resumed activities, the playing company had gained prestige as the King's Men. Many of the Globe's regular customers must have realized that the new king had wasted no time in taking the company under the royal wing. As early as 17 May, 1603, less than two months after his accession and apparently without having seen the company perform, James had licensed his royal players.[1] This was one of James' earliest official acts and one for which Queen Elizabeth had not, within recent memory, provided a precedent.[2] James had reached the outskirts of London on his progress from the North about 11 May 1603, at which time he and his company had entered the Tower of London without setting foot in the already infected city. He had stayed in the Tower three days before moving down the river to Greenwich, where he was when the company was licensed. The licensing could hardly have occurred at a more opportune time -- it was on 17 May that the plague orders were posted.

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1 It should be noted that the Globe actors received the honor of royal patronage well in advance of the licensing of the Children of the Queen's Revels and Prince Henry's Men. The Queen's Company's patent is dated 4 February, 1604; the Prince's Company, although not granted a patent until 1606, was in existence for the 1603/4 Christmas season. (Eliz. Stage, II, 49, 186).

2 Queen Elizabeth had maintained the Interluders before 1580 and Queen Elizabeth's Men from 1583 until 1594/5. (Eliz. Stage, 104-115).

In 1604 Globe audiences were seeing actors whom they could recognize as old friends: Burbage, Phillips, Armin, Cowley, Lowin, Heminges, Condell, Shakespeare, and Sly.[1] However, one new actor, Lawrence Fletcher, whose name had headed the list of players in the royal patent,[2] would, if and when he acted with the company,

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1 Our knowledge of the personnel of the company at this time is rather more extensive than usual. Actors' names appear in several royal documents, and Webster's Induction to The Malcontent gives us a particularly valuable insight into the goings-on within the Globe. We should note that two former members of the company, Thomas Pope and Will Kempe, died in London in 1603, apparently victims of the plague.

2 Information about Fletcher is, apart from his Scottish adventures, scant. See Eliz. Stage, II, 269, and Nungezer, A Dictionary of Actors. Chambers believes Fletcher's name in the 19 May 1603 patent is not to be taken seriously. It is true that his name appears nowhere in the actor-lists for the Globe plays, but his name is also mentioned, along with the old stand-bys in the King's Men, to receive four yards of red cloth for the London Entry of James on 15 March, 1604. Even more compelling a reason for believing Fletcher's association with the Globe was active is the fact that in 1605, Fletcher was remembered in Phillips' will as a 'fellow' to receive twenty shillings, the sum Phillips left to Armin and other younger members of the company. In all events, whether Fletcher "ever joined the company in the full sense, that is to say, the association of actors as distinct from the body of royal servants," as Chambers puts it, he had some connection with the Globe. A man who had almost certainly had the ear of the new king and knew something of the royal family's dramatic tastes would be of obvious value to the King's Men. It may have been Fletcher's idea to present a play based on the Gowry Plot; the play has disappeared but we know that there was some concern in official quarters when it was acted around 18 December, 1604, a week before Measure for Measure was played at Whitehall. This imbroglio, about which we should like to know more, came at a time when the company must have been thinking about the plays they would present at Court; this would constitute another reason for believing that Measure for Measure was offered as a 'safe' play.

have aroused special interest among the spectators. In 1599 when he and some other English players (whose names we do not know) had run into trouble with the church interests of Edinburgh, Fletcher had been defended by James. His association with James had extended over a considerable period of time. Indeed, in Scotland he had been called 'comediane to his Majesty' and in England, suddenly elevated to membership in the Globe company, Fletcher would have been recognized as a great favorite with the new monarch. A perpetual reminder to all of James' generosity toward old friends and players, Fletcher must have been a magnificent addition to the players.

Members of the Globe audiences in 1604 had seen very little of their new ruler. "Multitudes of people" had flocked to glimpse James in the fields outside London on 7 May, 1603, but this was to be one of the few views vouchsafed Londoners before James was finally able to make his London Entry on 15 March, 1604. The King's Men, however, had been in the royal presence, a fact which would weigh heavily with those who came to the theater as much for the gossip to be gleaned there as for the plays. At Wilton on 2 December, 1603 John Heminges had been paid

> for the paynes and expences of himself and the rest of the company in comming from Mortelake in the countie of Surrie unto the courte aforesaid and there p'senting before his matie one playe.

The journey to Wilton from Mortlake, where Phillips 'perhaps to avoid the recurring pestilence, had lately bought a country house,'[1] was considerable in those times, but even so the recompense of £30 was munificent.[2] On 18 January, for court appearances during the Christmas festivities, the company had received £53. If there were any doubt that James took his responsibility for his players' well-being seriously, the terms of another payment, this time to Burbage, on 8 February, 1604 of £30 would settle the matter:

> for the mayntenaunce and releife of himselfe and the rest of his company being prohibited to p'sente any playes publiquely in or neere London by reason of greate perill that might growe through the extraordinary concourse and assemble of people to a new increase of the plague till it shall please God to settle the cittie in a more p'fecte health by way of his maties free gifte.[3]

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1 Fripp, 589.

2 It is possible that the players had performed As You Like It at Wilton and that the Countess of Pembroke had enticed James to Wilton by saying 'we have the man Shakespeare with us.' The lady wanted to plead in behalf of Raleigh and others involved in the conspiracy to which we will devote considerable time later. (See William Shakespeare, II, 329 for the uncertainty of these facts.)

3 Eliz. Stage, IV, 168-9.

29 February Heminges received £20 for two plays presented at court earlier in the month. Apart from their normal duties of entertaining the Court, the King's Men assumed new roles as Grooms extraordinary of the Chamber. They had played some part in the Triumphant Passage on 15 March: Shakespeare, Phillips, Fletcher, Heminges, Burbage, Sly, Armin, Condell and Cowley had each received a gift of cloth "against his Maiesties sayd royal proceeding through the Citie of London."[1]

Among the regulars in the Globe audiences, it was probably recognized that the company was faring remarkably well under the new ruler. The difficulty in 1603 over the company's production of Sejanus had apparently not prejudiced the company's standing, however many embarrassing questions Ben Jonson had had to answer about his treasonable intention. Later, in 1604, there was the fuss over the play on the Gowry Plot. However, the fortunes of the players seem not to have suffered from these scrapes. Globe productions in 1604 must have been mounted with greater authority and opulence than ever before. The paying customers would appreciate the reasons for this new splendor.

What can we conjecture concerning Globe audiences

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1 William Shakespeare, II, 73.

in 1604? Because of the events of 1603, there may have been a greater homogeneity of spirit than might ordinarily have been the case. 1603 had been, particularly for Londoners, a "Wonderful Year," just as Dekker described it, but 1604 was, in its own less painful way, perhaps even more 'wonderful.' 1604 was the festival year for Londoners that 1603 should have been. City officials had planned to welcome James in the summer of 1603, but the decorations for those festivities had rotted away, a grotesque backdrop for the plague-ridden city. The spurt of prosperity to which London merchants had looked forward in 1603 came a year later. When James finally arrived in March, 1604, Londoners revelled in an atmosphere of carnival excitement engendered by all that the Triumphant Passage symbolized: the end of the Plague danger and at long last the settling-in of the new court. Foreign emissaries whose arrival had been discouraged in 1603 flocked to the city.[1] The plague in the countryside kept the court and Londoners in the city during 1604. Soldiers returning from Ireland, if the plague orders had kept them out of London in 1603, could now return to reestablish themselves. It was now

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1 In August, 1604, the King's Men, as Grooms of the Chamber, were in attendance for two weeks on the Spanish Ambassador at Somerset House. (Jac. Journal, 155.)

apparent that the new king wanted peace and, for people who had long been involved in war under Elizabeth, this must have been welcome enough news. 1604 was also the year of the first Parliament under James: on 11 January the proclamation calling upon the constituencies to send up members had gone out and on 19 March the best-attended meeting England had ever known was opened. This brought more money and more trade to London.

1604 was a year for knitting-up, for repairing damages. There must have been, of course, undercurrents of insecurity and uninformed speculation. However much James followed his announced intention to rely on most of his predecessor's officials and policies, his subjects had good reason to wonder what changes James would introduce. There were rumors that James was sympathetic to the Catholic cause, although the 1603 English editions of his BASILIKON DORON contained a specially written affirmation of the king's loyalty to the Established Church.[1] There must have been worries that James was creating new knights at too prodigious a rate, that he spent too freely. To some, the omens of the first years of James' reign must have seemed omens of ill -- the plague, for example, was the worst within recent

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1 THE BASILIKON DORON OF KING JAMES VI (edited by James Craigie), Scottish Text Society (No. 16, Third Series), I, 16.

memory. Events of 1603 had suggested that James had personal enemies, but they had also suggested that James and his advisors knew who these enemies were.

Two events in 1603 had given his new subjects valuable insight into the personality of the new king. One was the publication of the instruction-book James had written for Prince Henry, BASILIKON DORON, a work in which James defined his ideals of kingship.[1] Not the work of an intemperate mind, it was suffused with a supreme belief in the Divine Right of Monarchy and it was also notable for its recognition of the ruler's obligations

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1 Elizabeth Marie Pope ("The Renaissance Background of Measure for Measure," Shak. Survey 2, (1949), 66-82) has recently argued

> Sermons and treatises defining the status, privileges, and responsibilities of the Christian governor are plentiful enough during the sixteenth century...But in 1603 and 1604, public interest in the question seems to have been especially keen. In those years, King James's True Laws of Free Monarchies was reprinted twice and his Basilicon Doron seven times -- nine if we count the Welsh translation and William Willymat's digest in Latin and English verse. There also appeared a number of works dealing wholly or in part with the office and duties of the Christian ruler -- such as six sermons preached before King James at various times by Thomas Bilson, Richard Eedes, Henry Hooke, Thomas Blague, and Richard Field; reprints of Henry Smith's Magistrate Scripture and Memento for Magistrates; Andrew Willet's Ecclesia Triumphans, a tract showing how James met all the requirements of an ideal ruler; A Loyal Subject's Looking-Glasse, by William Willymat; Ben Jonson's Panegyre on the King's first entrance into Parliament; and William Perkins' posthumous Treatise of Christian Equity and Moderation. This outburst of concern (cont.)

to his subjects.[1] The Globe's paying customers

> with the theory of government seems to have been inspired primarily by the accession of James. A certain amount of such preaching and writing would probably have occurred on the arrival of any new monarch, but in this particular case, it must have been greatly stimulated by the fact that the new monarch was himself an authority on the subject, whose work was being eagerly discussed by the public and whose favour the court clergy and literati were naturally anxious to gain. ...
>
> Now Measure for Measure is very largely concerned with the "Prince's duty," particularly in regard to the administration of justice. At no time, perhaps, could Shakespeare have presented such a subject without reckoning to some extent on what his audience would be predisposed to think of his characters and their behaviour. But if he did write the play about 1603-4, he had unusually good reason to believe the subject would be popular and to consider it in terms of the contemporary doctrine of rule — even if we do not assume that he, like so many others, was seriously concerned over the problems of Christian and godly government and deliberately trying to catch the eye of the King, at whose court it was acted and to whose well-known dislike of crowds two passages apparently allude. ...
>
> According to Renaissance theory, the authority of all civil rulers is derived from God....This doctrine may very well explain why the Duke moves through so much of the action of Measure for Measure like an embodied Providence; why his character has such curiously allegorical overtones, yet never quite slips over the edge into actual allegory; and finally, why Roy Battenhouse's theory that Shakespeare subconsciously thought of him as the Incarnate Lord is at once so convincing and so unsatisfactory. Any Renaissance audience would have taken it for granted that the Duke did indeed "stand for" God, but only as any good ruler "stood for" Him; and if he behaved "like power divine," it was because that was the way a good ruler was expected to conduct himself. (70-71)

1 Trevelyan (in England Under the Stuarts) mentions BASILIKON DORON as part of every Jacobean gentleman's library. There are good accounts of the work in Albrecht, Draper, Sisson, and Paul. Better than any short account, however, is this highly readable work, which is now available in Craigie's parallel-passage

may well have suspected that Measure for Measure, with its development of the mercy-justice theme, was inspired by such passages as the following in BASILIKON DORON:

> Therefore be ye [his son] contrare at your first entrie to your Kingdome, to that Quinquennium Neronis, with his tenderharted wishe, Vellem nescire literas, in giving the law full execution against all breakers thereof but exception. For since ye come not to your reigne precario, nor by conquest, but by right and due discent; feare no up-roares for doing of justice, since ye may assure your selfe, the most part of your people will euer naturally favour justice: prouyding alwaies, that ye doe it onely for loue to justice, and not for satisfying any particulare passions of yours, under colour thereof: otherwise, howe justlie that euer the offender deserve it, ye are guiltie of murther before God. For ye must consider, that God euer looketh to your inward intention in all your actions.
>
> And when ye haue by the seueritie of justice once setled your countries, and made them knowe that ye can strike, then may ye thereafter all the dayes of your life mixe justice with mercie, punishing or sparing, as ye shall finde the crime to haue bene wilfullie or rashlie committed, and according to the by-past behauiour of the committer. For if otherwise ye kyth your

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edition of the Scottish Text Society's publications. I am convinced that Shakespeare knew this work before we wrote or touched up Measure for Measure, but I lack hard evidence for proving that he did. There are no obvious verbal echoes, chiefly perhaps because the conflict between justice and mercy was a theme which attracted platitudes. (See, for example, Samuel C. Chew, The Virtues Reconciled (An Iconographic Study), University of Toronto Press, 1947, and such older surveys as Henry Green's Shakespeare and the Emblem-Writers, Mario Praz's Studies in Seventeenth Century Imagery, and Hope Traver's The Four Daughters of God, where these platitudes are collected.) Despite the absence of verbal echoes, however, there is a striking similarity of general tone — that of amiable, friendly advising — in the two works.

> clemencies at the first, the offences would soone come to suche heapes, and the contempt of you growe so great, that when ye would fall to punishe, the nomber of them to be punished would exceed the innocent; and ye would be troubled to resolue whome-at to begin: and against your nature would be compelled then to wracke manie, whome the chastisement of fewe in the beginning might haue preserued. But in this, my ouer-deare bought experience may serue you for a sufficient lesson. For I confesse, where I thought (by being gracious at the beginning) to win all mens heartes to a louing and willing obedience, I by the contrarie founde, the disorder of the countrie, and the losse of my thankes to be all my rewarde.[1]

The other event which gave James' new subjects a striking view of him came as the culmination of nipping in the bud a complicated conspiracy that furnished exciting news during the entire summer and fall of 1603, and demonstrated just how well the royal intelligence system could work. The double-pronged plot which was -- almost accidentally, it would appear -- brought to light in June, 1603 had roots which went back to the old question of the succession and the Essex plot of 1601.

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1 Op. Cit., I, 61, 63, 65. It is interesting to note that James tried to follow his own advice on his way to England. See Harrison, Jacobean Journal, 15 for the account of the cutpurse James ordered to be hanged without a hearing. This occurred 21 April, 1603 at Newark. James' behavior in this instance was inconsistent: after the execution he pardoned all the prisoners in Newark Castle.

Elizabeth had been reluctant to name her successor, although it was generally assumed that, however little she liked him,[1] James VI of Scotland had received the nod. The Essex party had interested itself in assuring James' succession. The effect of that abortive rebellion had been to separate the black sheep from the rest of the flock; with the death of Elizabeth, however, the black sheep who had escaped the 1601 beheadings were suddenly restored to power. Southampton, for his part in the plot, had been languishing in prison for two years -- one of James' first official acts was to order his release. It was not long before Shakespeare's old patron was well established in James' court. As the fortunes of the old Essex supporters rose under James, the picture for the Queen's supporters became progressively blacker. One of the hardest hit was Sir Walter Raleigh, over whose appointment as Captain of the Guard as early as 7 April 1603 Sir Robert Cecil (his old enemy) and Lord Cobham (his friend) had disagreed. Raleigh led the Guard in the Queen's

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1 See Edith Rickert's "Political Propaganda and Satire in A Midsummer Night's Dream," MP, XXI (1923) for some plausible enough suggestions concerning Elizabeth's feelings about the Scottish king. Chambers is skeptical about Miss Rickert's theory but grants that "No doubt plays in derision of James were given in England" and concludes, "It is an amusing comment that Midsummer-Night's Dream was probably one of the first plays chosen for revival before James, on 1 January 1604." (See William Shakespeare, I, 362.)

funeral procession on 28 April 1603, but this was to be one of his last official acts in that capacity. On 8 May he was formally dismissed; early in June, ordered out of Durham House, he was protesting mightily; on 14 July it became known that Raleigh had been arrested -- for reasons not as yet disclosed -- and on 20 July that he had failed in a suicide attempt in his cell in the Tower.

A treasonable plot against James so early in his reign aroused great interest.[1] James had ascended the throne peacefully enough -- to everyone's great surprise and relief. The expectation had been that Elizabeth's death would set off violent contention over the succession. But before James had reigned two months, the English were made aware that under the placid surface there were fears of plots against the new King's life. On 27 April 1603 a proclamation for the arrest of William and Patrick Ruthven brought the name of Gowry before the public. Brothers of the Earl of Gowry who had engineered in 1600 an unsuccessful plot against James,

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1. It is surprising to find how little attention students of the period have paid to this episode. Perhaps the more explosive Gunpowder Plot of 1606 has drawn too much fire.

they were believed to be planning to avenge Gowry's death by killing the monarch before he reached London. On 9 June, Patrick Ruthven was arrested. If the people of England had known little or nothing about the Gowry Plot before, they were soon hearing about it from all sides. BASILIKON DORON contained a marginal allusion to 'the late house of Gowrie' in connection with James' warning that

> vertue or vice will oftentimes, with the heritage, be transferred from the parents to the posteritie, and runne on a blood (as the Prouerbe is) the sicknesse of the minde becomming as kindly to some races; as these sicknesses of the bodie, that infects in the seede, Especially choose suche minors, as are come of a true and honest race, and haue not had the house wherof they are descended, infected with falshoode.[1]

On the very day Raleigh and his alleged fellow conspirators were arrested, the Archbishop of Canterbury, acting on instruction of the Privy Council, announced to the English Bishops that 5 August, the date of James' deliverance from Gowry, was to be a holy day celebrated with "morning prayers, sermons, and evening prayers, and at night bonfires." A considerable amount of mystery was attached to the whole affair: it was

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1 Op. cit., I, 109. The marginal note appears only in the 1603 printings.

rumored that Gowry had been in love with James' wife, who, in her own right, was an interesting topic of conversation.[1]

In all events, the announcement of a full-blown new conspiracy, particularly since Raleigh was involved, was for Englishmen one of the most noteworthy events in midsummer 1603. Arrests, hearings, sentencings and executions of the conspirators furnished news from early July to 9 December, when James capped the climax of an already astounding affair by staging a most remarkable stunt. Perhaps it is a mistake to speak of 'the plot,' for discernible were at least two separate conspiracies. The whole affair was a hodge-podge in which several groups of men whose motives were for the most part mutually incompatible had somehow coalesced their separate forces. One of the two plots (the Bye Plot) involved two Catholic priests, at least one fairly innocent soul who thought he was supporting an anti-Jesuit putsch, and several disgruntled noblemen. The second plot (the Main) involved Lord Cobham and Raleigh. It was never proved that there was any connection between the two plots, but the fact that Master

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1 It was rumored that Queen Anne secretly celebrated Mass and that her relations with James were not altogether friendly. There was good reason for all such speculation. See Jacobean Journal, 30, 38-9.

George Brooke, Cobham's brother, was deeply involved in the first was strong circumstantial support for the view that Cobham himself was not a completely innocent bystander.

The purpose behind the Bye Plot is not altogether clear. The noblemen, Markham, Brooke, Gray, were discontented with their fortunes under James and intent upon righting the balance of power in the king's court so that they might receive a more favorable position.[1] The two priests apparently sought to secure a general toleration of religion. Raleigh and Cobham were accused of conniving with Count Aremberg, the Spanish Ambassador to France; Arabella Stuart's claim to the throne was involved; and at a time when peace with Spain was a strong possibility, the liaison was the more heinous. The case against Raleigh was complicated by Cobham who proclaimed Raleigh's innocence one day and his guilt another.

After a summer in which some participants in the

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1 The best but perhaps the most biased account of the plot is to be found in Lord Cecil's letter to the English Ambassador in France, Sir Thomas Parry. The letter, dated 4 August at Hampton Court, appears in its entirety in Birch's The Court and Times of James the First (1848), I, 9-13; a digest of the letter is provided in Harrison, Jacobean Journal, 52-3. Cecil describes the noblemen's project: "hoping, if they could have, with some convenient number, possessed the person of the king, that they might then, by his authority, have raised themselves to what places they would, by removing those that presently possessed them."

conspiracies had attempted escape and Raleigh had attempted suicide, all the plotters were finally incarcerated. The continuance of the plague in London necessitated several shifts of the law terms. By 12 November, however, all the prisoners had been transferred from the Tower of London to Winchester where the law term was finally to open. By 19 November, most of the conspirators had been judged guilty and sentenced to death.[1] The indictment indicates the seriousness of the charges:

1. To conspire to kill the King
2. To raise rebellion
3. To alter religion
4. To subvert the estate
5. To procure invasion by strangers.[2]

There had been some exciting days in these proceedings, particularly when Raleigh had given a brilliant performance in his own defense.[3] The whole affair was apparently followed with great interest, but spectacular as

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1 An exception was Sir Edward Parham, who was acquitted. Parham had been led to believe -- by Watson the priest -- that Lord Grey was leading a plot against the Papists. There was no reason to believe that Parham realized any of this was part of a plan to surprise the King. (Jac. Journal, 75.)

2. Stow, Annales, or a General Chronicle of England, 829.

3. We will do well to recall that it was about this time when the King's Men were summoned to Wilton, the ancestral home of Lord Grey, one of the main conspirators. They could hardly have been in a better position to hear of the legal fireworks at Winchester.

these earlier proceedings were, they were but a modest foreshadowing of what was to come.

On 29 November, the two anti-Jesuits, Watson and Clarke, were executed and on 5 December, Lord Brooke was beheaded "before no greater assembly than is usual at ordinary executions," as Stow recorded. The biggest fish in the royal net, Raleigh, Cobham, Gray and the others, waited in expectation of the same treatment. Throughout the hearings, however, Raleigh had maintained his innocence and King James, despite his avowals that he intended to let his ministers attend to these proceedings, clearly had interested himself in every development involving Raleigh.[1] On the day of Brooke's execution, James adopted another stratagem to solve the question of Raleigh's guilt. He ordered the Bishop of Chichester to visit Cobham and the Bishop of Winchester, Raleigh, hoping that in preparing the prisoners for their death, the bishops might learn something to reconcile the contradictory testimonies

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1 Even Gardiner, much exercised to prove Raleigh innocent, is perplexed by the records:

> With unerring judgment posterity has reversed the verdict of the Winchester jury. That Raleigh was innocent of planning a Spanish invasion of England, needs no proof to those who know how deeply hatred to Spain had sunk in his soul. Still, however, there is something that needs explanation. Raleigh was evidently not anxious to tell the whole truth.

(S. R. Gardiner, History of England, 1603-1642, I, 136.)

of the two men. The device failed, for Cobham maintained -- this time -- Raleigh's guilt as steadily as Raleigh maintained his innocence.

9 December was set for the execution of Markham, Grey and Cobham. At ten o'clock on a very inclement morning they were led to the Castle Yard of Winchester. "A fouler day could hardly have been picked out, or fitter for such a tragedy" is the editorial comment in Howell's State Trials. Markham was the first to place his head on the block. At this moment, the execution was stayed for two hours so that the prisoner might better prepare himself. Grey was then brought forth by a group of young courtiers:

> At his first coming to the scaffold, he fell on his knees, and his preacher made a long prayer, which he seconded himself with one of his own making, which for the phrase was somewhat affected and suited to his other speeches, but for the fashion expressed the fervency and zeal of a religious spirit. Then he entered into a long prayer for the King which held the standers-by a good half-hour in the rain. But being come to the full point, the Sheriff stayed him, saying that he had received orders from the King to change the order [= sequence] of the execution.[1]

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1 Howell's State Trials, II, 52-5. Harrison, Jacobean Journal, 87 contains a useful digest of Howell's commentary which has been used here.

Grey was led back into the castle, and Cobham was then led forth. The procedure was repeated: after Cobham reasserted his accusation of Raleigh and took his farewell of the world, the Sheriff intervened with the news

> that there rested yet somewhat else to be done, for he was to be confronted with some other of the prisoners, but he named none.

Grey and Markham were then led back to the scaffold, "nothing acquainted with what had passed, looking strangely upon one another, as men beheaded and met again in the other world." Now the moment of revelation arrived:

> And now, all the actors being together on the stage (as the use is at the end of a play), the Sheriff made a short speech by way of the interrogating, of the heinousness of their offences, the justness of their trials, their lawful condemnation, and due execution there to be performed. To all which they consented.
>
> Then saith the Sheriff, 'See the mercy of your Prince, who of himself hath sent hither to countermand, and given you your lives!'
>
> There was no need to beg a plaudite of the audience, for it was given with such hues and cries that it went from the Castle into the town and there began afresh, as if there had been some such like accident. And this experience was made of the difference of examples of justice and mercy, that in this last, no man could cry loud enough, 'God save the King!'[1]

That the theatricality of this development was sensed by Howell is evident in the metaphors in his account.

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1 Ibid., 55.

It is impossible to know exactly what interpretation the general populace placed on these events, but the staginess of the device must have been appreciated. James' clemency was to have been chronicled -- on 21 December, 1603 Carleton wrote his friend, Chamberlain, that "a book will be published of the proceedings at Winchester."[1] If such a book was prepared, it has not survived, but accounts of the Winchester affair turn up in numerous official documents. The Venetian Ambassador's report adds a few flourishes to Howell's account, but its import is substantially the same.[2]

The people of England must have learned a good bit about their new ruler from all this. That the King's actions were planned to come as a complete surprise to everyone is evident in Carleton's description of the action at Court before 9 December. Carleton described the action at Court before the reprieve:

1State Papers Domestic, VII, 59.

2 Describing the first staying, he wrote: "The headsman had lifted the axe to strike off his head, when there sprang upon the scaffold two emissaries of the King, and raising the body of Lord Cobham [sic], an inert mass, more dead than alive, they carried him into a neighboring house." The Venetian's interpretation of these events was the obvious one: "His Majesty resolved to grant them grace, but in such a way that they may be said to have looked death in the face, and will retain for ever a memory of the danger they were in." See Venetian State Papers, X, 126 (Document 175).

> ...Whilst these men [the condemned] were so occupied at Winchester, there was no small doings about them at court, for life or death, some pushing at the wheel one way, some another. The lords of the council joined in opinion and advice to the king, now in the beginning of his reigh, to show as well examples of mercy as severity, and to gain the title of Clemens as well as Justus; but some others, led by their private spleen and passions, drew as hard the other way; and Patrick Galloway, in his sermon on Tuesday, preached so hotly against remissness and moderation of justice, in the head of justice, as if it were one of the seven deadly sins. The king held himself upright betwixt two waters...[1]

Two days after the reprieve, Carleton wrote Chamberlain from Salisbury:

> Yesterday's resolution to save the prisoners was taken by the King without any man's help, for the Lords knew no other but that the executions were to go forward till the very hour of their performance, when the King called them before him, and told them how much he had been troubled to resolve in this business. To execute Grey, who was a noble, young, spirited fellow, and save Cobham who was as base and unworthy, were a manner of injustice. To save Grey, who was of a proud, insolent nature, and execute Cobham, who had showed great tokens of humility and repentance, were as great a solecism; and so went on with Plutarch's comparisons in the rest, till travailing in contrarieties but holding the conclusion in so indifferent balance that the Lords knew not what to look for till the end came out, at last he added, 'and therefore I have saved them all.' Whereat there was

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1 Birch, I, 28-9.

> great applause as at Winchester, which began about the King, went thence into the Presence, and so round about the Court.
>
> The manner of the action was that the King, having first called before him in his privy chamber at Wilton the Lords of the Council who had been Commissioners for the trial, commanded them to give a true narration of the nature and degree of their offences. Hereupon the King secretly determined that the executions should be stayed even at the instant. He therefore privately framed a letter to the Sherriff, written with his own hand, countermanding all the former directions, which he resolved to send by a man of no extraordinary rank that the standers-by might perceive no alteration, nor the delinquents themselves have any apprehension of what was to follow.
>
> Accordingly he made choice of Master Hohn Gibb, a Scottish man, who was but lately come to Wilton. Mr. Gibb therefore went to Winchester on the morning of the execution, and put himself in the throng of the people who were gathering on the Castle Green, and there waited till the Sheriff brought up Sir Griffin Markham. Two things had liked to have marred the play: the letter was closed and delivered to Gibb unsigned, but the King remembered himself, and called for him back again: and the other was that Gibb had much ado, for the press of the people, to get near the scaffold.[1]

The letter by which James had stayed the hand of the Sheriff of Hampshire was widely reprinted:

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1 The letter is reprinted in its entirety in Birch, I, 27-32. I have used Harrison's digest as it appears in Jacobean Journal, 88-9. The previous quotation is, of course, from the same Carleton letter.

Althouch it be true, that all well gouernid and floorishingly Kingdomes and common vealthis, aire established by justice, and that these tuo Noblemen by birth, that aire nou upon the point of Execution, aire for thair treasonable practises condemnid by the Lawe, and adiudgit voorthy of Execution thairof, to the exemple and terror of otheris: The one of thaim having filthily practised the ouerthrow of the quhole Kingdome, and the other for the surprise of our owin Person: Yet in regaird that this is the first yeere of our Raigne, in this Kingdome, and that neuer King was so farre obleished to his people, as ve have bene to this, by our entry here vith so hairtie and generall an applause of all sorts; Among quhom all the kinne friendis, and allies of the saidis condemned personis, vaireas fordurat, and duetiful as any other our good Subiectis, as also that at the very time of thair Arrainment none did more freely and readily give thair assent to thair conviction, and to deliuer thaim into the handis of Iustice, then so many of thair neerest kinsmen and allies (as being Peeris) vaire upon thair Iurie; as likewise in regaird that Iustice hath in some sort gottin course already by the execution of the two Priests, and George Brooke, that vaire the principall plotteris and intisaris of all the rest, to the embracing of the saidis treasonabill Machinations, Ve thair fore (bing resoluid to mixe Clemency with Iustice) aire contented, and by these presentis command you, our present Sheriffe of Hampshire, to superseide the execution of the saidis two Noblemen, and take thaim backe to thair prison againe quhile our further pleasure bee knowin. And since ve will not haue our Lawis to haue respect to personis, in sparing the great, and strikking the meaner sort, It is our pleasure, that the like course be also taken with Markeham, being sory from our hairt, that such is not onely the heynous nature of the saidis condemnid personnis crime, but euen the corruption is so great of thair naturall disposition, as the care vee haue for the safety and quiet of our State, and good

> Subjectis, vill not permit vs to vse that clemency tovardis thaim, quhich in our owin naturall inclination, ve might vary easily bee perswadit unto.[1]

Perhaps the final word should come from the Sheriff whose sense of the theatrically effective coup was an adequate match for that of his ruler. On 10 December Sheriff Tichborne wrote to, among others, the Earls of Suffolk and Devon:

> Yesterday, the ninth instant, I received his Majesty's most merciful warrant to me directed (when there was no other expectance than present death) for the stay of the execution...whose mercy was received with such joy and applause as was wonderful, to the contentment of his loyal subjects.... I pray God make them good and loyal subjects, for in my opinion by his Majestie's most sacred wisdom the carriage hath been such as the memory of the like hath not been seen or heard, of so great mercy in manner or form...[2]

Such were the fantastic events of 9 December, 1603. Because we have been led to think of James only as an effete and foolish monarch, we should doubtlessly be inclined to view this action as sadistic, inhumanly cruel.[3]

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1 Harrison, Jacobean Journal, 89-90.

2 Salisbury Papers, XV, 319-20. Also contained in this collection are the pathetic letters written by the prisoners to King James before and after the events of 9 December.

3 "Sadistic" and "inhumanly cruel" are epithets which are frequently attached in criticism of Measure for Measure to Duke Vincentio.

To his subjects, however, his action seemed magnanimously merciful, especially since the conspirators were guilty of the highest crimes against the State. This singular instance of a ruler's clemency could hardly have left the memory of those in attendance at the Globe in 1604.

Indeed, during 1604, there were reasons to recall the fate of Raleigh, Cobham and the others. 15 December, 1603 the plotters had all been removed back to the Tower of London. During 1604, three lesser conspirators were released into exile; Cobham, Grey and Raleigh were kept in the Tower under restraint -- most of the time. Toward the end of July, there were grumblings from the prisoners:

> Upon their return from Winchester, the Council ordered that Lord Cobham, Lord Grey, and Sir Walter Raleigh should each have two servants, one to attend, the other to go about their business. Since then this order has been somewhat relaxed, and many cometth them, their ladies and some courtiers. Once or twice, the gates of the gardens where they are allowed to walk being open, Lord Grey and Sir Walter have walked and talked together; but now the Lieutenant has caused locks to be put on their gates, and more straitly prevents too much access, which moves them to complain.[1]

James had exercised remarkable leniency in his treatment of the three and such complaints must have provoked

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1 Jacobean Journal, 154.

some consideration of their ingratitude.[1] In all events, the conspirators and the conspiracies would be called to mind.

If this working-out of the old conflict between justice and mercy favored the latter, other of James' policies showed a stiffening in favor of a stricter justice. Most notable was James' treatment of pirates, a group who had long been a source of trouble in the realm of foreign diplomatic relations. Speaking to the Venetian Ambassadors in December 1603, James had well characterized the winking attitude Elizabeth had maintained toward English 'adventurers':

> ...while he was King of Scotland his subjects had never committed deeds like this; that he was of the same mind now, but he was still new to the Government of England, and compelled to employ the old ministers, and, therefore, was unable to attend to everything at once, the more so that he feared his naval officers were somewhat interested in the matter; he added, in great confidence, that he had been obliged to give the Lord Admiral something out of his own purse, as the Admiral complained that he was unable to keep up his office, owing to the failure of revenues of this very nature.[2]

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1 In the case of Raleigh, for example, James had returned the personal property which Raleigh had forfeited by his treason (grant dated 14 February 1604); later James granted the manor of Sherbourne to two trustees to be held in trust for the benefit of Raleigh's wife and her son (grant dated 30 July 1604). It is impossible to know exactly how this generosity would be taken by Londoners, for Raleigh seems not to have been greatly admired by his contemporaries. (See Gardiner, I, 140.)

2 C.S.P. Venetian, X, 118 (Doc. 166).

James was not merely placating the Venetian emissaries, for his deeds betray a strong determination to bring piracy under control. Proclamations dated 23 June 1603[1] and 30 September 1603[2] and the arrests of numerous English pirates must have been viewed with some amazement by the English. Piracy was criminal action again and no longer condoned as a profitable source of revenue for the kingdom. The Globe audiences of 1604 might have remembered that, earlier in Shakespeare's plays, pirates had been Hamlet's rescuers. In Measure for Measure, however, the pirate Ragozine dies 'of a cruel fever' in prison.[3] Something had changed.

In 1604 Globe audiences would have found Measure for Measure full of reminders of the plague raging outside London. The tenements, against which the city

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1 Reprinted in Jacobean Journal, 40.

2 This proclamation ordered the arrest of one Tomkins and his associates who had plundered the ship on which a new Venetian Ambassador, Nicolo Molin, was making his way to England. James made a point, in his allusions to the proclamation, that such an order 'had never been seen in this kingdom.' (See C.S.P.V., X, 104-5, 118-9.)

3 Globe audiences could not have realized how completely Ragozine, 'a most notorious pirate,' was Shakespeare's invention. None of the sources contains a pirate. They might have marvelled that an Italian pirate was in a Vienna jail.

fathers had warred valiantly but ineffectually for years, had always been recognized as the source of many different kinds of trouble. London's underworld had long crowded into the cheap living quarters in the suburbs; the plague was most likely to break out in this fringe-area, a fact which, as Dr. Thomas Lodge and James Bamford were pointing out, had come home to Londoners with special point in 1603. On 15 September 1603 razing of the tenements had been ordered, but for various reasons not much had been achieved.[1] In all events, the following passage in Measure for Measure would have seemed topical:

> Pompey: ...You have not heard of the proclamation, have you?
> Mrs. Overdone: What proclamation, man?
> Pompey: All houses in the suburbs of Vienna must be pluck'd down.
> Mrs. Overdone: And what shall become of those in the city?

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1 See F. P. Wilson, The Plague in Shakespeare's London (1927), 24 ff. A serious drawback in this useful work is Wilson's failure to realize that the tenements had long been subject to London officialdom's ire. Harrison's Elizabethan Journals contain indications of this feeling; see entries for 19 September 1595, 23 February 1596, 19 October 1598, 30 April 1598. Stow recorded: "Proclamation was made against Inmates, multitudes of dwellers in straight roomes, and places, in and about the City of London, and for the razing and pulling down of new erected buildings the fifteenth of September: but nothing was done touching the matter: dangerous Rogues to be banished, so appointed by the Lords of the Council, and confirmed by the King, the 17th of September, the Statutes against Rogues, Vagabonds, Idle and dissolute Persons, to be put in Execution." (828).

Pompey: They shall stand for seed. They had gone down too, but that a wise burgher put in for them.
Mrs. Overdone: But shall all our houses of resort in the suburbs be pull'd down?
Pompey: To the ground, mistress.
Mrs. Overdone: Why, here's a change indeed in the commonwealth! What shall become of me?
Pompey: Come, fear not you; good counsellors lack no clients. Though you change your place, you need not change your trade... (I, 2, 95 ff.)

The strongly cynical tone of Pompey's remarks would have been appreciated against the background of continuing drives to clean out the suburbs. The implication, which is rather insistently developed, that brothels are not to be found only in the suburbs ("And what shall become of those in the city?") is doubtessly topical but its origins must remain obscure.[1]

The renewal of vigor in the drive against the tenements in 1603 was largely the result of the virulence of the plague. The plague would have been in 1604 a dangerous topic. Measure for Measure's allusion to it is fleeting enough so that it would scarcely be noticed in a performance of the play. Mistress Overdone complains

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1 It may be an instance of Shakespeare's partisanship. London suburbs, in which the theaters and brothels were for the most part situated, were the target of much Puritan criticism. The suburbs had no monopoly on vice, however, and this may be the point behind this rather striking exchange.

> Thus, what with the war, what with the sweat, what with the gallows, and what with poverty, I am custom-shrunk. (I, 2, 83-5)

Humor trading upon the plague, the tenements, the demi-monde would evoke a singularly mixed response. Audiences would be reminded of the grim shadow which, even in 1604, could not be dismissed from mind, but they would also be reminded that they had lived through the period. Thomas Dekker's The Wonderful Year, published late in 1603, had illustrated the fact that humor could be grim and reassuring at the same time, but his success could hardly have been easily duplicated in a situation of such immediacy of emotional involvement as public theaters thrive on. Moreover, the pestilence was commonly regarded as a divine punishment or exaction for human corruption.[1] The strength of such a superstition was such that it would be understood as part of the general picture of civic licentiousness.[2] The plague -- and all it stood

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1 See digest of Christopher Hooke's Sermon on the plague and its attendant miseries, Jac. Journal, 70-1.

2 Overdone's complaint is significant in that 'the war', 'the sweat,' 'the gallows' and 'poverty' seem to be relegated to the past as causes of her present status. It would be pushing the passage too far, perhaps, to see in it allusions to the wars which had ended in 1603 and 1604, the efforts to clean out the underworld alluded to by Stow (see above), and the poverty which, according to F.P. Wilson, had been widespread in England for fifteen years before 1603, but doubtlessly 1604 audiences might have sensed much of this.

for -- would have made Measure for Measure seem a kind of systematic exposé.

Shakespeare's audiences might have noted that Shakespeare's setting for this comedy was Vienna rather than the more customary Italian city. Spectators probably knew as little about the geography of Middle Europe as Shakespeare apparently did. F. P. Wilson has recently reminded us that, stemming from Wilson's Art of Rhetoric, the Elizabethan's thumbnail sketch of a Bohemian was always centered around his stubbornness.[1] This advances our understanding of the characterization of the only Bohemian in Measure for Measure, Barnardine,[2] certainly notable for his stubborn refusal to die. There were no such preconceptions about the character of the Austrians and inhabitants of Vienna in the minds of Shakespeare's audiences. However, the name of Albert, Archduke of Austria, had long been in the news. Indeed in 1603 the Archduke's name had come up in connection with the Main Plot: Cobham was reported to have used

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1 "Shakespeare's Reading," Shak. Survey 3 (1950), 15.

2 Shakespeare made a distinction between Bohemia and Vienna. He has the Provost tell the friar-duke that this prisoner is "A Bohemian born: but here nursed up and bred" (IV, 2, 134-5).

the Archduke's power with the Spanish King against England. The Archduke had led the war against the Low Countries, a matter in which the English had no small interest. His lady was reported to have vowed that she would not change her linen until Ostend was taken -- when that siege had dragged on for three years, a color, a dirty-yellow, was being named in her honor the Isabella (l'Isabeau).[1] As military commander of the Spanish monarch, his name -- especially during the English peace negotiations with Spain which would leave the Low Countries to fight for their independence without English aid -- may have been capable of evoking unpleasant associations in the minds of Shakespeare's 1604 audiences.[2]

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1 This story about the Archduchess Isabella poses some problems of authenticity. There was a yellow called Isabella (see M. C. Linthicum's Costume in Elizabethan Drama) but whether or not its origin is to be explained as here is questionable. The OED denies the colorful explanation.

2 However, it should be noted that nowhere in the play does Shakespeare refer to Austria (as he does in All's Well and King John). It may well be that he created a Duke of Vienna in the knowledge that the country had an Archduke. Certainly he had found only a King of Hungary and Bohemia in Promos and Cassandra. The Italian character-names perhaps indicate that Shakespeare had no great interest in the reality of the Viennese background.

Anyone who has witnessed a significant change of leadership can perceive without too much difficulty another important basis for Measure for Measure's special appeal in the period falling hard upon James' accession. The revival of old, neglected laws which propels the action of the play poses the same kind of suspenseful questions that would have been in the minds of Englishmen in 1603-4. Angelo's trial as the Duke's deputy parallels that of James as Elizabeth's successor.[1] Just as a college community watches carefully every movement a newly elected president makes in order to assess his essential character, Englishmen were watching James. He was an outsider -- and, if we can believe that enmity between the English and Scotch was as great then as it is now, he ascended the throne with some obvious handicaps. As BASILIKON DORON with its preface addressed to English readers clearly indicates, James took pains to show that he had not urged his son, Prince Henry, to take revenge upon the English for the death of his grandmother, Mary Queen of Scots; that he was opposed only to certain groups of 'Puritans,' namely the Anabaptists, the Family of

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1 This is not, however, to say that Angelo was intended to represent James: the parallels are to be found in the general situation rather than in personalities.

Love, and the followers of Brown and Henry, who would subvert the state; that he was opposed to meddling papists but could tolerate those who quietly and inobtrusively held their own views; that he recognized Queen Elizabeth (still living when the preface was written) had "with so great wisdom & foelicity gouerned her kingdoms, as (I must in true sincerities confesse) the like hath not bene read nor heard of, either in our time, or since the dayes of the Romane Emperour Augustus." Any of James' new subjects could take heart and perhaps warning from James' declaration:

> I hope by the contrary (with Gods grace) euer to keep that Christian rule, To doe as I would be done to.[1]

To read proclamations, official and unofficial documents of the first years of James' reign is not to derive a totally rosy picture. He was bound to offend some individuals and comparisons with Elizabeth not altogether flattering to James could be made.[2] In the

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1 Craigie edition, I, 21. It is, of course, hard to believe that James was kindly disposed toward Elizabeth. She had treated him, his mother, and his claim to the English throne with the greatest contempt.

2 See, for example, Sir Roger Wilbraham's comparison of the two rulers, dated 15 July 1603. It appears in its entirety in The Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham (Edited by H.S. Scott), Camden Miscellany, X (1902), 58-60; an abstracted version is in Jacobean Journal, 45-6. Sir Roger's account gives James a great amount of credit, but he clearly has his reservations. This is only one man's opinion, however.

main, however, there is more reason to believe that James began his rule by making a good impression on his new subjects than there is to believe that he was unpopular. In 1603 he had little occasion, because of the plague precautions, to appear before the people, but on those occasions when it was finally possible for him to make public appearances, he received great ovations. Behind these may have rested some reservation, some unwillingness to commit oneself to admiration or mistrust, but it is erroneous to suppose the existence of general ill will toward James.

In 1604 Globe audiences, bound together by the great events of 1603 and 1604, undoubtedly paid their admissions to see a comedy -- or perhaps since the term was being attached to another play the King's Men were doing that season, a tragi-comedy[1] -- called Measure for Measure. The title itself might have been slightly

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1 The tragi-comoedia was, of course, Marston's The Malcontent, a play which, in many respects, stands in exactly the same perplexing relationship to Measure for Measure that Philaster has with Cymbeline. However, it seems fairly certain that Marston's play was written long before 1604. (See the controversy over the priority of Hamlet and The Malcontent in H. R. Walley's "The Dates of Hamlet and Marston's The Malcontent," RES IX (Oct. 1933), 397-409, and E.E. Stoll's "The Date of The Malcontent: A Rejoinder," RES XI (Jan. 1935), 42-50.) Resemblances between Measure for Measure and Marston's play will be considered in Part Three.

ambiguous to the paying customers, but that fact would simply have whetted their appetite: Did Shakespeare mean the old Thyestean concept of an-eye-for-an-eye? Did he mean the Christian Do-unto-others? Did he mean simply moderation or temperance for moderation? The knowledge that the play was written by Shakespeare (whether as a new play for the 1604 season or simply an old play revived) would also have determined in advance a certain response, the exact nature of which we can only conjecture. Certainly the popularity of the Falstaff plays, of the earlier comedies and tragedies alike, betoken an awareness that Shakespeare could be counted on to provide a good play of many types.

Again, because those who attended the public theaters 'followed' actors perhaps as much as they did plays and playwrights,[1] they would have understood the meaning of the play largely in terms of the casting of parts. The importance of this is obvious in relation to a play like Measure for Measure, the central character of which has so long perplexed modern critics. We have no hard evidence for reconstructing the cast Globe audiences in 1604 would have seen doing Measure for Measure, but there are some strong clues. It is certain, I think, that Elbow was created for and enacted

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1 See references to actors in the Parnassus trilogy.

by Richard Cowley.[1] Concerning the other casting, the tough-minded would say that one guess is as good as another. Fergusson, as noted earlier, is entitled to enjoy his picture of Shakespeare playing the Duke; Baldwin, however, assigned the part to Condell, quite ignoring the fact that the Duke's role is the longest, by far, in the play and the fifth longest part Shakespeare ever wrote.[2] I will add my nomination for the original actor of the Duke: Burbage, the leading actor at the Globe.[3]

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1 Textual evidence tells that Kemp and Cowley played Dogberry and Verges in Much Ado. Kemp left the Globe in 1600; by 1604, he was dead. Cowley was still with the company in 1604 and undoubtedly was willing enough to enact another member of the constabulary.

2 Organization and Personnel of the Shakespearian Company, Tables. Baldwin does not compile parts according to their size, but using his line-counts, I have drawn up the following list: Hamlet (in Q_2) is the longest part (1575 lines); Richard III is second (1146); then, Iago (1110), Henry V (1062), Duke Vincentio (884), Othello (879), Coriolanus (868), Timon (861), Antony (in Antony and Cleopatra) (813), Lear (765), Richard II (752), Rosalind (747), and Brutus (724). It is easy to make too much of this rather surprising discovery, but this quantitative list provides one legitimate means of ending speculation on the meaningless question, Who is the chief character in Measure for Measure? It should be noted that the role of the Duke is more than twice as long as Isabella's, second with 420 lines. Angelo's part, 320 lines, is shorter than Lucio's by six lines.

3 Webster's (?) Induction to The Malcontent makes reasonably certain the assumption that Burbage played Altofronto the Malcontent, a role so similar to Duke Vincentio's that it is hard to imagine anyone but Burbage in the two parts. Baldwin believes Burbage played Angelo, a role I would assign to John Lowin, who — as second actor in the company in 1604 — played the villainous Mendoza, a role in The Malcontent not unlike that of Shakespeare's Angelo. Baldwin assigns Lucio to Lowin, however, and again I disagree. I believe Lucio is very clearly a part for Robert Armin (who, Baldwin conjectures, played Pompey Bum).

Perhaps it would be safest to leave the matter of casting entirely alone. However, without pushing the matter very far, I must point out that, if the Duke is to be taken as the topical center of the play, we ought to imagine Burbage doing the part. The play, with Burbage as Angelo, would not have been the same for Shakespeare's 1604 audiences as the play with Burbage as Duke.[1]

Once settled inside the theater, expecting a comedy by Shakespeare with -- perhaps -- Burbage in one of his popular disguise roles, Armin as a presumptuous butterfly, and Cowley as another Verges-Dogberry, would Globe audiences of 1604 have found Measure for Measure a bitter play?[2] I think not. They would have found some chal-

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1 In recent productions, whether ensemble-companies were responsible or not, a Gielgud or a Laughton has played Angelo. Doubtlessly it is a more exciting part -- and certainly more 'surefire' -- than the Duke's, but to place for whatever reasons a leading actor, particularly of the magnitude Gielgud has now attained, in what was intended to be a secondary role is to obscure the fundamental emphases in the play.

2 The following passage from the Induction to The Malcontent suggests that the term, a bitter play, was in use:

> Sly: Do you hear, sir? this play is a bitter play.
> Condell: Why, sir, 't is neither satire nor moral, but the mean passage of a history; yet there are a sort of discontented creatures that bear a stingless envy to great ones, and these will wrest the doings of any man to their base, malicious applyment; and should their interpretation come to the test, like your marmoset, they presently turn their teeth to the tail and eat it. (cont.)

lenging parallels between the merciful but crafty Duke Vincentio and their new ruler if they had read BASILIKON DORON or heard of the doing at Winchester on 9 December 1603. They would have appreciated the fine moral sentiments Shakespeare provided for the friar-duke-Burbage and the discomfitures experienced by the gabby Lucio-Armin; as theatergoers and, therefore, not Malvolian Puritans, they would have watched Angelo's fall with grim satisfaction. The low life scenes would not have disturbed them one whit: Elbow, Pompey, Mistress Overdone and Lucio would all have been enjoyed as disreputable,

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> Sly: I will not go so far with you; but I say, any many that hath wit may censure, if he sit in the twelve-penny room; and I say again, the play is bitter.
>
> Burbadge: Sir, you are like a patron that, presenting a poor scholar to a benefice, enjoins him not to rail against anything that stands within compass of his patron's folly. Why should not we enjoy the ancient freedom of poesy? Shall we protest to the ladies that their painting makes them angels? or to my young gallant that his expense in the brothel shall gain him reputation? No, sir, such vices as stand not accountable to law should be cured as men heal tetters, by casting ink upon them. Would you be satisfied in anything else, sir?

This apology for criticizing courtly manners is justified by the vigor of Marston's writing. See also his Note to the reader in the augmented 1604 edition.

ineffectual, but familiar and likable souls.[1] The play would have been applauded as another instance in which Shakespeare demonstrated that he knew what his audiences were thinking about and what they wanted which he and his fellow actors could give.

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1 Damon Runyon's stories and Sidney Kingsley's recent play, Detective Story, have not been interpreted as bitter. The trick, then as now, is to uncover a heart of gold beneath tough exteriors. Shakespeare managed to do this superbly well (without sinking into the sentimentalism that marks Runyon's writings). Overdone has undertaken to raise Lucio's child by Kate Keepdown and she is 'worn out in the trade' (whereas Lamia, her counterpart in Promos and Cassandra, is represented as being at the height of her prowess). Pompey, 'a poor man who would live,' is not far removed from the genial but hard-bitten bartender so familiar in our movies and plays. Even Lucio, who is given some rough treatment, has a ready wit, appreciatively recognizes virginity in Isabella, and is capable of personal loyalty and fine discriminations.

PART THREE

CHAPTER ONE

GEORGE WHETSTONE'S PROMOS AND CASSANDRA -- SHAKESPEARE'S CHIEF SOURCE FOR MEASURE FOR MEASURE

In Part Two, I suggested that the ingenuity and theatricality of Duke Vincentio, especially as Shakespeare developed his character's dominant traits in the long closing scene, would have reminded 1604 playgoers of King James' unprecedented demonstration of clemency in December, 1603. I was, however, reluctant, to suggest that Shakespeare intended to invite this topical interpretation for two reasons: (1) the uncertainty concerning the date Shakespeare wrote the play; (2) the riskiness of inferring an author's intentions from even the most probable responses of a popular audience.

Happily, whatever is discoverable of Shakespeare's intentions by speculating on the popular reception of Measure for Measure can be checked against the information concerning those intentions which we can derive by studying Shakespeare's use of his sources. If we find that, along with other easily recognizable source-borrowings, Shakespeare adopted the Duke's strange

machinations, we shall have lessened the possibility that Shakespeare intended to suggest something of James' interest in mercy through his characterization of the Duke.[1] If, however, we discover that Shakespeare created a Duke who, except for his dramatic function, differs markedly from the Duke-figure in his sources, we may be in a better position to assert that Shakespeare carefully developed the character to capitalize on some of the characteristics by which James had apparently sought to identify himself in the minds of his new subjects during the first year of his reign.

Before considering the work which has already been done on Measure for Measure and its possible sources, I have thought it advisable to summarize in some detail Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra, the work which has the strongest claim as the primary source of Measure for Measure.[2] The justification for this procedure is comparable to the reasons for examining the entire 1604/5 Revels Book entry instead of the single entry for Measure for Measure: it will be possible to avoid the errors of over-simplification which beset anyone using the standard editions of the play. In these editions, editors have summarized either the prose version

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1 Even though this were the case, it would still be possible to maintain that, recognizing a ready-to-hand, almost tailor-made resemblance to James, Shakespeare may have delighted in presenting the source-Duke to his audiences.

2 We need a parallel-and-facsimile edition of Whetstone's play and Measure for Measure, the more so that we lack as yet a Variorum of Shakespeare's play.

of the Promos-Cassandra story as Whetstone retold it in his Heptamaron of Civill Discourses or, less frequently, the "Argument of the Whole Historye" which prefaces the play. In either case, the procedure of the editors has been misleading in its failure to suggest Shakespeare's deviations from as well as his debts to Whetstone's play.

The following description of Whetstone's play is based on the widely available W. C. Hazlitt edition.[1] In the main, I have sought only to give an objective account of Whetstone's play in this chapter. The reader already familiar with this material may turn to the next chapter where the theory of source-studies is assessed and the values of a source-study of Measure for Measure are reconsidered.

The title-page of Whetstone's play is instructive of the author's conception of his work:

THE
RIGHT EXCELLENT AND FAMOUS
HISTORYE,
OF
PROMOS AND CASSANDRA:

Deuided into two Comicall Discourses.

In the fyrste parte is showne,

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1 Shakespeare's Library, Vol. VI (Part II, Vol. II), Second Edition, London, 1875, 201-304. Unless otherwise noted, all quotations are drawn from this edition which reflects Hazlitt's editorial caprices. Although no serious damage to the original text results, Hazlitt inconsistently modernized the spelling of a few words while leaving most of them unchanged.

The unsufferable abuse, of a lewde Magistrate:
The vertuous behauiours of a chaste Lady:
The uncontrowled leawdenes of a fauoured Curtisan.
And the undeserued estimation of a pernicious Parasyte.

In the second parte is discoursed,

The perfect maganimitye of a noble Kinge,
In checking Vice and Fauouringe Vertue:

Wherein is showne,

The Ruyne and ouerthrowe, of dishonest practises:
with the advauncement of upright dealing.

The WORKE of
GEORGE WHETSTONES GENT.

Forma nulla fides.

(Colophon)

Imprinted at London by Richarde Jhones,
and are to be solde ouer agaynst
Saint Sepulchres Church, without Newgate.

August. 20. 1578[1]

In a dedicatory letter addressed to his 'worshipfull Friende, and Kinseman, William Fleetwoode Esquier, Recorder of London," Whetstone explains something of the pre-publication history of the play -- and, incidentally, left us a notable bit of Elizabethan literary criticism:

> ...Amonge other unregarded papers, I fownde this discourse of Promos and Cassandra: which, for the rarenesse (and the nedeful knowledge) of the necessary matter contained therein (to make the actions appeare more lively), I devided the whole history into two Commedies: for that, Decorum

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1 Drawn from the Students' Facsimile Edition of Promos and Cassandra ("Old English Drama"), edited by J. S. Farmer (1910), and T. C. Izard, George Whetstone: Mid-Elizabethan Gentleman of Letters (No. 158 of the Columbia University Studies in English and Comparative Literature), (1942), 281.

used, it would not be convayde in one. The effects of both, are good and bad: verture intermyxt with vice, unlawful desyres (yf it were possible) queancht with chaste denyals: al needeful action (I thinke) for publike vewe. For by the rewarde of the good, the good are encowraged in wel doinge: and with the scowrge of the lewde, the lewde are feard from evil attempts: maintayning this my oppinion with Platoes auctority. Nawghtinesse, commes of the corruption of nature, and not by readinge or hearinge the lives of the good or lewde (for such publication is necessarye), but goodnesse (sayth he) is beawtifyed by either action. And to these ends: Menander Plautus and Terence, themselves many yeares since intombed, (by their Commedies) in honour, live at this daye. The auncient Romanes heald these showes of suche prise, that they not onely allowde the publike exercise of them, but the grave Senators themselves countenaunced the Actors with their presence: who from these trifles wonne morallytye, as the Bee suckes the honny from weedes. But the advised devises of auncient Poets, discredited with the tryfels of yonge, unadvised, and rashe witted wryters, hath brought this commendable exercise in mislike. For at this daye, the Italian is so lascivious in his commedies, that honest hearers are greeved at his actions: the Frenchman and Spaniarde folowes the Italians humor: the Germaine is too holye: for he presentes on everye common Stage, what Preachers should pronounce in Pulpets. The Englishman in this quallitie, is most vaine, indiscreete, and out of order: he fyrst groundes his worke, on impossibilities: then in three howers ronnes he throwe the worlde: marryes, gets Children, makes Children men, men to conquer kingdomes, murder monsters, and bringeth Gods from Heaven, and fetcheth Divels from Hel. And (that which is worst) their ground is not so unperfect, as their working indiscreete: not waying, so the people laugh. though they laugh them (for theyr folleys) to scorne: Manye tymes (to make mirthe) they make a Clowne companion with a Kinge: in theyr grave Counsels, they allow the advise of fooles: yea they use one order of speach for all persons: a grose Indecorum, for a Crowe, wyll yll counterfet the Nightingales sweete voice: even so, affected Speeche doth misbecome a Clowne. For to work a Commedie kindly, grave olde men, should instruct: yonge men, should showe the imperfections of youth: Strumpets should be lascivious: Boyes unhappy: and Clownes, should be disorderly: entermingling all these actions, in such sorte, as the grave matter, may instruct; and the pleasant, delight: for without this chaunge, the attention,

would be small: and the likinge, lesse.
But leave I this rehearsall, of the use, and abuse of Commedies: least that, I check that in others, which I cannot amend in my selfe. But this I am assured, what actions so ever passeth in this History, either merry, or morneful: grave, or lascivious: the conclusion showes, the confusion of Vice, and cherishing of Vertue. And sythe the end tends to this good, although the worke (because of evel handlinge) be unworthy your learned Censure, allow (I beseeche you) of my good wyll, untyl leasure serves me, to perfect, some labour more worthe. No more, but that, almightye God be your protector, and preserve me from dainger, in this voiadge, the xxix. of July, 1578.[1]

'Decorum,' that mysterious but popular term in the Elizabethan playwright's lexicon, is the reason invoked for the division of the play into two 'Commedies.' The best interpretation of Whetstone's logic in this procedure is offered by Izard:

> The first part shows the temporary triumph of evil over good; the second, "The Ruyne and Overthrowe of dishonest Practises: with the Advauncement of upright Dealing." It seemed to Whetstone, one would assume, an indecorous sort of violation of the unity of action to present both triumphs within a single play. Like Sir Philip Sidney, he was not quite convinced of the propriety of tragicomedy. He therefore told his story in two plays, the first of which is tragedy; the second, comedy--even though he confesses to an admixture of comedy in the first. The

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1 Whetstone's voyage was with 'the adventurous Captaine Syr Humfrey Gylbert,' and Whetstone's departure becomes the publisher's excuse for the author's failure "to worke it anew, nor to geve apt instructions, to prynte so difficult a worke, beying full of variety, both matter, speache, and verse."
Passages will seem to the reader strangely familiar, a matter which requires some explanation. Izard has demonstrated that Whetstone was indebted to Richard Edwards' prologue to Damon and Pythias (printed 1571), and that Whetstone, in his turn, is echoed clearly in Sir Philip Sidney's Defence of Poetry.

main theme of the first, nevertheless, remains tragic.[1]

In addition to Whetstone's consideration of esthetic values, the passage is notable for the indications of the usual strong moralizing impulse, especially as it is tempered by the surprising description of the German 'too holye' who offends by presenting on the stage 'what Preachers should pronouns in Pulpets.'[2] How well Whetstone avoids the extremes -- the 'lascivious' Italian and the 'too holye' German -- will become apparent in his play.

The play is also prefaced with an 'Argument of the Whole Historye'[3] in which a few details are more clearly established than they are in the play. Most importantly, we are told in the 'Argument' that the law invoked by Promos against "Adultery" is a "severe lawe" which "by the fauour of some mercifull magistrate became little regarded, vntil the time of Lord Promos auctority." The action of Whetstone's play, similar in this respect to

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1 Op. cit., 77. Later, we will see that we should perhaps consider the 'two plays' simply as 'two parts.' Whether the theme of the first part 'remains tragic' is questionable. Certainly it is significant that Whetstone called both parts 'Commedies.'

2 I have been unable to find any study of the 'German' drama to which Whetstone may have been referring here. The distinctions between bodies of national drama reflect a subtlety of judgment and a breadth of study of drama for which few modern editors have given Whetstone credit.

3 Reprinted by Quiller-Couch in the New Cambridge edition, viii-x. This brief summary omits the comic underplots entirely. In effect, the 'argument' is a better synopsis of Whetstone's prose version of the story in his Heptameron (printed February 1582) than of the play.

Measure for Measure, shows the Promos-Angelo character carrying out orders from his superior rather than invoking, on his own authority, a long-slumbering and overly-severe law.[1]

Whetstone's opening scene, like Shakespeare's, might be summarized as the conferring of authority on the deputy (Promos-Angelo). However, Whetstone's overlord (Corvinus-Duke) is absent from the scene -- his power is represented by a document. The play opens with Promos' announcement that he has been sent to Julio by 'our leadge, the King of Hungarie,' to join the officers of the city that 'styll we may to Justice have an eye.' As indicated in a stage-direction at this point

> PHALLAX readeth the Kinges Letters Patents, which must be fayre written in parchment, with some great counterfeat zeale.[2]

After this, Promos summarizes what his 'man' has just read:

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1 We must assume from the action that Shakespeare's Duke, not Angelo, is responsible for invoking the old statute. Most critics, following the view that Shakespeare intended to satirize the Puritans through his treatment of Angelo, hold Angelo accountable. There is some warrant for this in that the other characters (including Escalus, the 'moral center' of the play) blame Angelo. Yet, in I, 3, in which the Duke explains his stratagem to Friar Thomas, it is abundantly clear that Angelo has been ordered to enforce certain laws which he, as Duke of Vienna, has allowed to 'slip.'

2 It is surprising that Whetstone did not provide the document itself at this point. Apparently it was his expectation that the contents of the royal decree could be supplied from the ensuing dialogue.

Loe, here you see what is our Soveraignes wyl,
Loe, heare his wish, that right, not might beare swaye;
Loe, heare his care, to weed from good the yll,
To scoorge the wights, good Lawes that disobay.
Such zeale he beares unto the Common weale,
(How so he byds, the ignoraunt to saue)
As he commaundes, the lewde doo rigor feele:
Such is his wish, such is my wyll to have;
And such a Judge, here Promos vowes to be.
No wylfull wrong, sharpe punishment shall mysse;
The simple thrall, shalbe judgde with mercie,
Each shall be doombde, even as his merite is.
Love shall not staye, nor hate revenge procure,
Ne yet shall Coyne, corrupt or foster wrong:
I doo protest, whylste that my charge indure,
For friende nor foe, to singe a partiall song.
Thus have you heard, howe my Commission goes,
He absent, I present our Soveraigne styll:
It aunsweres then, each one his dutie showes,
To mee, as him, what I commaunde and wyll.

The Mayor of Julio confers the sword of Justice ('to destroy/ The wicked impes, and to defend the rest') and the 'Shirife' presents the 'Citty keyes.' Promos accepts these symbols of authority and promises to appoint a time for the council to consider the means 'to reforme abuse.'

The next scene introduces Lamia, a 'Curtizane,' singing a song appropriate to her calling:

Al a flaunt now vaunt it, brave wenche cast away care,
With Layes of Love chaunt it, for no cost see thou spare. ...

There is nothing modest about Lamia as Whetstone describes her in the concluding verses of her song:

Triumphe fayre Lamia now, thy wanton flag advaunce,
Set foorth thy selfe to bravest show, bost thou of happy chaunce
Gyrle, accompt thou thy selfe the cheefe, of Lady Pleasure's traine;
Thy face is faire, thy forme content, thy Fortunes both doth staine.
Even as thou woldst, thy house doth stande, thy furniture is gay,

Thy weedes are brave, thy face is fine, and who
for this doth paye?[1]

I, 3 begins with the entrance of Rosko, Lamia's servant, and the action here is, though longer, strikingly similar to I, 2, 83-119, of Measure for Measure. Rosko announces that his mistress must shut up her 'shops' and abandon her 'occupying:'

ROSKO: Marrie, right nowe at the Sessions I was,
And thirtie must to Trussum corde go.
Among the which (I weep to showe) alas!
LAMIA: Why, whats the matter man?
ROSKO: O Andrugio,
For loving too kindlie, must loose his heade,
And his sweete hart, must weare the shamefull weedes,
Ordainde for Dames, that fall through fleshly deedes.
LAMIA: Is this offence, in question come againe?
Tell, tell, no more, tys time this tale were done:
See, see, howe soon my triumphe turnes to paine.
ROSKO: Mistresse, you promised to be quiet,
For Gods sake, for your owne sake, be so.
LAMIA: Alas poore Rosko, our dayntie dyet,
Our braverie and all we must forgo.
ROSKO: I am sorie.
LAMIA: Yes, but out alas, sorrowe wyll not serve:
Rosko, thou must needes provide thee else where,
My gaynes are past, yea, I my selfe might starve;
Save that, I did provide for a deare yeare.
ROSKO: They rewarde fayre (their harvest in the stacke)
When winter coms, that byd their servaunts packe.
Alas Mistress, if you turne mee off now,
Better than a Roge, none wyll me allowe.
LAMIA: Thou shalt have a Pasporte.
ROSKO: Yea, but after what sorte?
LAMIA: Why, that thou wart my man.
ROSKO: O the Judge, sylde showes the favour,
To let one theefe, bayle another:
Thus I know, ere long you so wyll slyp awaye,

---

1 These rhymed fourteeners continue in the same vein for four more couplets.

As you, for your selfe, must seeke some testimony
Of your good lyfe.

LAMIA: Never feare: honestly
Lamia nowe meanes to lyve, even tyll she dye.

ROSKO: As jumpe as Apes, in vewe of Nuttes to daunce,
Kytte wyll to kinde, of custome, or by chaunce:
Well, howe so you stand upon this holy poynt,
For the thing you knowe, you wyll jeopard a joynt.[1]

---

1 Cf. the following in Measure for Measure:

BAWD: Thus, what with the war; what with the sweat, what with the gallows, and what with poverty, I am Custom-shrunk. How now? What's the news with you.

ENTER CLOWN

CLOWN: Yonder man is carried to prison.
BAWD: Well: what has he done?
CLOWN: A Woman.
BAWD: But what's his offense?
CLOWN: Groping for Trowts, in a peculiar River.
BAWD: What? is there a maid with child by him?
CLOWN: No: but there's a woman with maid by him: you have not heard of the proclamation, have you?
BAWD: What proclamation, man?
CLOWN: All houses in the Suburbs of Vienna must be pluck'd down.
BAWD: And what shall become of those in the City?
CLOWN: They shall stand for seed: they had gone down too, but that a wise Burger put in for them.
BAWD: But shall all our houses of resort in the Suburbs be pulled down?
CLOWN: To the ground, Mistress.
BAWD: Why here's a change indeed in the Commonwealth: what shall become of me?
CLOWN: Come: fear not you; good Counsellors lack no Clients: though you change your place, you need not change your Trade: I'll be your Tapster still; courage, there will be pity taken on you; you that have worn your eyes almost out in the service, you will be considered.
BAWD: What's to do here, Thomas Tapster? let's withdraw?
CLOWN: Here comes Signior Claudio, led by the Provost to prison: and there's Madam Juliet. EXEUNT

It is frequently offered as evidence of revision that, although Mistress Overdone receives Pompey's news of 'yonder man' (apparently Claudio) being carried to prison, she has just finished telling Lucio and the two Gentlemen what seems to be the same news Pompey brings. It is, of course, possible that the (playhouse?) addition of the Lucio-two Gentlemen gags brought this seeming duplication of detail in it

Rosko has a plan whereby Lamia may continue in her trade. She is to endear herself to the 'paltrie petyfogger,' Phallax ('A man esteemde, of Promos verie much') who loves 'lase mutton well.' Rosko runs off to find Phallax, leaving Lamia reviewing her fate in words which differ only slightly from those by which she was introduced:

> Aye me alas, less Phallax helpe, poor wench undone I am:
> My foes nowe in the winde, wyll lye to worke my open shame:
> Now envious eyes will prie abroade, offenders to intrap,
> Of force nowe Lamia, must be chaste, to shun a more mishap.
> And, wanton girle, how wilt thou shift, for garments fine and gay?
> For dainty fare, can crust content? who shal thy houserent pay?
> And that delights thee most of all, thou must thy daliaunce leave;
> And can then the force of lawe, or death, thy minde of love bereave?
> In good faith, no: the wight that once, hath taste the fruits of love,
> Untill hir dying daye will long, Sir Chaucers jests to prove.[1]

---

wake. It is also possible, of course, that the Bawd-Clown material is the later addition, although the resemblance to the Lamia-Rosko scene is so close as to suggest its priority.

However, it is most probable that the 'yonder man' to whom Pompey refers by way of opening his conversation with his employer was not Claudio, but simply another victim of the re-invoked laws. Pompey knows Claudio by sight when the Prevost leads him on stage later. In all events, 'yonder man' was apparently not expected to appear on stage. He is a means of indicating that the purge is on.

1 Whetstone's lines here may have suggested a course of action implied in Pompey's attempt to comfort Mistress Overdone: "courage, there will be pity taken on you; you that have worn your eyes almost out in the service, you will be considered." Shakespeare did not, however, choose to do anything further on this score.

I, 4 removes Lamia from the stage: Lamia's maid brings the news that her 'thraule,' young Hipolito ('both young and welthy') is waiting for her.

Act II gives us our first view of Cassandra bemoaning her fate:

> Aye mee, unhappy wenche, that I must live the day
> To see Andrugio tyeless dye, my brother and my stay.
> The only meane, God wot, that should our house advaunce
> Who in the hope of his good hap, must dy through wanton chance.
> O blynde affectes in love, whose tormentes none can tell,
> Yet wantons wyll byde fyre, and frost, yea hassard death, nay hell,
> To taste thy sowre sweete frutes, digested styll with care,
> Fowle fall thee love, thy lighning joyes, hath blasted my welfare;
> Thou fyerest affection fyrst, within my brothers brest:
> Thou mad'st Polina graunt him (earst) even what he would request:
> Thou mad'st him crave and have a proofe of Venus meede,
> For which foule act he is adjudged eare long to lose his heade.
> The lawe is so severe, in scourging fleshly sinne,
> As marriage to worke after mends doth seldome favour win.
> A law first made of zeale, but wrested much amis:
> Faults should be measured by desart, but all is one in this:
> The lecher fyerd with lust, in punished no more,
> Then he which fel through force of love, whose mariage salves his sore;
> So that poore I dispayre, of my Andrugios lyfe,
> O would my dayes myght end with his, for to appease my stryfe.

In II, 2 Cassandra asks her brother how his 'wits" could have been so 'witched' as to commit 'this vile lascivious deede' for which he must die. Andrugio (like Shakespeare's Claudio) admits his error:

> O good Cassandra, leave to check, and chide me thraule therfore,

If late repentaunce, wrought me helpe, I would doe
so no more.
But out alas, I wretch, too late, doe sorrowe my amys
Unless Lord Promos graunt me grace, in vayne is had
ywist.

He begs her to 'assault' Promos' heart 'with battering tyre of teares,' and Cassandra promises that she will not fail to 'pleade and praye, to purchase the mercye.' As she takes leave of her brother, she sees Promos approaching:

Now tongue addresse thy selfe, my mind to wray:
And yet least haste worke waste, I hold it best,
In covert, for some advauntage, to stay.

II, 3 opens with Promos speaking to the Sheriff. His words do not give Cassandra much cause to hope:

Tis strange to thinke, what swarms of unthrifts live
Within this towne, by rapine, spoyle, and theft:
That were it, not that Justice ofte them greeve
The just mans goods, by Ruffers should be reft.
At this our Syse are thirtye judgde to dye,
Whose falles I see, their fellowes smally feare:
So that the way is, by severity
Such wicked weedes, even by the roots to teare:[1]
Wherfore Shriefe, execute with speedy pace
The dampned wightes, to cutte of hope of Grace.

Cassandra pleads for Andrugio, however, as best she can:

Behold the wofull Syster heare, of poore Andrugio,
Whom though that lawe awardeth death, yet mercy do him
show:
Way his yong yeares, the force of love, which forced
his amis,
Way, way, that Marriage works amends, for what com-
mitted is.
He hath defilde no nuptiall bed, nor forced rape hath
mov'd;
He fel through love, who never ment, but wive the
wight he lov'd.
And wantoms sure, to keepe in awe, these statutes
first were made,

---

1 Cf. Duke's 'We have strict statutes, and most biting lawes/ (The needful bits and curbs to headstrong weedes,)' I, 3, 19-20. Modern editors emend 'weedes' to 'steeds,' to avoid what seems a strangely mixed metaphor.

Or none but lustfull leachers, should with rygrous
law be payd.
And yet to adde intent thereto, is farre from my
pretence:
I sue with teares, to wyn him grace, that sorrows his
offence.
Wherefore herein, renowned Lord, Justice with pitie
pays:
Which two in equall ballance waide, to heaven your
fame will raise.

Promos advises her to give up her 'bootlesse sute,' for -- by law -- Andrugio has been tried, found guilty and condemned. Cassandra takes up again, repeating much of what she has already said:

Yet this maye be replide,
That law a mischiefe oft permits, to keepe due forme
of lawe,
That lawe small faultes, with greatest doomes, to
keepe men styl in awe.
Yet Kings, or such as execute regall authoritie,
If mends be made, may over-rule the force of lawe
with mercie.
Here is no wylful murder wrought, which axeth blood
againe;
Andrugio faultes may valued be, Marriage wipes out
his stayne.

Promos grants a brief reprieve and, after her departure, soliloquizes briefly in a passage similar to Angelo's at the end of II, 2:

Happie is the man that injoyes the love of such a wife.
I do protest, hir modest wordes, hath wrought in me
amaze.
Though she be faire, she is not deckt with garish
shewes for gaze;
Hir bewtee lures, hir lookes cut off, fond sues with
chast disdain;
O God I feele a sodaine change that doth my freedom
chayne,
What didst thou say? fie Promos fie: of hir avoide
the thought,
And so I will; my other cares wyll cure what love
hath wrought.[1]

---

1 Cf. Angelo's soliloquy:
What's this? what's this? is this her fault, or mine?

In Whetstone's II, 4, another comic underplot is launched. Phallax dispatches the 'Promoters,' Gripax and Rapax, to bring offenders to him so that he may 'fleece' them.[1]

The Tempter, or the Tempted, who sins most? ha?
Not she: nor doth she tempt: but it is I,
That, lying by the Violet in the Sun,
Do as the Carrion does, not as the flower,
Corrupt with vertuous season: Can it be,
That Modesty may more betray our Sense
Than woman's lightness? having waste ground enough,
Shall we desire to raze the Sanctuary
And pitch our evils there? Of fie, fie, fie:
What dost thou? or what art thou Angelo?
Dost thou desire her foully, for those things
That make her good? oh, let her brother live:
Thieves for their robbery have authority,
When Judges steal themselves: what, do I love her,
That I desire to hear her speak again?
And feast upon her eyes? what is't I dream on?
O cunning saint, that to catch a Saint,
With Saints dost bait thy hook: most dangerous
Is that temptation, that doth goad us on
To sin, in loving vertue: never could the Strumpet
With all her double vigour, Art, and Nature
Once stir my temper: but this vertuous Maid
Subdues me quite: Ever till now
When men were fond, I smil'd, and wondred how.

EXIT

The length of the Shakespearean passage is typical of the expanded treatment given to the corresponding Whetstone passages. It should be noted that Promos' speech occurs at the end of II, 3 (Part One); the play has only begun. Angelo's soliloquy, however, concludes II, 2, by which point Shakespeare has carried us well toward the middle of the play.

1 A model for Constable Elbow is, by some critics, alleged in Rapax on the basis of the following -- and quite conventional -- bit of wordplay:

RAPAX: I am so subtyll sighted I trowe,
As I the very thoughts of men doo know.
GRIPAX: I fayth, Rapax, what thought thy wife when she,
To lye with the preest, by night stole from thee?
RAPAX: Marry she knew, you and I were at square;
And least we fell to blowes, she did prepare,
To arme my head, to match thy horned browe.

It is not altogether clear in Measure for Measure that Elbow's wife is playing him false; if Shakespeare took a cue from this bit in his characterization of the foolish constable, we have another clear instance in which a masterful touch has been given to the most prosaic of fabliau humor. A better model for Elbow is Gresco, who appears late in the second part.

After their departure, Phallax outlines his own schemes. He is the corrupt lower official (without a true counterpart in Measure for Measure, although Lucio is given the same sort of corrosive treatment) and there is little point in concerning ourselves with the twelve heptameter couplets in which he proclaims his own defects ('Yet am I neither learned, true, nor honest any way').

In II, 5 Phallax is joined by Promos who would confide his feelings for Cassandra. Phallax has no trouble guessing that a woman is the root of the difficulty. Promos here behaves like a young Romeo:

PROMOS: Doe what one can, fyre wyll breake forth I see.
My words unwares, hath shown what greeueth mee:
My wound is such, as love must be my leache,
What cure wyll bryng my Gravity in speeche,
For what may be, a folly of more note,
Then for me to see, a man gray beard to dote.

PHALLAX: No, my Lorde, Amor emnia vincit.
And Ovid sayth, Forma numen habet.
And for to proue, loves services seemes the wise,
Set Sallamon and Sampson, before your eyes;
For wyt, and strength, who wonne the cheefest prise,
And both lyv'd by the lawes love did devise,
Which proves in love, a certaine godhed lyes.
And Goddes rule yearely, by wisdom from the skyes:
Whose wyls (thinke I) are wrought best by the wise.

PROMOS: Indeede divine, I thinke loves working is,
From reasons use, in that my senses sweare;
In pleasure paine, in mayne I fynde a blysse,

On woe I feede, in sight of foode I
stearve:
These strange effects, by love are lodged
in mee,
My thoughts are bound, yet I myselfe am
free.[1]

When Phallax finally learns that it is Cassandra for whom Promos yearns, Phallax points out the ease with which Promos should be able to possess her:

PHALLAX: Cassandras flesh is as her brothers frayle,
Then wyll she stoupe, (in cheefe) when
Lords assayle.
PROMOS: The contrary (through feare) doth worke my
payne,
For in her face, such modesty doth raigne,
As cuttes of loving sutes, with chaste
disdayne.
PHALLAX: What love wyll not necessity shall gayne,
Her brother's lyfe, will make her glad
and fayne.

At the close of the scene, Phallax promises to show

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1 Cf. Angelo's
When I would pray, and think, I think, and
pray
To several subjects: heaven hath my
empty words,
Whilst my Invention, hearing not my Tongue,
Anchors on Isabel: heaven in my mouth,
As if I did but only chew in his name,
And in my heart the strong and swelling evil
Of my conception: the state whereon I studied
Is like a good thing, being often read
Grown fear'd, and tedious: yea, my Gravity
Wherein (let no man hear me) I take pride,
Could I, with boote, change for an idle
plume
Which the air beats for vaine: oh place,
oh form,
How often dost thou with thy case, they habit
Wrench awe from fools, and tie the wiser souls
To thy false seeming? Blood, thou are blood,
Let's write good Angel on the Devil's horn
'Tis not the Devil's Crest: How now? who's
there?
(II, 4, 1-17)

Promos how best to cure his 'sicknes.'

The next two scenes (II, 6 and 7) take place in the jail. In the first, the Hangman "with a greate many ropes abought his necke" marvels at the changes that have taken place with Promos' administration:

> The wynd is yl, blowes no mans gaine, for colde I neede not care,
> Here is nyne and twenty sutes of apparrell for my share:
> And some berlady very good, for so standeth the case,
> As neyther gentelman, no other Lord, Promos sheweth Grace.
> But I marvell much poore slaves, that they are hanged so soone,
> They were wont to stay a day or two, now scarce an after noone:
> All the better for the hangman, I pardons dreaded sore,
> Would cutters save, whose clothes are good, I never feard the poore.
> Let me see, I must be dapper in this my facultie,
> Here are new ropes, how are my knots? I faith syr, slippery.
> At fast or loose, with my Giptian, I meane to have a cast;
> Tenne to one I read his fortune by the Marymas fast.[1]

In the second of these scenes, a group of prisoners

---

1 This is the only glimpse of the Hangman Whetstone provides, but it is enough to give the rough outline for Shakespeare's Abhorson. The comedy is grisly in both plays, but the mere fact that Shakespeare kept the character in the play -- as he need not have since his Provost handles all the arrangements of prisoners -- seems to indicate that he believed this grim humor would be well received. Abhorson has the same pride in his calling ('a mystery') as Whetstone's Hangman, but the latter lacks such an uneasy assistant as Pompey Bum.

sing a solemn song asking God's mercy and then, one by one, warn the audience to take example by their deeds: pride, sloth, 'quarrelling,' 'the dyce' are a few of the vices we are told to beware. A 'Preacher' who is with the prisoners, giving what little comfort he can, advises a "Scoffing Catchpole":

> With this thy scoffing speach, good friend offend
> him not,
> His faults are scorged, thine scape (perhaps)
> that do deserve his lot.

At the end of the scene, the prisoners 'leysurablie depart,' singing another song calling on Christ not to forsake them.[1]

Act III finds Promos still struggling to overcome his passion for Cassandra:

> Do what I can, no reason cooles desire,
> The more I strive, my fonde affectes to tame,
> The hotter (oh) I feele, a burning fire
> Within my breast, vaine thoughts to forge and
> frame.
> Of straying effectes, of blinde affected Love,
> From wisdomes pathes, which doth astraye our
> wittes;
> Which make us haunt, that which our harmes doth
> move
> A sickenesse lyke, the Fever Etticke fittes,
> Which shakes with colde, when we do burne like
> fire.
> Even so in Love, we freese, through chilling
> feare,

---

1 This scene may have inspired Pompey's listing of the prisoners he finds in Vienna's jail (IV, 3, 1-21), but the moralizing strain is absent in Shakespeare. The general effect is, however, the same in the two scenes: both Promos and Angelo are shown to have carried out their missions with great success.

When as our hartes, doth frye with hote desire:
What said I? lyke to Etticke fittes? nothing neare;
In sowrest Love, some sweete is ever suckt.
The Lover findeth peace, in wrangling strife,
So that if paine, were from his please pluckt,
There were no Heaven, like to the Lover's life.
But why stande I to pleade, their toye or woe,
And rest unsure, of hir I wish to have?
I knowe not if Cassandra love, or no:
But yet admytte, she graunt not what I crave,
If I be nyce to hir brother lyfe to give:
Hir brother's life, too much wyll make yer yeelde
A promise then, to let hir brother lyve:
Hath force enough, to make her flie the field.
Thus though sute fayle, necessitie shall wyn.
Of Lordlie rule the conquering power is such:
But (of sweete sight) see where she enters in:
But hope and dreade, at once my harte doth tuch.[1]

III, 2 brings Cassandra and Promos together for the second time. The same points are made as in the first interview. Promos is at first adamant -- Andrugio must die. Cassandra reminds him that Andrugio could hardly be said to have violated Polina, since the lady was willing. But 'evyl intent' must be reckoned with, replies Promos, and, in that sense, Andrugio is wholly guilty:

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1 This speech, standing as it does before Cassandra's second effort to move Promos' mercy, should also be compared with the Shakespearean speech previously quoted in connection with Promos' confession to Phallax (Whetstone's II, 5; Shakespeare's II, 4, 1-17). Little of this tiresome speech is left in Shakespeare who works by indirection, implying in the Angelo-Isabella second interview everything that Whetstone states explicitly here.

PROMOS: Lawe ever at the worst, doth conster evyl intent.
CASSANDRA: And lawe even with the worst, awardes them punishment;
And sith that rigorous lawe adjudged him to dye,
Your glorie will be much the more, in showing him mercye.
The world wil think, how that you do, but graunt him grace on cause;
And where cause is, there mercy should abate the force of lawes.

Promos' answer surprises Cassandra: she is told first that she has already said all that can be said in Andrugio's behalf, and then that she has the power to purchase her brother's life if she will but 'yeelde.' The following passage is remarkably close to its counterpart in Measure for Measure:

CASSANDRA: And may it be, a Judge himself, the self same fault should use,
For which he domes an others death? O crime without excuse.
Renowned Lorde, you use this speach (I hope) your thrall to trye,
If otherwise, my brothers life, so deare I will not buy.
PROMOS: Faire Dame my outward looks my inward thoughts bewray,
If you mistrust, to search my harte, would God you had a kaye.
CASSANDRA: If that you love (as so you saye) the force of love you know,
Which fealt, in conscience you should my brother favour show.
PROMOS: In doubtfull warre, one prisoner still, doth set another free.
CASSANDRA: What so warre seekes, love unto warre, contrary is, you see.
Hate fostreth warre, love cannot hate, then maye it covet force.

This continues for 35 more lines. Promos tries to argue down Cassandra's indignation by proposing marriage ("To buie this Juel at the full, my wife I may thee make"). Discouraged by his lack of success, Promos determines

to offer his terms and give Cassandra time to think them over:

> Fayre Cassandra, the juel of my joye,
> Howe so in showe, my tale seemes straunge to thee,
> The same well waide, thou need'st not be so coye,
> Yet for to give thee respite to agree,
> I wyll two daies hope styll of thy consent,
> Which if thou graunt (to cleare my clowdes of care)
> Cloth'd like a Page (suspect for to prevent)
> Unto my Court, some night, sweet wenche repaire.
> Tyl then adue; thou these my words in works per-
> form'd shalt find.

Promos departs, leaving Cassandra lamenting her fate again. She seems particularly concerned that her 'beautie' has been the cause of her woe; the scene closes with the couplet:

> This forme so Promos fiers with Love, as wisdom
> cannot quench
> His hote desire, tyll he lust, in Venus seas
> hath drencht.

Ganio, Andrugio's page, summons Cassandra to her brother (III, 3). In III, 4 Andrugio is, understandably, eager to learn how Cassandra has fared with Promos. She is pessimistic: "All things conclude thy death, Andrugio." She reports Promos' offer, and her brother's first response is (like Claudio's) shocked indignation, but before long (like Claudio) he is proposing that she submit:

> Nay Cassandra, if thou thy selfe submyt,
> To save my life, to Promos fleashly wyll,
> Justice wyll say thou dost no cryme commit,
> For in forst faults is no intent of yll.

This is followed by another dispute -- which lacks, however, the vehemence that marks Isabella's response

to Claudio's proposal -- but Cassandra finally agrees:

ANDRUGIO: Nay sweete sister more slaunder would infame,
Your spotles lyfe, to reave your brothers breath,
When you have powre, for to enlarge the same,
Once in your handes, doth lye my lyfe, and death.
Way that I am, the selfe same flesh you are,
Thinke I once gone, our house will goe to wrack:
Knowe forced faultes, for slaunder neede not care:
Looke you for blame, if I quaile through your lack.
Consider well, my great extremitie,
If other wise, this doome I coule revoke,
I would not spare, for any jeberdye
To free thee wench, from this same heavy yoke.
But ah I see, else, no way saves my life,
And yet his hope, may further thy consent,
He sayde he maye percase make thee his wife,
And 't is likelie, he cannot be content
With one nights joye: if love he after seekes,
And I discharg'd, if thou aloofe then be,
Before he lose thy selfe, that so he leekes,
No doubt but he, to marryage, wyll agree.

CASSANDRA: And shall I sticke to stoupe, to Promos wyll,
Since my brother injoyeth life thereby?
No, although it doth my credit kyll,
Ere that he should, my selfe would chuse to dye.
My Andrugio, take comfort in distresse,
Cassandra is wonne, thy raussome greate to paye,
Such care she hath, thy thraldome to releace:
As she consentes, her honour for to slay.
Farewell, I must, my virgins weedes forsake,

And lyke a page to Promos lewde repayre.[1]

III, 5 and 6 resume the underplot: in Scene 5, Phallax comments on the changed Promos (who 'fryskes abought, as byrdes ware in his breech'). Promos is anxiously awaiting the news, 'without there waytes a page.' Phallax makes sport of Promos' preoccupation to 'fish for gaine.' In Scene 6, Gripax, Rapax, a Bedell and 'one with a browne Byll' bring in Lamia and Roske. Phallax and Lamia are soon close friends and a further meeting is arranged.

PHALLAX: Then to be short, your rare bewtie my harte hath wounded so,
As (save your love, become my leach) I sure shall die with woe.
LAMIA: I see no signe of death, in your face to appeare,
Tis but some usual qualme you have, pitifull Dames to feare.
PHALLAX: Faire Lamia, trust me I faine not, betimes bestow som grace.
LAMIA: Well, I admit it so, onelie to argue in your case.
I am maried, so that to set your love on me were vaine.
PHALLAX: It suffiseth me, that I may your secrete friend remaine.

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1 Comparing this with the corresponding passage in Measure for Measure (III, 1, 54-151), one is struck by the extent to which Shakespeare rearranged the details. Isabella is made to speak of family honor -- and she uses it to convince Claudio that she must not submit to Angelo. The subject of marriage is never mentioned. The general effect is, whether intentional or not, to shift the unpleasantness here attached to Andrugio over to Isabella, and Cassandra's pliancy becomes Claudio's weakness.

Isabella will not, of course, yield to Angelo: it is at this point in Whetstone's play that Shakespeare takes one of his most notable departures.

ROSKO: A holie Hoode, makes not a Frier devoute,
He will play at small game, or he sitte out.[1]

At the close of this long scene (100 lines), the victorious and still triumphant Lamia sings another song ("Adue, poore care, adue").[2]

Act III concludes with Cassandra, dressed in page's costume, on her way to submit to Promos:

My fluddes of teares, from true intent which floe,
Maye quenche his lust, or ope his muffled eyen,
To see that I deserve to be his wife;
Though now constrainde to be his Concubine.

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1 Lamia's 'marriage' is only once mentioned and nothing more is made of it. It is, of course, possible that the detail suggested Mistress Overdone's nine husbands, but it is hard to believe that Shakespeare worked so closely from or remembered a scene which has no real counterpart in Measure for Measure.

Rosko's "A holie Hoode, makes not a Frier devoute" is, of course, remindful of Lucio's Cucullus non facit monachum at a much later point in Measure for Measure, V, 263. Again, however, we have a detail which ought not to be credited as a Shakespearean borrowing from Whetstone. Quite apart from the fact that this scene has no corresponding part in the later play, Shakespeare had (already?) used the Latin tag in Twelfth Night, I, 5, 62.

2 After Phallax' departure, Rosko congratulates his mistress on the effectiveness of her performance:

I tolde you earst, the nature of Phallax,
Money, or fair Women, workes him as waxe:
And yet I must commend your sober cheere,
You told your tale, as if a Saint you were.

Lamia's answer picks up this compliment:

Well (in secreete be it sayde) how so I seemd divine,
I feared once, a blewe gowne, would have bene my shrine.

This detail, the sinner masquerading as a saint, suggests the source of much of Shakespeare's imagery in connection with Isabella: the transformation is, however, complete.

Act IV opens with a new character, Dalia, Lamia's maid (not the same maid who summoned Lamia home to Hipolito in I, 4), on her way to market. She comments briefly on the change in her mistress' fortunes after she made 'a luckie friende (yea, one that beareth swaye)' and hurries off to prepare for Lamia's reception of Phallax.

In IV, 2 Whetstone provided Promos' account of the assignation with Cassandra. Although he has sworn to save Andrugio's life, he decides to 'unsweare' his oath, an unmotivated decision -- Promos is certain that Cassandra will not betray him because she will be reluctant to proclaim her own shame. At the end of the scene, he is about to send word to the 'Gayler' to 'secretelie' behead Andrugio and deliver his head to Cassandra with this grim riddle:

> To Cassandra, as Promos promist thee,
> From prison loe, he sendes thy Brother free.[1]

The next scene (IV, 3) parallels its predecessor: here we find Cassandra complaining, "And shall Cassandra now be termed, in common speeche, a stewes?" Promos has not made her a wife and she is no longer

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1 Shakespeare, of course, adopts the device of the execution-order, but it is handled with considerably more delicacy. The Provost receives the order from Angelo -- without the memorial verses -- and is expected to deliver Claudio's head to the deputy.

a maid.[1] In Scene 4, the Gayler brings her "a dead mans head in a charger," and properly apologetic, he delivers his bloody gift and Promos' message. Cassandra is now beside herself; she kisses Andrugio's lips "ere I fall to mone." As her tears wash Andrugio's bloody face, her thoughts return to Promos whose child ("another Promos") she fears she may be carrying. By suicide she will succeed in murdering his offspring. She decides, however, that before she kills herself, she will carry the news of Promos' "Tiranny" to the king who is "just and mercyfull." Before she sets out to find the king, however, she will see her brother's head "ingraved."

In IV, 5 we learn that Andrugio still lives. The Gayler (who is very like Shakespeare's Provost) sends Andrugio on his way with an injunction to maintain a disguise and to remain far from Julio; Andrugio fears that Cassandra and Polina will "destroye themselves, with greefe," but the Gayler advises him to be thankful that he is alive. After declining a gift from

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1 Cf. the riddling in Measure for Measure, V, 170-177, on Mariana's status: she is not married, she is not a maid, and she is not a widow. There, however, one suspects that Shakespeare was merely using the riddle to set up another of Lucio's gags: "My lord, she may be a punk, for many of them are neither maid, widow, nor wife." Whether there is a borrowing here is doubtful.

It is, however, notable that, through the addition of the Mariana character, much of the Cassandra material after this point in Whetstone's play falls to the new character rather than to Isabella.

Andrugio and waving him off, the Gayler, a cautious soul (like the Provost), reveals all:

> Well, I am glad, that I have sent him gone,
> For, by my fayth, I lyv'd in perlous feare:
> And yet God wot, to see his bytter mone,
> when he should dye, would force a man forbeare,
> From harming him, if pitty might beare sway.
> But see how God hath wrought for his safety?
> A dead mans head, that suffered th' other day,
> Makes thim thou 'ht dead, throughout the citie.
> Such a just, good and righteous God is he:
> Although awhyle he let the wicked raygne,
> Yet he releeves, the wretch in misery;
> And in his pryde, he throwes the tyraunt downe.
> I use these wordes, upon this onely thought,
> That Promos long his rod cannot escape;
> Who hath in thought, a wylfull murder wrought,
> What hath in act performed a wicked rape.
> Gods wyll be done, who well Andrugio speede;
> Once well I hope, to heare of his good lucke;
> For God thou knowest my conscience dyd this deede,
> And no desire of any worldly muck.

In the following scene Dalia, returning from market and concerned that she has spent so long searching for delicacies for Lamia's dinner guest, is joined by Grimball, a country bumpkin, for some lively indecorousness and a song ("Come smack me, come smack me, I long for a smouch").

Act V opens with Phallax marveling at Promos' latest unrest ("He fares as if a thousand Devils, were gnawing in his brest"). He shortly departs for Lamia's whose "Aple squier" he has now become. Scene 2 brings Rosko in, urging Phallax to make haste:

> O that I could find Master Phallax, the meat
> burnes at the fire.

> And by your leave, Andrugios death doth
> make my mistris sweate.[1]

Phallax offers to set Rosko, a 'Barbour' by trade,[2] up in business, but Rosko has enough to do, trimming the gentlemen of his employer's acquaintance.

In V, 3, we are finally introduced to Polina "in a blew gowne," the mark of her sin. Her lament equals those of Cassandra; she vows to "estraunge her selfe from joy" in fourteen

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1 In both plays, the use of the prostitute and her man to announce the various stages of the condemned brother's progress poses some strange problems. In Whetstone's play, we are not surprised by anything, but when we find the same detail in Measure for Measure it is hard to resist the view that Shakespeare was led astray by his sources into writing uncritically. Andrugio-Claudio is, at best, a difficult character to render sympathetically, but the fact that he is greatly admired by these denizens of the stews, Lamia-Overdone and Rosko-Pompey, makes us wonder about him even more. If anything, Shakespeare accentuated his mildly disreputable character by Overdone's announcement to Lucio and the two Gentlemen that Claudio was "worth five thousand of you all" (I, 2, 62), a line inserted doubtlessly as a compliment to Claudio (and to introduce the necessary exposition of his fate) but which suffers in its context by becoming a kind of dirty joke. Whetstone's Adrugio, though known to Lamia and Rosko, has no such intimate connection with them as Claudio seems to have with Overdone and Pompey, and, of course, Whetstone's character has no such close alliance with scabrous "fantastics" like Lucio.

2 It is, of course, possible that Rosko's sideline may have suggested the image, "the forfeits in a barber's shop" (V, 323), to Shakespeare, but again, I am suspicous of this alleged borrowing. Barbering imagery and jokes can be found in Much Ado, 2 Henry IV, All's Well, Taming of the Shrew, and Lear, to mention only Shakespeare's own works: he need not have relied on Whetstone here.

more heptameter couplets. In Scene 4 Rosko offers commentary on the change that has taken place since Lamia met Phallax: the lady "hath bewicht him so,/ As haulfe his brybes, unto her share will goe." Rosko is now going to shift for himself, and, as a first demonstration, he is after Grimball's purse: "if I empty it not, Dalia wull." The next scene finds Grimball in the company of a sharper , one Rowke, with whom Rosko joins forces in the bilking enterprise.[1]

The first part of the play ends (V, 6) with Cassandra dressed in black and, having buried Andrugio's head, setting out on her journey to the King. She plans, after reporting Promos' misdeeds, to end her life with the knife she carries. She departs singing a particularly lugubrious song:

> Sith fortune thwart, doth crosse my joyes with care,
> Sith that my blisse, is chaungde to bale by fate;
> Sith frowarde chaunce, my dayes in woe doth weare,
> Sith I alas, must mone without a mate;
> I wretch have vowde, to sing both daye and night,
> O sorrowe slaye, all motions of delight.
>
> Come grieslie griefe, torment this harte of mine,
> Come deepe dispaire, and stoppe my loathed breath;

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1 There is some slight possibility that Pompey's victim, Froth, may also have been suggested by Grimball, but in this instance the resemblance is very slight indeed.

Come wretched woe, my thought of hope to pine,
Come, cruell care, preferre my sute to death:
Death, ende my wo, which sing both daye and night,
O sorrowe slaye, all motions of delight.

* * * * * * * * * *

The second part of the play opens with Polina, still in blue but now a blue 'shadowed with a blacke Sarcenet,' going to the Temple to pray on Andrugio's tomb. At the end of another long lament (38 lines of iambic pentameter rhymed in an abab pattern), we have another sad song ("Amyd my bale, the lightning joy, that pyning care doth bring"). That Shakespeare may have received the hint from such scenes as this that the Polina-Julietta character belonged somewhere in the play is possible, but beyond this there can be no great indebtedness. Whetstone's Polina -- especially in this, perhaps her biggest scene -- is but another hands-wringing, self-pitying Cassandra, Whetstone's implement for further moralizing. For example, in this scene, after almost thirty lines in which she cries for a wished death, the tone suddenly changes and the moral is driven home again:

So wretched I, with every woe do waste,
Yet care wants force, to kyll my harte out ryght.
O gratious God, and is my gilt so great
As you the same, with thousand deathes must wreake?
You will it so, else care I could intreate
With halfe these woes, my thyrd of lyfe, to breake.
But what meanst thou, Polina, most accurst,
To muse why God, this pennaunce joynes thee to?
Whose correction, although we take at worst,
To our great good he doth the same bestow.
So that, syth greefe can not relyve my friend,
Syth scorching syghes, my sorrowes cannot drye,

Syth care himselfe, lackes force my lyfe to ende,
Syth styll I lyve that every howre doe dye;
Syth mighty God appoyntes my pennaunce so,
In mornefull song I wyll my patience show.

She thus becomes another Job.[1]

The following short scene introduces a Messenger from the King; he brings news to Promos that the monarch is making his way to Julio. I, 3 gives us another report on the Phallax-Lamia affair: Rosko is amazed that his mistress and her new friend are behaving very much as though they were deeply in love.

In I, 4 - 6, plans are under way for the King's arrival and, in their way, these three short scenes represent one of the pleasantest interludes in Whetstone's play. In Scene 4, Phallax is giving Dowson, as Carpenter, directions for the erection of shows which, by their contrast with the preceding action's viciousness, seem to illustrate Whetstone's mastery of a rudimentary dramatic irony:

PHALLAX: Dispatch Dowson, up with the frame quickly,
So space your roomes, as the nyne worthyes may,
Be so instauld, as best may please the eye.
DOWSON: Very good, I shall.

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1 Possibly it is this quality of bearing God's correction or will that suggested to Shakespeare the superbly stoical quality he endowed Julietta with in her brief interview with the Duke: "I do repent me, as it is an evil,/ And take the shame with joy" (II, 3).
There is nothing in Whetstone to suggest that the Juliet-figure was betrothed to the heroine's brother, that she was a close schoolgirl friend of the heroine, or even that she is pregnant.

PHALLAX: Nay soft Dowson, stay:
Let your man at saynt Annes crosse, out of hande,
Ereckt a stage, that the Wayghts in sight may stande.
DOWSON: Wyll you ought else?
PHALLAX: Soft a whyle, let me see,
On Jesus gate, the fowre vertues I trow,
Appoynted are to stand.
DOWSON: I syr, they are so.
PHALLAX: Wel, then about your charge, I wyll foresee
The Comfort of Musicke, well plast to be.
DOWSON: I am gone syr.

In Scene 5, the Bedell of the "Marchanttaylers" asks Phallax where they may place their pageant:

BEDELL: They have Hercules, of Monsters conqueryng,
Huge great Giants, in a forest fighting
With Lyons, Beares, Wolves, Apes, Foxes, and Grayes, Baiards, Brockes, &c.
PHALLAX: O wondrous frayes.
Marry syr, since they are provided thus
Out of their wayes, God keepes Maister Pediculus.
BEDELL: You are pleasaunt syr, but with speede I pray,
You aunswere mee, I was charged not to stay.
PHALLAX: Because I know, you have all things currant,
They shall stand where they shal no viewers want:
How say you to ende of Ducke Alley?
BEDELL: There all the beggers in the towne wilbe.
PHALLAX: O, most attendaunce is, where beggers are,
Farewell, away.
BEDELL: I wyll your wyll declare.

In Scene 6, two men "apparrelled, lyke greene men at the Mayor feast, with clubbes of fyreworke" appear to Phallax and announce that they have been charged to keep a passage clear "in Jesus streete" for the king and his train. After their departure, Phallax comments on the speed with which suitable arrangements for the King's arrival have been made:

A syr, heare is short knowledge, to entertayne a kyng;
But O, O, quid non pecunia? yea, at a dayes warning?
The king in provision that thought to take us tardy,
As if we had a yeare bene warnd, shall by hism welcome see:
I have yet one chare to do...

In the following scene, Rosko is told to relay the news to Lamia that Phallax will bring members of the King's company to her establishment for entertainment. Rosko is, typically, delighted: "Their purses will be dryven to a non plus."

In I, 8 we find Cassandra with the King (for the first time in the text named Corvinus), two counsellors, and Udistao, a young nobleman, on the outskirts of Julio. Cassandra is dismissed until further notice: with the King's promise to clear her name and to punish the "wycked Promos." After her departure, Whetstone inserts a long lecture which at once underlines the theme of the play and reports Cassandra's reception by the King. This is our first real view of Corvinus, about whom very little has been heard earlier in the play, and the speech contains some possible clues for Shakespeare's characterization of Vincentio as a crafty examiner:

I playnely see, it tendes to great behove
That prynces oft doo vayle their eares to heare,
The Misers playnt: for though they doe appoynt
Such as they thynke will Iustice execute,
Aucthority is such a commaunder,
As, whereas men by office beareth sway,
If they their rule by conscience measure not,
The poore mans ryght is overcome by might:

If love or hate from Iustice leade the Iudge,
Then money sure may overrule the case.
Thus one abuse is cause of many moe,
And therefore none in Iudges ought to be.
How Rulers wrong, fewe tales are tould the King:
The reason is, their power keepes in awe
Such men as have great cause for to complayne.
If Cassandra her goodes, nay, lyfe preferd
Before revenge of Promos trechery,
I had not knowne, his detestable rape,
The which he forst to save her brothers lyfe.
And furthermore, Andrugios raunsome payde,
I had not knowne he put him unto death:
For when (good soule) she had this treason tould,
Through very shame her honour so was spoyld,
She drewe her knyfe to wound her selfe to death,
Whose pytious plyght, my hart provockt to wrath
At Promos wyles:
So that to use indifferency to both,
Even in the place where all these wronges were done;
Myselfe am come, to syt upon the cause.
But see where Promos and the Mayor waight
To welcome mee with great solemnity:
With cheereful showe I shadowe wyll the hate,
I beare to him for his insolency;
Perhaps I may learne more of his abuse,
Whereby the more his punishment may be.
Come my Lords, to the Towne haste we apace.

I, 9 shows the civic welcoming of Corvinus. Promos makes an appropriate 'briefe Oration' and tenders the sword of Justice to Corvinus, alleging that he has, he trusts, "uprightlie" used it. The King receives this symbol of authority and, 'shadowing his hate,' he greets Promos affectionately enough:

Promos, the good report, of your good government I heare,
Or at the least, the good conceyte that towards you I beare;
To incourage you the more, in Iustice to perseaver,
Is the cheefe cause, I dyd addresse, my Progresse heather.

The Mayor of Julio presents Corvinus with "a fayre Purse," which the King courteously refuses:

> Your great good wyls, and gyfts with thankes I take;
> But keepe you styll, your goodes, to do you good.
> It is inough, and all that I do crave,
> If needes compels for your and our safety,
> That you in part your proffers large performe;
> And for this time as outward showes make proofe,
> It is inough (and all that I desire),
> That your harts and tongues (alyk) byd me welcome.

This is followed by a puzzling stage direction for a song and some dumb show:

> Five or sixe, the one halfe men, the other women, neare unto the Musick, singing on some stage erected from the ground. During the first parte of the song, the KING faineth to talke sadlie with some of his Counsell.

The King's Gentlemen Usher gives the order for departure and the scene ends as the officials "all go out leysurablie while the rest of the Song is made an ende."[1]

Act II opens with Lamia exulting in her Phallax-sponsored prosperity. Other 'Dames' of her trade "shutte up their shoppes for feare," but Lamia is in an excellent position to raise her rates; she has no intimation that she is riding for a fall. In II, 2 Rosko escorts Apio and Bruno, "two Gentlemen strangers,"[2] to

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1 Whetstone did not, however, provide the song.

2 It has been alleged that these two men suggested the two Gentlemen engaged in conversation with Lucio in I, 2. (See Albrecht, 46.) Only the most overzealous efforts to establish borrowings could produce such an ingenious -- and incredible -- "debt." Almost every Shakespearean play opens with two or three men engaged in expository conversations, filling the audience in on what it must know: to make anything more significant of this obvious dramaturgic device is to offer another weapon to those critics who deride 'source-study' as a fruitless enterprise.

Lamia's residence, where they are greeted by four "bravelie apparelled" women sitting in Lamia's window, singing a song ("The Quyre," "If pleasure be treasure") at the end of which Apio and Bruno enter the house where the "doore opes alone." At this moment a Sergeant, bearing a Mace, the town crier, and another officer "with a paper, lyke a Proclamation" appear. Rosko listens to the proclamation which signals his and his mistress' decline:

> Corvinus, the hye and mightie King of Hungarie and Boemia: Unto all his loving Subjects of Julio, sendeth greeting. And therewithall, giveth knowledge of his Princelie favour towards every sort of them. First, if any person, Officer, or other, hath wronged any of his true subjects, by the corruption of brybes, affecting or not favoring of the person, through Usurie, extortion, wrong imprisonment, or with any unjust practise, His Majestie wylles the partie so grieved to repayre to Syr Ulrico, one of his hignesse privie Counsell; who (finding his or their injuries) is commaunded to certifie them, and their proofe unto the Kings majestie; where incontinentlie he wyll order the controversie, to the release of the partie grieved, and the punishment of the offenders. Further, if any of his faithfull subjectes can charge any person, Officer, or other, with any notable or haynous offence, Treason, Murder, Sacriledge, sedicion, or with any such notorious cryme; for the safetie of his Royal person, benefyte and quiet of his Realme and subjectes, on Fridaye next, his most excellent Majestie (with the advise of his honorable Counsell) wyl in open Court syt, to heare and determine all such offences. Therfore he strayghtlie chargeth all and everie of his subjectes that knowe any such haynous offenders, one the forenamed daye, that he present both the offender and his faulte. Dated at his Royall Court, in Julio, the 6 of Februarie.

II, 3 provides Rosko's commentary of the proclamation:

> ...But the sport is to see
> Us officers, one looke of another;

I at Lorde Promos, Lorde Promos at mee;
The Lawiers at the Shriefe and Maior.[1]

In II, 4 and 5, Sir Ulrico is shown soliciting complaints. Phallax's bribe-taking and his arrangement with Lamia are quickly brought to light, and Ulrico's virtues are aptly but tediously established.[2]

Act III opens with Phallax announcing that he intends to brazen out the public hearing "tomorrow." That he is not frightened for his life is evident when he sees Gripax and Rapax, his "promoter" friends, with a victim, one John Adroynes, "a Clowne," in tow. III, 2 opens with this comic device. The fight between the three, with the 'Clowne' clearly gaining the upperhand, is interrupted by Phallax. The charge against Adroynes is, among other nonsensical matters, kissing a maid. For a bribe of ten shillings thirteen, Phallax drops the charges and sends the country lout on his way ("Ich surely had bene whipt, but for my golde,/ But chull no more, with smouches be so bolde"). At this point, the

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1 Although this speech is assigned to Rosko, it is far more appropriate to Phallax.

2 It is frequently alleged that Ulrico is the model for Escalus in Measure for Measure, and there is some justice in the view. However, it should be noted that Escalus has a far different and more important function as Shakespeare developed the character than Whetstone allowed Ulrico. Perhaps the only similarity between the two characters is that they are both honest judges trusted -- with good reason -- by their rulers.

King, Promos, Ulrico, Mayor, Gonsago, Phallax and several attendants enter.[1] One Gonsago is warned by Corvinus that he must mend his ways and the clemency of Corvinus is established:

> Sir Gonsago, if that we henceforth heare,
> With will, or wealth, you doe our subjects wrong,
> Looke not agayne, this favour for to fynde;
> We use this grace, to wyn you to amende:
> If not our wrath shall feare you to offende.

After dispatching Gonsago, Corvinus announces his methods:

> I see by proofe, that true the proverbe is,
> Myght maisters right, wealth is such a canker,
> As woundes the conscience, of his Maister,
> And devoures the hart of his poore neyghbour.
> To cure which sore, Iustice his pryde must pyne,
> Which Iustice ought in princes most to shine:
> And syth subjectes lyve by their Princes law,
> Whose laws in cheefe, the rytch should keep in awe:
> The poore in wronges, but sildome doth delyght,
> They have inuffe, for to defend their right:
> It much behoves the maker of these lawes,
> (This mony findes in them, so many flawes)
> To see his lawes, observ'd as they are ment,
> Or else good lawes, wyll turn to evyll intent.
> Well, ere I leave, my poorest subjects shall,
> Both lyve and lyke, and by the richest stawll.

Promos seconds this speech by commending the King's clemency: "Those harts your rule commands through feare, to faithful love shall win." The next complaint is against Phallax and Corvinus criticizes Promos for allowing such men to serve him:

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1 Following Whetstone's usual practice, this should mark the beginning of a new scene, III, 3.

KING: My Lord Promos, it seemes you rule at large,
When as your clarkes are officers unjust.
PROMOS: Dread King, I thinke he can these wrongs discharge.
KING: Doe you but thinke syr? a sure speare to trust?
A dum death and blynde judge can do as much:
Well, well, God graunt, your owne lyfe byde the tuch.
Sir Ulrico, your complaynt continew.

Ulrico reads the charges against Phallax and Corvinus, noting that Promos is struck dumb by them, calls on Phallax to speak for himself. Phallax's only recourse is to ask for time:

KING: Why? to devise a cloke to hyde a knave?
Friend, <u>veritas no quaerit angulos</u>,
And if yourself you on your truth repose,
You may be bould, these faultes for to deny:
Some, lyttel care, upon their othes to lye:
See if any in your behalfe will sweare.

Although Phallax throws himself on the King's mercy, admits his guilt and promises to repent, Corvinus is here somewhat less merciful:

Thy confession doth meryt some favour
But repentaunce payes not thy poore neyghbour;
Wherefore, Syr Ulrico, his goods sease you,
And those, he wrong'd, restore you to their due.

Ulrico explains that Phallax has few goods with which he can pay back any of his victims -- Lamia has everything. The King must now devise a new punishment:

Where naught is left, the king must lose his right.
Pay as you may, I hould it no offence
If eache pay somewhat for experience:
But by the way, you rule the citty well
That suffer, by your nose, such dames to dwell.
And now Phallax, thy further pennaunce ys,
That forthwith thou do resigne thy office.
....
Because thou didst, thy faultes at first confesse
From punishment, thy person I release.

Promos suddenly notes the presence of Cassandra: "Ah, out alas, Cassandra heare I see." The lady ("in a blewe gowne, shadowed with black") enters and begs to state her case. Promos attempts to divert her with an affectionate greeting: "Welcome my sweete Cassandra," but she begs leave to report her "bale." Corvinus pretends that he has never seen the lady:

> How now Promos? how lyke you, of this song?
> Say on fayre dame, I long to heare thy wrong.

In twenty-four lines, Cassandra repeats her charges against Promos[1] and, when Corvinus asks Promos whether the terrible story is true, Promos' silence is eloquent. Finally, Promos confesses:

> My gilty hart commaunds my tongue, O king, to tell a troth,
> I doe confesse this tale is true, and I deserve thy wrath.

Corvinus assures Cassandra that no shame can attach to her for her efforts to save Andrugio: "Thy forced fault, was free from evil intent." He then launches into a stinging rebuke of Promos:

> Thou wycked man, might it not thee suffice,
> By worse then force, to spoyle her chastitie,

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1 The only detail added here is that Promos had decreed that Polina "should ever after lyve/In some religious house, to sorrowe her misdeede." Whether such a brief reference would be enough to suggest that Isabella (not Julietta) should be shown as a Poor Clare novice is questionable, but the possibility remains.

But heaping sinne on sinne against thy oth,
Haste cruelly her brother done to death.
This over proofe, he can but make me thinke
That many waies thou hast my subjectes wronged;
For how canst thou with Iustice use thy swaie?
When thou thy selfe dost make thy will a lawe?
Thy tyranny made mee, this progresse make,
How so, for sport tyll now I colloured it
Unto this ende, that I might learne at large
What other wronges by power, thou hast wrought,
And heere, I heare: the Riche suppresse the poore:
So that it seemes, the best and thou art friendes:
I plaste thee not, to be a partiall Iudge.
Thy Offycers are covetous, I finde,
By whose reportes, thou over-rulest sutes:
Then who that gives an Item in the hande,
In ryght, and wrong, is sure of good successe.
Well, Varlet, well; too slowe I hether came,
To scourge thy faultes, and salve the sores thou mad'st.
On thee vyle wretches, this sentence I pronounce;
That forthwith thou shalt marry Cassandra,
For to repayre hir honour, thou dydst waste;
The next daye thou shalt lose thy hated lyfe,
In penaunce, that thou mad'st hir Brother dye.[1]

Promos beseeches Corvinus to grant him mercy, but he is rebuffed with a Latin tag which may well have given Shakespeare the title of his play:

KING: Hoc facias alteri quod tibi vis fieri:
Pitie was no plee Syr, when you in judgmment sate:
Prepare your selfe to dye...[2]

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1 This speech is notable at once for its similarities with and differences from the corresponding passage in Measure for Measure (V, 366-420). Most impressive, however, is the fact that Shakespeare did not choose to consider any of the other crimes with which Promos is here charged.

2 Cf. Folio printing (V, 405-416):
For this new-married man, approaching here,
Whose salt imagination yet hath wrong'd
Your well-defended honor: you must pardon
For Mariana's sake: But as he adjudg'd your Brother,
Being criminal, in double violation

(continued on following page)

As the group departs, a "Poore man" kneels in the King's way and his case is turned over to Ulrico. The scene closes with John Adroynes commenting on the miraculous events he has witnessed. After determining that he will carry his case to 'good syr Ulrico,' he sings his "Ballat, of good King Corvin." The King's "grace and mercie" is once again lauded.

Act IV opens with a housecleaning operation attendant upon the exposure of Promos and Phallax. Gresco, "a good substantiall Offycer," (who may have suggested Shakespeare's Constable Elbow), directs two "Beadelles in Blew Coates, with Typestaves" to bring in all idle vagabonds. "Ducke alley, Cockelane, and Scouldes corner" will be most productive in their searches. After the tipstaffs leave, Gresco explains what lies ahead for Lamia:

> The King, I fayth, hath set us all a worke,
> To search odde holes, where ydle varlettes lurke.

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2 (continued from preceding page)

> Of sacred chastity, and of promise-breach,
> Thereon dependent for your Brother's life,
> The very mercy of the Law cries out
> Most audible, even from his proper tongue,
> An Angelo for Claudio, death for death:
> Haste still pays haste, and leisure, answers leisure;
> Like doth quit like, and Measure still for Measure:

Shakespeare's practice in handling Whetstone's Latin phrases calls for brief comment here. Elsewhere he Latinizes a phrase which Whetstone had translated: Cucullus non facit monachum (V, 263; see also Twelfth Night, I, 5, 62), but here the procedure is reversed, despite the fact that the Latin Hoc facias alteri quod tibi vis fieri seems rather more appropriate to the sententious Duke than Cudullus nonfacit monachum does to Lucio. The longer phrase does not, of course, make good blank verse, a matter of less importance to Whetstone than it was to Shakespeare: perhaps that is as close as can come to explaining this curious phenomenon.

He so nypped, our Maior for yll rule,
As ever since, he hath bene lyke to whule.
And in a rage, the man is nowe so whotte,
As lewde personnes, tagge, and ragge, goes to potte.
But in chiefe, he stormes, at fine Mistresse Lamia,
She drinkes for all, come she once in his waye,
And least she scape, my selfe forsooth he wylles
Worshipfullie to fetch hir, with fortie Bylles.
Well, I must goe, and worke our Maior's heast,
No force, for once, she wyll never be honest.

The next scene takes place near a forest and several divergent strands of action converge here. First we find Andrugio explaining how he has lived since the Jailer gave him his liberty:

This savage life were hard to brooke, if hope no comfort gave;
But I (whose life, from tyrants wrath, Gods providence did save),
Do take in worth this misery, as penaunce for my mys;
Stil fed with hope to chaunge this state, when Gods good pleasure is.
A hollow Cave for house, and bed, in worth Andrugio takes,
Such sorie foode, as fortune sendes, he syldome nowe forsakes.
I am my selfe foresoothe, nowe Butcher, Cooke, ater and all,
Yea, often tymes I fall to sleepe, with none, or supper small.
Then in my Denne, I call to minde, the lyfe I lyv'de in blisse:
And by the want I freedome judge, the greatest joy that is.

This curious intermingling of a pastoralism gone sour with a eulogy of freedom continues for fourteen more lines, at the end of which Andrugio encounters John Adroynes who is looking for his lost mare. The Clowne is, as he shortly tells Andrugio, on his way to Julio to see the "sport" which will be attendant on Promos'

execution. This sequence is relatively long and a good bit of slapstick is worked into the action: the Clowne mistakes Andrugio for another "Promoter" and only reluctantly and in a most garbled fashion will explain exactly what has happened in the city. After the Clowne's departure, Andrugio muses on the news -- and another moral lesson is the result:

> For God we see, styll throwes the tyraunt downe,
> Even in the heyght, and pride of his renowne.
> Lorde Promos rule, nay tyranny in deede,
> For Judges is a mirror, worthy heede.
> The wretched man, with show of Justice zeale,
> Throughly dyd, with poore offenders deale.
> The wicked man, both knew and judg'd, abuse,
> And none so much as he, her faultes dyd use.
> He fellons hang'd, yet by extorcion stoale;
> He wantons plag'd, himselfe a doating foole.
> He others checkt, for suing for their right;
> And he himselfe, mayntayned wrongs by might.
> But see the rule of mischiefe, in his pride,
> He headlong falles, when least, he thought to slide.

Andrugio determines to disguise himself and proceed to Julio "in spyte of linxes eyes" to learn "how the game doth go." Before he goes, however, he will sing a song showing his gratitude to God ("To thee O Lord, with hart, and voyce I syng").

The next movement in the scene is farcical: Gresco and three other officers are leading Lamia to the whipping-post. The lady tries to exercise her charms to ease her situation, but this time it appears that she has met her match. Gresco is unmoved by her arguments and enticements as he leads her on to her punishment. The next wanderer in Andrugio's forest is

Cassandra, who now ponders the fate which has given her a husband about to be beheaded. Her self-lacerating spirit leads her to the conclusion that she must try to save Promos' life:

> Nature wyld mee, my Brother love, now dutie commaunds mee,
> To preferre before kyn, or friend, my Husband's safetie.
> But O, aye me, by Fortune, I am made his chiefest foe;
> Twas I alas, even onely I, that wrought his overthroe.
> What shall I doo, to work amends, for this my haynous deede?
> The tyme is short, my power small, his succors axeth speede.
> And shall I seeke to save his blood that lately sought his lyfe?
> O yea, I then was sworne his foe; but nowe as faithfull Wife,
> I must and wyll, preferre his health, God send me good successe,
> For nowe unto the King I wyll, my chaunged minde to expresse.

Now become a patient Griselda, Cassandra hurries off to do the proper thing by her spouse. The last voyager through the forest is the recently exiled Phallax, happy that he, unlike Promos, has been given his freedom. He describes the arrest of Lamia:

> The Officers, and chiefe men of Julio
> Vengeaunce lyberall, themselves lykewise showe.
> Poore knaves, and queanes that up and down do goe,
> These horesen kinde crustes, in houses bestoe,
> But yet, poore cheere they have: marry for heate,
> They whyp them untyll verie blood they sweate.
> But see, their cost bestowe of fyne Lamia,
> To save hir feet, from harde stones, and cold waye,
> Into a Carte, they dyd the queane convaye,
> Apparelled in colours verie gaye;
> Both Goode, and Gowne, of greene, and yellowe Saye.
> Hir Garde weare Typstaves, all in blewe arraye;
> Before hir a noyse of Basons dyd playe,
> In this triumphe, she ryd well nye a daye.
> Fie, fie, the Citie is so purged nowe,

As they of none, but honest men allowe;
So that farewell my parte, of thriving there:
But the best is, flattrers lyve everie where.
Set cocke on hoope; Domini est terra.
If thou cannot where thou wouldst, lyve where
thou maye.

Phallax knows where next he will go:

Yes, yes, Phallax knoweth whether to go;
Nowe, God bwy ye all honest men of Julio:
As the Devilles lykes, the company of Friers,
So flattrers loves as lyfe, to joyne with lyers.

The concluding act opens with Andrugio "disguised in some long blacke Cloake" commenting on his observations during the two days he has been at Court. His forgiving nature (like his sister's) leads him to the determination to rescue Promos:

And shortlie he must lose his subtyll head,
For murdring me, whome no man thinkes but dead,
His wyll was good, and therfore beshrewe mee
If (mov'd with ruthe) I seeke to set him free.

He retires as Ulrico appears to deliver to a marshall the order for Promos' execution. Ulrico reports that Corvinus was almost moved by Cassandra's "stormes of tears" to pardon Promos, but in the last resolve, "preferd the helth, of this our common weale." He sees Cassandra approaching:

But see againe, to sue for him she comes,
Her ruthfull lookes, her greefe, doth force mee
feele.
With hope, I must hir sorrowes needes delay,
Tyll Promos, be dispatcht out of the way.

In V, 3 Cassandra prevails on Ulrico to let her speak to the King in Promos' behalf again and Andrugio, having witnessed this encounter and knowing that Ulrico is but stalling for time, ponders his next

move: he has been deeply moved by Cassandra's woe and would save Promos by revealing himself; yet, if he reveal himself, he will be given the death he so narrowly missed. At first, his choice is to let Promos die:

> Time wyll appease, no dought, Cassandras woes.
> And shal I thus acquite Cassandra's love?
> To worke her joy? and shal I feare to dye?
> Whylst, that she lyve, no comforte may remove
> Care from her harte, if that hir husband dye?
> Then shall I stycke, to hasard lym? nay life?
> To salve hir greefe, since in my cure it rests.
> Nay first, I wilbe spoyld, with blooddy knife,
> Before I fayle her, plunged in distres.
> Death is but death, and all in fyne shall dye:
> Thus (being dead) my fame, shall live alway:
> Well, to the king, Andrugio now wyll hye,
> Hap lyfe, hap death, his safety, to bewray.

This is, for Whetstone, relatively high-powered writing which seems to betoken his intention to redeem Andrugio somewhat in our eyes. The stoicism implicit in the last lines of the speeches is, of course, identical with that in Shakespeare's "Be absolute for death" consolatio.

In the long closing scene (V, 4) everything is finally righted. The Marshall and three or four "with halbards" are introduced, leading Promos to execution. The condemned man takes an eloquent farewell in the course of which another moral lesson emerges:

> Farewell, my friendes, take warning by my fall,
> Disdaine my life, but lysten to my ende;
> Fresh harmes, they say, the viewers so apall,
> As oft they win, the wicked to amend.
> I neede not heare, my faultes at large resyte,

Untimely death, doth witnesse what I was;
A wicked man, whiche made eache wrong seeme right,
Even as I would, was wrested every case.
And thus long tyme, I lyv'd and rul'd by wyl:
Where as I lov'd, their faultes I would not see:
Those I did hate, tenne tymes beyond there yll
I did persue, vyle wrętch, with cruelty.
Yea dayly I, from bad to worse did slyde,
The reason was, none durst controule my life;
But see the fall of mischeeve, in his pride:
My faultes were knowne, and loe, with bloddy Axe
The headseman strayght, my wronges with death wyll quite;
The which in worth I take, acknowledging,
The doome was geven on cause, and not on spyte;
Wishing my ende, might serve for a warning,
For such as rule, and make their will a lawe:
If to such good, my faynting tale might tend,
Wretched Promos, the same would longer draw;
But if that wordes prevayle, my wofull ende
From my huge faultes, then tenne tymes more wyll warne.
Forgevenesse now, of all the world I crave;
Therewith that you, in zealous prayer, wyll
Beseeche of God, that I the grace may have,
At latter gaspe, the feare of death to kyll.

The Marshall's comment at this point is appropriate enough: "Forwards my Lord, me thinkes you fayntly goe." Promos, now believing all is lost, rejoins, "O syr, in my case your selfe would be as slowe."

At this moment, Cassandra, accompanied by Polina and "one mayde," enters and inquires where Promos is going. His answer ("Sweete wife, to dye") sets off another round of forgiveness:

Cassandra: Nay, I vile wretch, should most agreeved be,
Before thy time, thy death which hastened have:
But (O sweete husband) my fault forgeve mee,
And for amends, Ile helpe to fyll thy grave.
Promos: Forgive thee, ah: nay, for my soules releefe.
Forget sweete wyfe, this thy most guyltles greefe.

The Marshall prods Promos: his staying only prolongs Cassandra's "mone." Before leaving, Promos asks Polina for fergiveness (which she grants) and kisses Cassandra who opines, "O, at his lyppes, why fayleth not my breath?"

After Promos is finally led off, Polina begs Cassandra to "leave of this bootelesse griefe," but the latter only asks that Polina join her in her "bytter plaintes." Polina declines, however,

> Nay, first powre foorth your playnts, to the powers Divine,
> When hate, doth clowde, all worldly grace, whose mercies styll do shine.

Polina's suggestion only provokes further lamentation which is soon embodied in another song:

> Cassandra: O, so or no, thy motion doeth well,
> Swan lyke, in song, to towle my passing Bell.

The Song of CASSANDRA

> Deare dames, divorse your minds from joy, helpe to bewayle my wo,
> Condole with me, whose heavy sighs, the pangs of death do shoe:
> Rend heairs, shed teares, poore wench distrest, to hast the means to dye,
> Whose joye, annoy; reliefe, whose griefe, hath spoyld with crueltie.
>
> My brother slaine, my husband ah, at poynt to lose his head,
> Why lyve I then unhappy wench, my suckers being dead?
> O time, O cryme, O cause, O lawes, that judged them thus to dye;
> I blame you all, my shame, my thrall, you hate that harmlesse trye.
>
> This Tragidy they have begun, conclude I wretched must,

O welcome, consume the threadm thereto my life doth
trust;
Sound bell, my knell, away delaie, and geve mee
leave to dye,
Lest hope, have scope unto my hart, afresh for
ayde to flye.

At the conclusion of this, Ganio ("sometime Andrugios Boye") announces that Andrugio lives and that Promos has been reprieved. Not without good reason, Cassandra is reluctant to believe this news, but the sight of brother and husband convinces her: the King, Andrugio, Promos, Ulrico and the Marshall arrive. Explanations are made all around. Corvinus pardons Andrugio but orders him to marry Polina. Cassandra again pleads for Promos' life -- this time with success. The play closes with Corvinus' pardoning and a last moral lecture:

Cassandra: Most gratious King, with these my joye
to match,
Vouchsafe, to geve my dampned husbande
lyfe.
King: If I doe so, let him thanke thee, his Wife.
Cassandra, I have noted thy distresse,
Thy vertues eke, from first unto the last;
And glad I am, without offence it lyes,
In me to ease, thy griefe, and heavines
Andrugio sav'd, the juell of thy joye,
And for thy sake, I pardon Promos faulte,
Yea let them both, thy vertues rare commende;
In that their woes, with this delyght doth
ende.
...
Promos: Cassandra, howe shall I discharge thy due?
Cassandra: I dyd, but what a Wife, shoulde do for
you.
King: Well, since all partes are pleased, as they
woulde,
Before I parte, yet Promos, this to thee:

Henceforth, forethinke, of thy forepassed faultes,
And measure Grace, with Justice evermore.
Unto the poore, have evermore an eye,
And let not might, out countenaunce their right:
Thy Officers, trust not in every tale,
In cheife, when they are meanes, in strifes and sutes,
Though thou be just, yet coyne maye them corrupt.
And if by them, thou dost unjustice showe,
Tys thou shalt beare, the burden of their faultes.
Be loving to good Cassandra, thy Wife:
And friendlie to thy brother Andrugio,
Whom I commaund, as faythfull for to be
To thee, as beseemes the duety of a brother.
And now agayne, thy government receyve,
Injoye it so, as thou in Iustice joye.
If thou be wyse, thy fall maye make thee ryse.
The lost sheepe found, for joye, the feast was made.
Well here an ende, of my advise I make,
As I have sayde, be good unto the poore,
And Iustice joyne, with mercie evermore.
Promos: Most gratious King, I wyll not fayle my best,
In these prēceptes, to followe your beheast.

To the modern reader, it may be difficult to understand why Shakespeare was inspired to set hand to reworking such sorry stuff. If, however, we do not do Whetstone the disservice of measuring his accomplishment by Shakespearean standards, the play may not seem quite so unimpressive a performance. Much of the difficulty for the modern reader stems from the language or, more particularly, the metrics and the dreary rhyming. As drama, however, the play was worthy of Shakespeare's attention, and, when we consider how little of the language Shakespeare retained, it is obvious that it was the drama that attracted him. There is unquestionably too much comic subplot material

but, in its defense, it must be recognized that it is all related to a central theme of civic corruption and the ruler's responsibility for checking the viciousness of his subjects. The central situation is charged with difficult problems of motivation which Shakespeare tried to solve by the simple expedient of avoiding them: his heroine does not <u>in fact</u> acquiesce to the abhorrent proposal and, through the addition of a plighted but abandoned other lady, she does not have to behave the ideal wife of her former betrayer. Perhaps in avoiding some of the more vexatious problems, he created others: the character of Angelo is somehow complicated and our response to him altered by the addition of Mariana; the character of Isabella undergoes a change which deprives her of some of the sympathy due a young woman who is willing to make the supreme sacrifice to save her brother; most importantly, however, Shakespeare's Duke, greatly augmented, changes the dramatic effect of the whole play on all scores. But these matters are the subject of the following chapters.

PART THREE

CHAPTER TWO
INTRODUCTORY NOTES ON SOURCE-STUDIES OF MEASURE FOR MEASURE

The task of comparing Measure for Measure with its sources is considerably less simple than first appears primarily because it is no longer possible to assume Shakespeare was indebted only to Whetstone's play. In recent years, largely through the persistence of a few students of comparative literature, more and more standard accounts accept the view that Shakespeare knew and worked from at least four earlier versions of the Angelo-Isabella tale. To complicate matters, other kinds of sources are also credited: Fripp argues for Montaigne's Essais, Albrecht and Draper for BASILIKON DORON, Battenhouse for the New Testament, and numerous classical scholars for the Antigone-Creon story or for Cicero's De Officiis or

Seneca's De Clementia, to name only a few.[1] Clearly, it is no longer easily possible to maintain the older distinctions between, not just sources and analogues, but immediate sources like Promos and Cassandra and remote sources such as the Essais, BASILIKON DORON, or the Bible.

The implications of this development for our understanding of Shakespeare at work on Measure for Measure are so manifold that it seemed necessary to reconsider the theory behind source-studies. However, at this point, a new difficulty presented itself: the lack of an adequate systematic study of the bearings of sources on Shakespearean drama.[2] Indeed, such a work may never be forthcoming. With so many special pleaders to be satisfied and with the question of

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1 For other -- and generally more remote -- sources of this type, see Selma Guttman's The Foreign Sources of Shakespeare's Works: An Annotated Bibliography of the Commentary Written on this Subject between 1904 and 1940 together with Lists of Certain Translations Available to Shakespeare, New York: King's Cross Press, 1947.

2 In 1934, J. Isaacs (in A Companion to Shakespeare Studies) included such a work in his list of works which are badly needed by Shakespearean scholars. In 1951, Kenneth Muir (in Shakespeare Survey 4) emphasized the same need after accurately summarizing the situation: "For Shakespeare's treatment of his other [apart from Plutarch] sources one has to go to introductions to individual plays and to articles scattered through the learned journals. In these there is often little attempt to explain why Shakespeare made the alterations he did."

Shakespeare's reading still moot, it is hard to conceive that anyone can compile a work on Shakespearean sources which would be at once authoritative and a manageable scholarly tool.

Under the circumstances, it has seemed necessary to survey briefly the work already done on the sources of Measure for Measure. It will be seen that the major questions are still unanswered: What source or sources did Shakespeare use? What effects did he intend by adopting or discarding various elements in his sources? What effects could he have achieved? How can we measure the extent of his indebtedness? The questions proliferate at a prodigious rate and it would only be wishful thinking to expect that any can be satisfactorily answered.

Essentially the problems in source-study proceed from the root of all vexatious questions in literary study -- the individual student's interpretation of the play. Thus, it should come as no surprise to discover that, because it has generally been considered an 'artistic failure,' older source-studies of Measure for Measure have all been predicated on the assumption that Shakespeare was either subverted or relatively helpless when confronted with earlier versions of this 'intractable' story. The following remarks may be taken as representative of the standard treatment, appearing as it does in a recent handbook of some distinction:

> Shakespeare's modifications of plot and character were not always wholly successful. Today, Measure for Measure is a puzzling, repulsive play, both because of its Elizabethan ethics and its characters. The original, as retold from Cinthio by George Whetstone, was much simpler. In his desire to emphasize Angelo's severity in applying a law against fornication to true lovers, like Claudio and Juliet, and to save his heroine, Isabella, from submitting to the dishonorable advances of the deputy, Shakespeare introduced a substitute in Mariana, the jilted betrothed of Angelo, a character not found in the original. The parallelism afforded by the Claudio-Juliet and Angelo-Mariana situations is attractive and very dramatic, but, at the same time, it produces an unlucky inconsistency in the character of Angelo. First portrayed as an austerely virtuous character who believed himself strong enough to withstand any temptation, Angelo is shown, after the beginning of Act III, to have been all along a blackguard and a hypocritical opportunist who had cast aside a devoted lady merely because she had lost her dowry. What is worse, all this was known by Duke Vincentio at the time he selected Angelo as his deputy to enforce the laws of Vienna. Structurally superior to its original, Measure for Measure is, nevertheless, one of Shakespeare's few artistic failures.[1]

The only conventional complaint missing from this account concerns the inconsistency of Isabella -- to be completely typical, Holzknecht's remarks should have noted that "for a Duke, she will throw her novitiate head-dress over the mill," to quote Quiller-Couch.[2] The most typical aspect of this passage is the failure to recognize that a change at least as striking as the introduction of Mariana was the expansion of the ducal

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1 Karl J. Holzknecht, The Backgrounds of Shakespeare's Plays, New York: American Book Company, 1950, p. 234.

2 New Cambridge Measure for Measure, p. xxxi.

overlord into the central and controlling character of the play.[1]

We need not consider Holzknecht's remarks further here. Mirroring as they do the conclusions most frequently encountered in source-studies, they have been offered solely to orient this consideration of Shakespeare's artistic shaping of the sources for Measure for Measure. A more profitable and theoretical approach will be to analyze Hardin Craig's recent effort to revitalize source-study as a useful approach to genuinely literary study.[2] Recognizing that source-hunting is 'a sound instinct and a natural and fruitful approach to the study of Elizabethan literature,' Craig attempts to explain why, in the plethora of

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1 Albrecht, Draper and T. C. Izard (in his biographical study of Whetstone) are the only writers who have adequately recognized the importance of this alteration. Izard notes:

> The function of the overlord in the various accounts remains much the same; he is the incorruptible dispenser of justice, a sort of deus ex machina, who rectifies the injustice of the magistrate, restoring confidence in the ultimate heads of government. Shakespeare has given to this role also a greater importance than any earlier writer chose to give it, allowing the Duke to remain on the scene incognito throughout the play and marrying him finally to Isabella. (58)

It might also be noted here that William Davenant, when he combined Measure for Measure and Much Ado about Nothing into The Law Against Lovers, the play so greatly admired by Mr. Pepys, restored the original ending and married Isabella to Angelo, but did not materially reduce the function of the Duke.

2 "Motivation in Shakespeare's Choice of Materials," Shakespeare Survey 4 (1951), 29. It is surprising to note the absence of helpful theoretical consideration of source-study in the Wellek-Warren Theory of Literature (1949), a work in which we should expect this method considered at some length in its bearings on literary analysis.

source-studies already available to us, there has been so little material that is really useful:

> The trouble has been that those engaged in Quellen-untersuchungen have not known why they did it or have not known what to do with sources after they are found. Accounts of sources have been tucked away in the pages of learned journals and special studies, whence they have been available for mention, and for very little else, by editors of the works of Elizabethan authors. But the instinct was sound, because sources tend to furnish basal concepts.[1]

Noting that the 'age' was 'one to a degree we can scarcely comprehend' and that 'to read one author is in some sense to read them all,' Craig explains the special necessity of studying the source materials used by Elizabethan authors:

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1 These remarks should be compared with those previously cited from Isaacs and Muir and with the following, which concern only source-studies of Measure for Measure:

> ...no editor...seems to have felt the necessity of investigating the relationship between all the various pre-Shakespearean treatments. The result is that the paragraphs on Shakespeare's sources which each editor feels an obligation to submit have been consistently marred by misstatements or misleading half-truths based upon second-hand information and, what is even more regrettable, by the omission of information that a full study of the early versions would have revealed. The purpose of the present paper is to provide the basis for such a study.

The paragraph introduces F. E. Budd's "Material for a Study of the Sources of Shakespeare's Measure for Measure," Revue de Litterature Comparee, XI (October-December, 1931), 711-736. Not surprisingly, considering the complexity of the 'full study' Budd envisioned, his compilation of the pre-Shakespearean treatments has never been put to use.

> Instead of inventing what they needed, they sought for it widely, and it may be said without derogation that from the point of view of plot-construction an Elizabethan play is built like a mosaic with varying skill and ingenuity in putting the parts together. ... A good deal of erroneous criticism of Elizabethan drama has come from the fact that this same invention of plots is in our time considered a primary characteristic of originality. ... It is, at any rate, an error to belittle Shakespeare's genius on the ground that he did not supply from some vague reservoir of general human experience such incidents as he might need to complete his patterns, but actually sought out and borrowed from definite places such incidents as he might need. ... Shakespeare's originality seems to have consisted in the selection of great significant patterns, in the discovery of incidents, in unequalled ingenuity in fitting parts together so that they reinforced one another, and in masterly skill in realistic amplification.[1]

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[1] Op. cit., 29-30. It is shocking to find such platitudes so vigorously reasserted in these times, but the caveat is needed. A recent source-study of which Craig would approve is C. T. Prouty's The Sources of Much Ado About Nothing (Yale, 1950). Recognizing the special challenge presented by the existence of a large number of versions of a single story (a situation in which Measure for Measure and Much Ado present parallel problems), Prouty emphasizes the Renaissance doctrine of imitation, a doctrine which should lead us to expect variety rather than similarity in the various versions of popular narratives:

> This doctrine is clearly expressed in the literature and critical works of the period, and its origins and prevalence have been the subject of a valuable study by Dr. Harold White. In spite of, or perhaps because of, the currency of the concept, it is rarely mentioned in connection with any study of sources, either dramatic or nondramatic. Although introductions to Shakespeare's plays invariably notice the sources of individual plays, presumably the reader, layman, or scholar accepts the fact without questioning "Why?" or "How?" Shakespeare utilized the work of other men. ...To realize as nearly as we can why Shakespeare borrowed and how he handled such materials may clarify theme and ideas which have been obscured by time and by personal judgments based on nineteenth or twentieth century standards. ...These aspects of source study are those which have been neglected, for hitherto most research has been concerned with specific borrowings of names of characters and places, details of plot, and parallel passages. Important and valuable though such factual observations are, they are after all but the beginning. (5-9)

Earlier in the same essay Craig provides "a conjectural account, not without some plausibility, of Shakespeare's experience in the writing of Measure for Measure." It may be useful to consider whether Craig's 'practical demonstration' lives up to the specifications he prescribes for useful source-studies:

> "He has read Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra, or, more probably, the tale on which it is based, and learned that Cassandra, who is represented as a faithful and virtuous woman, yielded to the base demands of Promos and sacrificed her honour in order to save her brother's life. Shakespeare, celebrated for his faith in the integrity of women, fresh from the depiction of Desdemona in Othello, and perhaps even then engaged in the delineation of Cordelia in King Lear, said to himself, 'Cassandra would never have sacrificed her honour'. So enraptured was he with his idea that he proceeded to represent what would actually happen if his heroine was a faithful and virtuous woman. With this concept in mind he proceeded to write for two acts and a part of one scene on the very highest level of his ability. At this point he found himself involved as a dramatist in serious difficulties and one can see evidence of this perplexity. Having to his own satisfaction rescued his heroine, how was he to save her brother's life, punish her would-be seducer, and, since this was to be a comedy, provide everybody with a matrimonial union at the end? Shakespeare in comedy never lets an eligible bachelor or a lonely maid escape. He bethought himself of the device of the bed trick he had used in All's Well That Ends Well and shamelessly used it over again. It served the purpose very well, but how did the Duke know about Mariana? His knowledge of Angelo's past behaviour and therefore of his base character is certainly a surprising thing for him now to know and does not agree at all with the high opinion which the Duke seems to have entertained about Angelo in the first act. Perhaps Shakespeare's major interest in the subject was exhausted. At any rate, he never wrote so well in the play again. He engages himself with a lot of not very original or successful satirical low comedy, and at the end, as a sort of confession of weakness, he resorts to theatrical intrigue, and ends the play with the usual pairing off of lovers, even marrying off Isabella to the Duke without, so to speak, asking her consent, since she is at least unexpectedly silent."[1]

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1. Ibid., 26-27.

It should first be noted that Craig seems not to have realized how little his account deviates from the standard treatments of the play, as exemplified by the earlier citation from Holzknecht's handbook. To find this account offered as an example of the kind of source-study we might well strive to achieve suggests that Craig's practical right hand did not know what his theoretical left hand was doing.

Again, surprisingly, Craig depends on an unconventional chronology of the plays. Most critics place Measure for Measure before Othello and certainly well before King Lear. Actually, of course, these plays could have been written in the order assumed by Craig -- we have no way of knowing. Chronology, if it were proven, would obviously be of tremendous value to us in understanding Shakespeare at work on Measure for Measure, but inasmuch as it remains a mystery to us, it can hardly be adduced to explain anything about the composition of the play. Craig, denying himself the simple virtues of the older, more familiar "transitional period" or "dark period" explanations for Shakespeare's 'failure' in Measure for Measure, evolves an explanation which casts an even more ominous shadow. In this view, Shakespeare was so carried away by the idea of presenting a faithful and virtuous woman that he forgot to think through his plot. We are left with the view of an impractical and inartistic playwright.

If Craig deviated from the usual view with respect to chronology, he is totally conventional once again when he says: "He bethought himself of the device of the bed trick he had used in All's Well That Ends Well and shamelessly used it over again." Quite apart from the fact that there is no evidence that All's Well is an earlier composition than Measure for Measure, it is amazing to find Craig, who later warns us not to expect originality as a criterion of the dramatist's powers, betraying his own desire for originality with the accusation that Shakespeare 'shamelessly' borrowed the substitution-device from his own earlier work. Even the fact that Shakespeare may have been borrowing from himself (surely less heinous than borrowing from someone else) is withheld as an extenuating circumstance. Again betraying his own desire for the original, Craig complains that "as a sort of confession of weakness," Shakespeare is once again derivative not only in the "not very original or successful satirical low comedy" but in the happy ending itself. Whether the "low comedy" is successful or not is, of course, a matter of individual taste, but it should be noted that, in the theater, this fourth and fifth act comic material is always enjoyable -- and a distinct improvement over the comic material which clutters Whetstone's play. The problem of the "happy ending" -- if indeed it is a problem -- as a 'confession of weakness' re-

quires a more extensive consideration.

Craig, by implication, has accepted the very familiar either/or proposition that the Elizabethan playwright had to write either a comedy (swedding bells for every "eligible bachelor or lonely maid") or a tragedy. In all fairness to Craig, it must be said that he is in good company when he presents Shakespeare as having failed because he could not easily wind up his story in an orange-blossom finale. In order to accept this explanation, we must again conceive of a Shakespeare who worked without really knowing what he was doing and we must ignore the words of those who have worked to remind us that the pattern of native English as well as Italian comedy was essentially what we should call melodramatic or tragi-comic.[1] In all events, we should question Craig's statement simply on the basis that the story as it appeared in both Cinthio and Whetstone ends with the same sort of "pairing off" of marriageable characters. Shakespeare could, of course, have ended the play any way he pleased but the precedent established by his predecessors must have borne heavily on his consciousness. We must also recall that most critics have applauded -- as in a sense, does Craig --

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1 See, for example, Ristine's English Tragi-comedy: Its Origin and History (Columbia University Press: 1910) and, more recently, Murray Krieger's "Measure for Measure and Elizabethan Comedy," PMLA, LXVI, 775-784.

Shakespeare for rescuing Isabella from marriage with her seducer!

Obviously Craig would never number himself among the enthusiastic admirers of Measure for Measure. As a result, his account leaves us with the impression that Shakespeare -- for whatever reason -- failed to put his sources to very good use. In this respect, Craig differs rather notably from the numerous other critics who also regard the play as a failure. Instead of following the crowd and regarding the sources as the real cause of Shakespeare's downfall, Craig does at least look moreorless steadily at Shakespeare and holds him -- not the sources -- accountable for the results.

The view that the play is a failure was, as we have seen in Part Two, almost unchallenged before the opening of this century. In these times, there are fewer critics who admire only "two acts and a part of one scene" and are content to forget about the rest of the play. This later development of eloquent defence of Measure for Measure as one of Shakespeare's greatest achievements, has not yet manifested itself to any considerable extent in source-studies. One wonders how future source-hunters following, for example, F. R. Leavis in seeing the play as "one of the very greatest" will handle the matter of Shakespeare's indebtedness to Whetstone.

Leavis himself is not greatly concerned with

sources, but his one reference to Promos and Cassandra is inaccurate:

> But what one makes of the ending of the play depends on what one makes of the Duke; and I am embarrassed about proceeding, since the Duke has been very adequately dealt with by Wilson Knight ... The Duke, it is important to note, was invented by Shakespeare; in Promos and Cassandra, Shakespeare's source, there is no equivalent. He, his delegation of authority, and his disguise (themselves familiar romantic conventions) are the means by which Shakespeare transforms a romantic comedy into a completely and profoundly serious "criticism of life."[1]

In general, I find most source-studies as essentially "disintegrative" as the textual work of a J. M. Robertson and a Dover Wilson. Instead of "other hands" which Robertson and Wilson have been so quick to 'discover' as a means of explaining away 'un-Shakespearean' elements, source-hunters offer "other versions" to explain why no Shakespearean play is flawless. Normally, Shakespeare's reworkings of older material are eminently superior to the originals. However, in the case of Measure for Measure, it has been alleged that Shakespeare's sources were in various ways superior to the Shakespearean adaptation.[2]

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1 "The Greatness of Measure for Measure," The Importance of Scrutiny, 151.

2 Recall, for example, the manner in which Holzknecht offers the play as an almost classic instance in which "Shakespeare's modifications of plot and character were not always wholly successful."

This heretical judgment most frequently is concerned with the alleged inconsistency of Shakespeare's characterization of Isabella. Whatever one feels about Shakespeare's treatment of Isabella depends ultimately on one's prejudices about the high value of chastity as opposed to personal loyalty. Truly, it is difficult, especially for a male critic, to accept Shakespeare's innovation easily. Although Mrs. Jameson admired Isabella's "vestal dignity and purity," Mrs. Charlotte Lennox called the character a "vixen," "an affected prude, outrageous in her seeming virtue." Mrs. Lennox's is a voice from the eighteenth century and Mrs. Jameson's is from the nineteenth. Quiller-Couch, while willing to concede that "she is honestly conceived as a heroine," concluded:

> Still, it has to be admitted that she is something rancid in her chastity; and, on top of this, not by any means such a saint as she looks. To put it nakedly, she is all for saving her own soul, and she saves it by turning, of a sudden, into a bare procuress. ... Her panegyrists may excuse it: they cannot overlook it: and to us, in our day, it looks as if this virgin 'enskied and sainted' had saved herself by a trick which denudes her own chastity of all but chastity's conventional (or conventual) religious trappings; that she is chaste, even fiercely chaste, for herself, without quite knowing what chastity means.

Sir George Greenwood was another twentieth-century critic who proclaimed himself unimpressed by Isabella:

> Let Isabella be a paragon of virtue. Let her chastity be as ice that no warmth of affection can raise above the freezing-point, even though a dear brother's life may depend on it; let her be saint-

> like, and virginal, and holy. But surely she might reprove a wretched brother, lying in the valley of the shadow of death, in restrained and measured language, 'more in sorrow than in anger,' and not with the abuse and vituperation of a termagant! ... For myself, I greatly prefer the character of Cassandra, who was willing at the last to save the life of the brother whom she loved — even as Monna Vanna was willing to sacrifice herself in order to save the town and citizens of Pisa — to the rigid inflexible 'virtue' of Shakespeare's Isabella! Such is my own opinion, let those condemn it who will.[1]

A sensible approach to this problem of Isabella's 'inconsistency' is to analyze the logic — or implications — of the basic story as it had evolved by the time Shakespeare decided to dramatize it.[2] Although the story's most clearly recognizable predecessor is the Tereus-Philomela-Procne myth (which Shakespeare knew), there are more helpful parallels to be drawn, as J. C. Maxwell has reminded us, from the Antigone-Polynices-Creon legend (which Shakespeare seems not to

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1 A good but partisan survey of this problem, paramount in the history of the criticism of Measure for Measure, is to be found in the New Cambridge edition, xxvii-xxxi, in which pages Quiller-Couch offers the material from Greenwood. Quiller-Couch's rejoinder to Greenwood hits at a truism which will be challenged later in these pages: "We do not condemn it [Greenwood's opinion]: yet we have no doubt that it lay within Shakespeare's power, at its best, to create an Isabella who should make the refusal and yet keep our sympathy along with our admiration. In the play, as we have it, he has not done this; and the trouble, to our thinking, lies in his failure to make Isabella a consistent character." (Italics are Quiller-Couch's.)

2 The approach will hardly seem 'sensible' to critics like Greenwood who allow themselves to become so emotionally engaged in characters as to forget the larger consideration of the larger plan and effect of a play as a work of art.

have known).[1] Antigone's chastity is, of course, not involved in her efforts to give her brother proper burial, but her struggle with Creon is otherwise very like Isabella's with Angelo. Most importantly, Antigone is a tragic heroine and one of the most compelling figures in world drama. The earliest known versions of the Isabella-Claudio-Angelo story in European drama also presented the sister (or more frequently the wife) of the condemned man as a tragic figure.[2] By the time of Cinthio and Whetstone, however, the sister enjoyed a reasonably happy outcome for all her earlier suffering. Shakespeare, then, inherited a heroine who would today be most at home in soap opera.[3] He might, of course, have reconverted Isabella's story to tragedy, but it would appear more reasonable to assume that, simply by choosing to dramatize or adapt Whetstone, he indicated his general approval of the story as he found it, that is, as material for something other than tragedy.

Most of the modern puzzlement with Isabella is,

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1 "Creon and Angelo: A Parallel Study," Greece and Rome, XVIII (January, 1949), 32-6. Maxwell also notes, with many others, that the Creon-Angelo figure is far more 'dramatic' than Antigone-Isabella.

2 See F. E. Budd, "Rouillet's Philanira and Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra," RES, VI (January 1930), 31-48.

3 An exceptional instance is, of course, the opera, Tosca.

I think, traceable to the feeling that she should, for the sake of consistency, be a tragic heroine because the story itself is "essentially tragic." This is, to my mind, a highly debatable assumption on which to base any criticism of the play. The play in which Whetstone had dramatized the story bore the label, "The Right Excellent and Famous Historye of Promos and Cassandra: Divided into two Commical Discourses," and perhaps, if we assume Shakespeare knew Whetstone's play, that is all we need to remember to understand why Isabella is not a tragic heroine. When Shakespeare analyzed the plot as either comic or tragic material, he may have encountered some of the "great difficulties" Izard has recognized as contained in the nature of the story:

> It is not easy to decide whether it should be tragedy or comedy or even whose story it is. As a tragedy it is almost unbearably horrible. The wronged woman seems most suitable as a central character, but since she lacks a 'tragic flaw,' there is no sufficient justification for her misery. A spectator would leave the theater with an unrelieved sense of injustice and resentment. The magistrate has many of the qualifications of a tragic protagonist, but it seems impossible to center the interest of a spectator on him rather than on the persecuted woman. Budd, in pointing out the romantic aspects of Rouillet's Philanira, supplies a vivid idea of how gruesome the tragedy becomes. ...Comic relief would be artistically ineffectual and impertinent. Cinthio, Whetstone, and Shakespeare judiciously abandoned this plot as tragic material; it probably would have been aesthetically about as satisfying as Titus Andronicus or Masefield's Tragedy of Nan.
>
> But as comedy it seems to offer equally insuperable difficulties. The first half of the

> story if treated lightly would offend public taste. Such treatment would also necessitate the debasing of the characters and the degrading of the excellent psychological studies in the scenes between the magistrate and the prisoner's sister and in the prison scene between the sister and brother. The second half, on the other hand, offers no comic solution which can be taken seriously. It necessarily degenerates into farce. Both Whetstone and Shakespeare began anticipating this difficulty early in the play by introducing, in order to lighten the tone, more-or-less irrelevant comic scenes, which otherwise served only to show the generally corrupt atmosphere of the city.[1]

For its recognition that a 'plot' basically limits an author in what he can achieve, Izard's analysis is most admirable. However, Izard would have done well to question the assumption that drama, if it is to be respectable, must fall into the category of either comedy or tragedy. The assumption pervades most dramatic criticism[2] and has operated so strongly that

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1 Op. cit., 73-4.

2 The comedy-tragedy bipolarization frequently becomes the basis on which elaborate explanations for Shakespeare's 'failures' are erected. A superb example is provided by Mark Van Doren's remarks on Measure for Measure in his Shakespeare (1939). He rejects the older explanation for Shakespeare's failure by noting that he "has given it thought and care, and...some of his gravest, most complex, and most effective poetry," but he feels that the play remains "unsatisfactory" because "it goes against his grain to make comedy out of such matter." (217) Later, in a confusing meteorological vein, we find:

> The rustling of that straw [in Barnardine's cell] ...is the permanent symbol for a city, itself all earth and rotting straw, with which Shakespeare at the moment [?] can do no more than he had been able

(continued on next page)

estheticians have never attempted an adequate defence of the large number of plays which fall in the No Man's Land between 'Pure Comedy' and 'Pure Tragedy.'[1]

(Footnote 2 continued from preceding page)

> to do with the diseased bones of Pandarus's Troy. All he can do is stir it until its stench fills every street and creeps even into the black holes of prisons. In a tragedy he might have done more, for tragedy is a cleansing stroke, like lightning. Perhaps in this year [?] he was not up to tragedy, however soon he was to write 'Othello.' But comedy has its lightnings too, and none of them strikes Vienna. The bank of dark cloud above her forehead is never burned away. (223-4)

Perhaps it is significant that Van Doren never betrays any interest in Shakespeare's sources.

1 An exception may be Coleridge (who may not qualify as an esthetician, however). In Literary Remains is to be found one of the few favorable definitions of tragi-comedy: "a representation of human events more lively, nearer the truth, and permitting a larger field of moral instruction, a more ample exhibition of the recesses of the human heart, under all the trials and circumstances that most concern us, than was known or guessed at by Aeschylus, Sophocles, or Euripides." (Works, edited by Shedd, IV, 33). I offer this as some sort of rebuttal to all who insist that tragi-comedy is a 'mongrel species.' Oliver Goldsmith, in his Art of Poetry (1761), writing while the great controversy over 'Poetic Justice' was raging, said that "tragedy is not always to end with the misfortunes of some principal person," but he was arguing for a special kind of tragedy. The fact remains that few have seriously concerned themselves with the 'mixed mode' or what Ristine, using a term with unfortunately pejorative overtones, calls 'intermediate drama.' This is surprising particularly because so many great plays fit into the middle ground.

This misleading two-valued standard of judgment was fostered by the classicists and the neo-Aristotelians, and, although it is undoubtedly futile to insist that comedy and tragedy have always shaded into one another, it may not be amiss to assert that hardly a single Elizabethan play failed to contain liberal doses of both gravity and mirth. It may also be recalled that Aristotle, although he obviously disliked the genre, recognized a second type of tragedy:

> In the second rank comes the kind of tragedy which some place first. Like the Odyssey, it has a double thread of plot, and also an opposite catastrophe for the good and for the bad. It is accounted the best because of the weakness of the spectators; for the poet is guided in what he writes by the wishes of his audience. The pleasure, however, thence derived is not the true tragic pleasure. It is proper rather to Comedy, where those who, in the piece, are the deadliest enemies -- like Orestes and Aegisthus -- quit the stage as friends at the close, and no one slays or is slain.[1]

It would be hard to cite a critical preconception that has done more damage than the 'either-tragedy-or-comedy' proposition.[2] Thus, it is particularly disconcerting to

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1 Poetics, 13, 7-8. (Butcher's corrected translation of 1932 is used.) It should be noted that Aristotle included Euripides as a writer of the 'first rank' of tragedy, of which he approved, but that we should, on the basis of surviving Euripidean drama, expect him to have been cited as a writer of tragedy of the 'second rank.'

2 R. W. Battenhouse, arguing that Measure for Measure can only be regarded as ethically and esthetically sound by juding it in light of Christian ethics and "a Christian esthetics," is too greatly vexed by this proposition:

(continued on following page)

(Footnote 2 continued from preceding page)

> We can say of the Atonement drama that it makes a "dark" story, yet to many quite full of light; that it is a "problem" comedy, dealing with the all-too-human problem of sin, yet also a Divine Comedy ending in the reconciliation of men with their Sovereign; that it is a "comedy of intrigue," since man's enemy, Satan, must first be outwitted, outmaneuvered, and bound before man can be released, yet at the same time a Chronicle play telling of bold courage, battle, and conquest. In short, the Christian Atonement is a "mystery" play, the central mystery of the gospel. Artistically, it fits neither classical "tragedy" nor "comedy," since it is, properly described, "beyond tragedy." And ethically, it is neither strictly "just" nor "unjust" by classical standards, since it has, like God's rain, the supernatural "justice" of mercy. To some, the story of the Atonement has seemed and will always seem a tour de force, accomplished only "unnaturally" by a deus ex machina; others have regarded it as a romantic tale, at many points too harsh to be pleasing and at other points spotted with too many "improbabilities." But there are still others for whom the very "artificiality" of the Atonement story is witness to a higher order of artifice than the human, and the incredible "romance" of the narrative is welcomed as carrying the most profound truth of our human history. To these last, members of the Christian guild, the story embodies the secret of their "craft": it is their "mystery," calculated in its shrewd entertainment to scandalize some and mystify others. For those who understand it from within, it is absolutely normative in its art and in its ethics. (1033)

This is an excellent statement of an ethical-esthetic system by which Measure for Measure can be judged; unfortunately, as a Christian scheme, it also accounts too well for such classical dramas as the Aeschylean Eumenides and Suppliants, and the Euripidean Ion, Orestes, Iphigenia, Helen, Electra, Alcestis, and perhaps even Medea. To this list should be added the bulk of Indian drama, much Oriental drama, and such Hebrew 'drama' as the Job tragi-comedy. Battenhouse's discomfort proceeds from his view that Measure for Measure "fits neither classical 'tragedy' nor 'comedy.'" He should have noted that very few plays in world drama (essentially drama of the tragi-comic mold) do fit these 'types.'

find that Izard, although on the track of the right fox, suddenly reverts to the usual view of Measure for Measure. Although recognizing that the play "requires no more than many of Shakespeare's other plays the willing suspension of disbelief," he concludes:

> Shakespeare seems interested chiefly in the events of the first three acts -- especially in the fall of Angelo and Claudio. Beyond that point character revelation and development are largely absent; plot interest becomes uppermost. Practically everything that gave the play importance has been completed. It remains only to supply a diverting unraveling of the plot and, if possible, to send the audience away amused.[1]

These remarks remind us of Craig and Holzknecht.

Another basic flaw in source-studies is the easy assumption, perhaps unavoidable if source-studies are to be carried on at all, that the existence of a single story in several forms entitled the source-hunter to assume the particular author with whom he is concerned knew the variant versions. Frederick E. Budd has devoted a considerable amount of time and energy to compiling -- for other scholars to use -- the possible sources of Measure for Measure. He

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1 Op. cit., 74. The real 'fall' of Angelo can hardly be said to occur in the first three acts. I have always found that the revelation of Angelo under the difficult circumstances of the closing scene is very carefully handled by Shakespeare. I also doubt that Shakespeare was much interested in Claudio's fall except as a necessary part of the donnée.

found at least eight non-dramatic and seven dramatic pre-Shakespearean versions and, although he does not hesitate to accept Promos and Cassandra as Shakespeare's primary source, he concludes that, because of "exclusive" parallels," Shakespeare very probably knew several of these earlier versions. (What, however, are "exclusive parallels" and what do we mean when we say an author "knows" any other work? Must every detail in a play be traceable to a literary source, as Budd, by the implications of his practical demonstrations, seems to assume?) Such a work as Budd's leaves us with the picture of Shakespeare writing his plays as though he were collecting material for a doctoral dissertation -- bits and pieces from Whetstone's play, a change or two suggested by Whetstone's prose retelling of the story in the popular Heptameron, several major changes suggested by Cinthio's 'tragedy-not-tragedy,' Epitia, especially as 'proved' by the ways in which Cinthio's play differs from his first version of the story in the Hecatommithi. While I should not hesitate to admit that any literary creation is the product of a great variety of outside influences (most of which must inevitably elude even the most resourceful detective), I find it difficult to believe that Shakespeare needed to rely on so many variant versions of a story as this type of source-study inevitably implies.

Another fallacy into which source-hunters rather too willingly slip is closely related to the tendency to assume knowledge(=use?) of multiple sources. Working in comparative literature or the history of European literature, one may demonstrate "wide currency" of a particular story over a period of several hundred years and in various national literatures. It is, however, dangerous to assume from such currency that individual authors in separate, isolated instances retold the story in full awareness of its so-called popular appeal. The problem is well demonstrated by a passage in which Budd, arguing against J. M. Robertson, says:

> Robertson, speaking of Chapman as the undoubted author of the unrevised Measure for Measure, says in conclusion: "Chapman, we know, held that poetic merit lay in novelty of tale, style, stanza, theme and topic." This paper, if it does nothing else, will, I hope, at least show that novelty of tale, theme and topic is the very last thing that can be claimed for Measure for Measure.[1]

Whatever Budd has demonstrated concerning "novelty of tale, theme and topic" has meaning only in relation to the history of European literature. Certainly, in the case of Measure for Measure, no one has yet discovered a dramatic version which was familiar to English

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1 Op. cit., 731. My criticism of Budd here is not to be construed as defense of Robertson. It should be noted that Budd appears willing to accept the elaborate revisionist hypotheses of Dover Wilson and Robertson in other details.

audiences prior to the Shakespearean play.[1] Is it outrageous to suggest that part of the story's attractiveness to Shakespeare was due to his own sense of having discovered a "tale, theme and topic" which would appeal to his audiences as something new and different?[2] If the Isabella-Claudio-Angelo story had been familiar to Shakespeare or his audiences from the Heptameron, we should expect that at least a few of Whetstones character-names would have been retained by Shakespeare as a simple expedient for evoking an audience's recognition of the familiar. There is no good evidence to believe that, in writing Measure for Measure, Shakespeare did not think of his plot as "novel" in the experience of the audience for whom he was writing.

Still another fallacy commonly found in source-

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1 Promos and Cassandra was, by Whetstone's announcement in the Heptameron (1582), unacted. It is, of course, possible that it was acted subsequent to the publication of the Heptameron or even of Aurelia, the title under which the collection of tales was reissued in 1593. However, there is no record of its performance and the play itself, if not quite 'unactable,' is certainly unwieldy in terms of normal Elizabethan stage conventions.

2 These remarks apply equally well to Lawrence's Shakespeare's Problem Comedies where, because of the "wide currency" of the substitute-bride theme, the ruler-in-disguise theme, etc., it is too easily assumed that the elements of which Measure for Measure was compounded were tried-and-true, "old stuff," to Shakespearean audiences. Although he professes not to believe that Shakespeare was capable of tossing together a potpourri of popular and mildly sensationalistic plot-devices just to satisfy popular audiences, this impression of Shakespeare is the one which remains uppermost when one finishes a reading of Lawrence's book.

studies results from the source-hunters' tendency toward over-abstraction in their thinking about stories and, particularly, characters. It is a serious and seductive error to speak of either as if they had an evolutionary development quite independent of authors. At the risk of quibbling over a problem in semantics, I should insist that it is meaningless to assert that the Isabella-character had "evolved from a tragic into a tragi-comic heroine" or that the story "evolved from tragedy into tragi-comedy."[1] The effect of such statements is to cause the reader, unless he is very careful, to think that the characters or stories "received" by an author had become fixed and unchangeable. Such statements erroneously imply a kind of historical continuum in story-transmission or character-development which does

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1 Fundamentally, perhaps, this is simply the way in which the old over-emphasis on characters manifested itself in this single highly-specialized branch of Shakespearean studies. The use of characters as a principle of organization in source-studies is a workable approach to a difficult problem, but it is as dangerously lopsided an emphasis here as L. C. Knights ("How Many Children Had Lady Macbeth?") has demonstrated it to be in more general Shakespearean criticism. Unfortunately, Knights' by now almost classical diatribe against what Tillyard calls 'the Bradleian character-stuff' contains no mention of the ways in which this attitude has worked itself out in source-studies.

Examples of historifying 'stories' are provided by both Budd and Izard who note that the Isabella-Angelo story became progressively softer "as a result of the rising preference during the Renaissance for tragi-comedy over tragedy." It need hardly be said that it is impossible to prove that the 'Renaissance' is any more notable than any other era in its preference for melodrama.

not exist except in the genealogical tables source-hunters compile. We need only recall that Shakespeare converted the happily-concluded older play of King Leir into magnificent tragedy to remember that story and character have no such binding effects on individual authors as source-studies with their evolutionary bias lead us to think.

Once we recognize that the dangers lurking in source-studies grow out of the source-hunter's occupational necessity to emphasize similarities rather than differences between literary works, it is possible to put many source-studies to good use. Occasionally one finds a source-study infused with the author's awareness that, having demonstrated likenesses, he has merely laid the groundwork for more detailed and inevitably more speculative analysis of the reasons for borrowing or not-borrowing, for reshaping or not-reshaping 'received' source material. I should expect source-students to sigh in relief as they stop short at establishing literary indebtednesses -- to explore borrowings for their esthetic bearings is to enter an arena from which only a few emerge victorious. Most source-students have, however, entered upon esthetic speculation, looking for relationships which are only capable of analysis in terms of personal interpretations of the works involved. One need only read a handful of the studies of Shakespeare's sources for Measure

for Measure to realize how thoroughly they are grounded in their authors' acceptance of the 'majority-view' that *this* play is a 'failure.' Value-judgments inevitably operate even in the most coldly 'scientific' source-hunting expeditions.

PART THREE

CHAPTER THREE

SOURCES AS A CLUE TO SHAKESPEARE'S CONCEPTION OF *MEASURE FOR MEASURE*

No one seriously questions the fact that *Promos and Cassandra* seems to be a model for *Measure for Measure*, but whether it was *the only* — or even *the chief* — model remains a moot question. That this is the case should occasion no surprise for, as noted in the preceding chapter, we have no reliable yardsticks for measuring the influence of any source on Shakespeare.[1] However, even if we had such useful tools available, it is doubtful in the extreme that any scholar could employ them profitably on a play which has evoked such widely divergent interpretations and value-judgments as appear in the history of the criticism of *Measure for Measure*.

Granting the skeptics the full weight of their objections, I should still insist that Shakespeare appears to have been more attentive to more details in

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1 It is always possible, for example, that there were intermediate versions between Whetstone and Shakespeare, as suggested by the disintegrators. It seems futile to me, however, to construct hypothetical plays when we can discuss plays which have survived. So few Elizabethan plays survive that one should not conjecture easily on what lies behind any play except when there are obvious verbal echoes. *Measure for Measure* contains no verbal echoes of any of its alleged sources — but to worry this fact is self-defeating.

Whetstone's play than he was to any of the other alleged sources for Measure for Measure. R. H. Wilson found the similarity great enough "to arouse the suspicion that Shakespeare was composing with a copy of Promos and Cassandra before him, and filling in the outline, as it were, with his own invention."[1] This seems considerably exaggerated, but the fact remains that such an opinion cannot be voiced with regard to Measure for Measure and any of the other alleged sources. Even Professor Budd, although convinced that Shakespeare 'knew, and knew well' other sources, admits that a parallel reading of the two plays suffices to prove that the Whetstone play was Shakespeare's 'primary source.' In Izard's view, Shakespeare's debt to Whetstone's play is "perhaps more extensive and significant than is usually assumed" — this is the view of a dedicated biographer of Whetstone. Izard is primarily concerned with parallels between characters and, since it is in this area where most of the resemblances lie, I have thought it advisable to orient a further consideration of Shakespeare's other alleged sources by quoting his admirable summary of the details of Whetstone's contribution to Shakespeare:

> Though Shakespeare has made changes in characterization and has shifted the emphasis about, making characters of greater or less

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1 "The Mariana Plot of Measure for Measure," PQ, IX (October, 1930), 342.

> importance, has telescoped some of them and divided others, the parallels among the principal characters remain perfectly clear. Promos becomes Angelo; Lamia, Mistress Overdone; Rosko, Pompey; Cassandra, Isabella-Mariana; Andrugio, Claudio; Gayler, Provost; Polina, Juliet; Corvinus the King, Vincentio the Duke; and Ulrico, Escalus. Perhaps the mysterious Varrius of the last act of Measure for Measure is a remnant of Ulrico in Promos and Cassandra. Gripax and Rapax may have suggested Constable Elbow. They make arrests for Phallax, and jokes are made about the wife of Rapax as about the wife of Elbow. Scenes between Phallax, Rapax, and Gripax may have suggested Measure for Measure, I, ii. Shakespeare, practical man of the theater, reduced Whetstone's cast by dropping some twenty minor characters. The principal figures, however, seem to be retained in one form or another, with the exception of Phallax. Escalus, as an assistant for Angelo, in some measure replaces Phallax, but the frivolous Lucio shows also slight correspondence [sic] with Phallax. (Lucio's name was possibly suggested by that of Lucillo, an adviser to Juriste in Epitia.) Both Lucillo and Phallax were advisers of the deputy. Lucio is in peril in the trials near the end for his lewd life, just as Phallax had been.[1]

The fact that none of the comic characters are drawn from Whetstone's prosed novel in the Heptameron would seem sufficient indication that, if the prose version was known to Shakespeare, it was not a significant influence. It would be merely picayune to list the names of the many reputable editors who talk about Promos and Cassandra knowingly when, quite obviously, they have read only Whetstone's prose retelling, but it may be useful to list briefly the major reasons offered for any kind of alleged source-relationship between Shakespeare

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1 Op. cit., 64-5. As noted in Part Three, Chapter 1, Whetstone's Gresco seems a more likely model for Elbow than the Gripax-Rapax pair. Complete in most respects, Izard's summary also neglects Whetstone's Hangman, an obvious model for Shakespeare's Abhorson the Executioner.

and Whetstone's prose version. The only compelling reason involves a character-name, always a most unreliable kind of evidence when the name is as neutral in its values as Isabella. However that may be, it is true that Whetstone's narrator of the Promos-Cassandra story in the Heptameron is one 'Madam Isabella.' Yet Shakespeare did not adopt a single name from Whetstone's play and one wonders why he should have recalled the name of the narrator in the Heptameron. Izard also remains skeptical of this alleged carry-over. The other evidence is so flimsy as to merit the question: How could scholars ever have taken such evidence seriously?[1]

It is curious coincidence that the four most possible sources of Measure for Measure were the work of only two men. It is significant that both Cinthio and Whetstone were interested enough in the story to embody it in two different literary forms. Cinthio first included the story in his collection, the Hecatommithi, published initially in 1565 and popular enough to be reissued in 1566, 1574, 1580, 1584, 1593 and 1608. The story appeared as the fifth novel of the eighth decade; the Othello-story is the seventh

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1 Izard provides a useful resume of the usual evidence (63-4):
(1) the echo of the narrator's name;
(2) the king disguises himself (whereas the brother is the only disguised character in the play);
(3) the disguise is 'the habyt of an hermyt' (whereas in the play it is merely 'some long black Cloake');
(4) the brother is not so abrupt and relentless in arguing away the sister's hesitation about submitting to the deputy.

novel of the third decade.[1] As early as 1583/4, Gabriel Chappuys' French translation of Cinthio's collection was published. Sometime before his death in 1573, Cinthio had reworked his story into a tragedia, Epitia.[2] The play was not published, however, until 1583 in a collection of the author's 'tragedies.'

When Whetstone had converted his play into a prose novel, he had produced a compressed, economical version by eliminating the various comic sub-plots of the play. In no way is the difference between English and Italian

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1 I mention the position of the Othello material because the most compelling reason for assuming that Shakespeare knew Cinthio's novelle when he composed Measure for Measure is that the Hecatommithi remains the unique source for the Othello-Desdemona story (to say nothing of the remarkable name, Desdemona, itself).
On the other hand, it should also be noted that there are far fewer 'exclusive parallels' between Measure for Measure and the Cinthio novel than between Shakespeare and Cinthio's plays.
In my view, there is little room for doubt on a relationship between Othello and Cinthio. I believe that the connection between Measure for Measure and Cinthio (through Whetstone, who certainly knew Cinthio's work) is more apparent than real. This means that the chronology which links Measure for Measure with Othello as 'companion plays' is also suspect, in my opinion.

2 The actual date of Epitia's composition is not known. R. H. Ball ("Cinthio's Epitia and Measure for Measure," Elizabethan Studies and Other Essays in Honor of George F. Reynolds, University of Colorado, 1945, 132-146) regards it as "almost certainly his last play, composed after he left Ferrara in 1562." It had not been acted or published before Cinthio's death. Whetstone's play was, then, probably based on Cinthio's novel.
Although called a tragedia, Epitia is, as Budd has noted, "apart from its pseudo-classical technical impedimenta, as good an example of romantic tragi-comedy as any Elizabethan could have wished, and I strongly suspect that Shakespeare realised this when considering the plan of his Measure for Measure." (723) Cinthio is a key figure in the evolution of tragedy-not-tragedy. He argued, in theory as well as in his practice, for tragedies of Aristotle's 'second rank' and preferred the term tragedia di lieto fin, to the already widely used tragicommedia. (See Ristine for extracts from Cinthio's literary criticism.)

dramatic tradition at this time so well demonstrated as by comparing Whetstone's play with Epitia.[1] From a

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1 Ball begins his brief synopsis of Epitia by describing it as a work which "tells a serious romantic story, cast in neoclassic form which includes observation of the unities and a chorus, puts many of the events off the stage, and excludes incidental comedy; it alternates sunshine and shadow, builds to a conclusion which seems inevitably tragic, and then...turns to a happy ending by means of an unforeseen disclosure." In general, Cinthio's play differs most notably from his novel in respect to saving the brother.

"The first act is largely taken up with a presentation of the opposing views of a stern Podesta and Juriste's merciful secretary. Vico[=Andrugio-Claudio] has been condemned to death by Juriste[=Promos-Angelo] for the violation of a virgin. The sentence has now been suspended by Juriste at the petition of Vico's sister, Epitia. Epitia has given herself to Juriste, who has promised to send her her brother free; on this day when his marriage is to be celebrated.

In Act II it appears that Epitia has surrendered to Juriste on the advice of the latter's sister, Angela; both women rejoice at the approaching nuptials and the liberty of Vico. Juriste reveals his own confusion of mind. Should he content Epitia or the Podesta? He has, however, sent his decision through his counselor, Lucillo, whose advice in the matter has not been taken. Irene, Epitia's aunt, summoned by Epitia's nurse to join the rejoicing, reveals the impending arrival of the Emperor. There are serious forebodings because of the inconstancy of Fortune.

Act III includes the presentation of the decapitated Vico to Epitia, who apparently accepts the situation tamely enough, but is really planning revenge on the traitor. Angela, who has acted in good faith, is shocked at her brother's deception, fears Epitia's reaction, and castigates Juriste, who, however, is delighted at Epitia's apparent submission.

In the fourth act, Irene persuades Epitia, who plans to kill Juriste at an appointed rendezvous, that it will be better to present her case to the Emperor. She does so, and he sends for Juriste and later Angela. Juriste protests that he did not promise to send Epitia her brother, alive, or to marry her, but Angela confutes him. The Emperor orders Juriste to marry Epitia at once over her protest.

The marriage takes place before the fifth act opens, and the Emperor then orders Juriste's execution. Angela, torn between justice and love of her brother, and in such grief that she fears for her life, begs Irene to intercede with Epitia for Juriste's pardon, but Epitia is obdurate to both their attempts. The Captain who had brought the dead body joins in the plea on the grounds that he may be able to bring everything to a happy

sprawling blend of comedy and melodramatic fireworks, Whetstone fashioned a compact and, for the most part, well told tale; from a sprawling novel, Cinthio fashioned a tightly constructed 'classical' drama.[1] Ironically, looking at the variants, one is impressed by the fact that Whetstone's novel and Cinthio's play are, for unity of effect, most similar to Measure for Measure.

It is not my purpose here to determine which or

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conclusion. Before the Emperor he reveals that he had executed an already condemned criminal who resembled Vico, and had dressed the corpse in Vico's clothing. Vico is still alive, though he does not appear, and is pardoned by the Emperor. Epitia thanks the Captain and wins her husband's life." (135-6)

1 It would be a mistake to ignore the neo-classical elements in Whetstone's play: the new scene-marking for each character-entrance, division in acts and scenes, and an effort to observe the Unity of Place and, to some ambiguous extent, the Unity of Time.

Nothing shows the awareness of 'classical' precepts so much as Whetstone's decision to divide the play into two parts because of his great consideration for 'decorum.' Izard attempts to explain this curious procedure:

> The first part shows the temporary triumph of evil over good; the second, "The Ruyne and Overthrowe of dishonest Practises: with the Advauncement of upright Dealing." It seemed to Whetstone, one would assume, an indecorous sort of violation of the unity of action to present both triumphs within a single play....he was not quite convinced [like Sir Philip Sidney at a later date] of the propriety of tragi-comedy. (77)

I hesitate to accept Izard's conjecture concerning this puzzling strategy because it would seem that an exorbitant concern for the Unity of Action, had it existed in Whetstone, would have driven him to eliminate all the comic sub-plots, the most egregious violations of the principle of Decorum and the Unity of Action.

The effect of all such preoccupations with dramatic form appears to have been wasted, fortunately, so far as Shakespeare was concerned.

even how much of the alleged sources were used by Shakespeare. Beyond Promos and Cassandra, he may have known none of the works in which variants of the story have survived — or he may have known all of them. Budd has found the following possibilities, but in all of the versions except those of Cinthio and Whetstone (and three commedia dell'arte scenarii) are to be found stories which end unpleasantly:

(A) The Historie of Philip de Commines (1566 in manuscript; Englished in 1596);
(B) L'Introduction au Traité de la conformité des merveilles anciennes avec les modernes (1566; widely translated but best known in Goulart's version of 1606);
(C) Thomas Lupton's The Second part and Knitting up of the Boke entituled Too good to be true (=Siuquila, 1580; 1581);
(D) Le sixiesme tome des histoires tragiques, extraittes des oeuvres Italiennes de Bandel... (1582);
(E) Tragica seu tristium historiarum...libri ii...Islebiae...1597 (widely available in Thomas Beard's translation of 1597);
(F) Iusti Lipsi Monita et Exempla Politica (1605);
(G) Rouillet's Latin tragedy, Philanira (1556);
(H) Three commedia dell'arte scenarii.[1]

By way of establishing something of Shakespeare's debt to and deviations from his sources, I have attempted to

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1 Op. cit., passim. Budd admits that the scenarii had nothing 'directly' to do with Shakespeare's play.

Professor Budd is greatly impressed by the popularity of Philanira as evidenced by a French translation issued in 1563 and reissued in 1577, and by a production of the play at Cambridge in 1564-5. However, he doubts that the work, a primary source of Whetstone's, was known to Shakespeare.

Budd also notes a possible 'dramatic version' of the story as early as 1548 in a non-extant jeu de moralité performed at Besançon. Budd concludes: all of these works "might, in respect of chronology, have influenced Shakespeare," but it is certain that "in addition to his orthodox, accepted source, Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra, three of them, namely the two novels and Giraldi's [sic] Epitia, were directly utilised by him."

create an archetype of the story as it appears in the four non-tragic variants, Cinthio and Whetstone's novels and plays. All four versions are alike in the following respects:

(1) The heroine is concerned to save the life of her brother (not her husband, as in the tragic versions);
(2) The sister submits to the deputy-magistrate's proposal in an attempt to save her brother from death;
(3) The heroine later becomes her betrayer's apparently contented wife — and, as we should expect, nowhere does either Cinthio or Whetstone question the propriety of this;
(4) An overlord (=Emperor-King) appears suddenly at the end to distribute adequate rewards and punishments; that is, he grants mercy and pardons to the deputy-magistrate and, if possible, the brother;
(5) The brother's crime is in some way involved in extralegal sexual conduct for which he is sentenced to death;
(6) The sister is led to believe that her brother has been duly executed, receiving as 'evidence' either his lifeless body or his decapitated head;
(7) The setting is middle-European (Innsbruck in Cinthio, 'Julio' in Hungary in Whetstone);
(8) The character-names are Graeco-Italian;
(9) The deputy-magistrate is, except for his fierce sexual desire for the sister, shown to be a respected and trustworthy person;
(10) The sister is attractive, young, and marriageable;
(11) There is considerable debate on the Mercy-Justice theme;
(12) Revenge is treated as a subsidiary theme — and as a concomitant,
(13) The heroine becomes convinced that it is within the province of the highest temporal authority, rather than the private citizen's, to try her cause.

Shakespeare borrowed most of these elements. Indeed his major departures from the archetype involve primarily strengthening of characterization and motivation in the characters of the Duke and Isabella. This is entirely consistent with his best-known procedures in dealing

with the sources of his other borrowed plots.

Shakespeare's most widely advertised departure in Measure for Measure lies in his creation of Isabella who is allowed to submit-without-submitting and, because of the addition of Mariana, can be pledged to wed the overlord rather than the deputy.[1] Shakespeare added the note of religiosity to Isabella's character and gave us our first view of her essential nature as a virgin about to wed Christ. That he followed the implications of that addition through to their logical conclusions this side of actual marriage with the Duke has been the largest single cause of critical abuse and admiration for the play as a whole. The

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1 It is profitable to read the ending of the play very carefully and to compare the effect of close reading with the probable effect of the ending on a spectator in the theater. It has been alleged that Shakespeare deliberately left the prospect of marriage between Vincentio and Isabella vague. Truth to tell, a good case can be made to support the view. Shakespeare was usually meticulous in his distinctions between the thou and you forms of address. There is a stiff formality in Vincentio's "Dear Isabel, I have a motion much imports your good, Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline, What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine" (V, 529-532). This is hardly the language in which Shakespeare regularly embodies his proposals.

If one is not disturbed by the prospect of marriage between the two characters — and I am not — there is little reason to worry over this uncharacteristic bit of romancing. Certainly the earlier speech in which the Duke presents Claudio to Isabella has the ring of wedding-bells in it:

> If he be like your brother, for his sake
> Is he pardoned: and, for your lovely sake,
> Give me your hand, and say you will be mine,
> He is my brother too: but fitter time for that.

It remains possible, however, that Shakespeare intended that an audience should not pay too much attention to an impending marriage between a 'sainted' Isabella and her temporal master. Nothing in the way of logical explanation is likely to abate the indignation of those who have been outraged by this prospect.

older tradition in source-study of Measure for Measure has proceeded on the assumption that Shakespeare's over-riding intention in reworking the Promos-Cassandra story was to rescue his heroine from an ignominious fate. This has engendered the view that the creation of the Duke and the expansion of his function in the play were necessitated by the commendable enough desire to preserve Isabella's chastity. Yet, this cause-effect relationship, which editors have willingly enough accepted, leaves too many questions unanswered. I doubt, finally, that any final answer to this question is possible, but I would suggest that Shakespeare's changes in the characterization of Isabella would have followed easily from his recognition of the advantages to be gained by building the whole play around the Duke. Certainly, more must be involved in Shakespeare's deviations from the proto-Isabella than has been suggested by the romantically-appealing but treacherous myth of his fierce desire to preserve the lady's chastity. I cannot conceive that Shakespeare could have failed to realize that Isabella would be a more compellingly interesting character in the last two acts of the play if she, like her counterparts in the earlier versions, had acquiesced to Angelo's demands. Which consideration should prevail finally? That of the 'practical man of the theater' or that of the prudish defender of womanhood? This is one of the questions which explain the continuing reputation of Measure for Measure as a problem for the critics.

Before considering this question of the nature of Shakespeare's major alterations in the composite-source, we must note that many of Shakespeare's deviations are explicable in terms of separate sources. For example, there is considerable variation in Cinthio and Whetstone concerning the brother. Only in Cinthio's novel (the earliest of the four likeliest sources) is the brother-criminal actually executed. In the other three versions he is saved through the good offices of a kindly Captain-Gayler, who, for purposes of building suspense, is never allowed to set the sister's mind at ease before the dénouement. (In Promos and Cassandra, however, the audience is let in on the secret early in the play, and in this respect Whetstone and Shakespeare are notably similar for their disinclination to rely on melodramatic tricks.) Although Shakespeare developed his Provost along the lines suggested in three of the earlier versions, there are notable differences between his Provost and the earlier Captain-Gayler. These differences all stem from the introduction of Shakespeare's Duke as the raisonneur of the dramatic action. Shakespeare's Provost is, thus, an almost superfluous character. Instead of being a kindly deus ex machina, he is merely an assistant to the deus ex machina Duke. Shakespeare portrays the Provost as another Viennese who regards the death-penalty as unduly severe for Claudio's crime, but he leaves the rescue of Claudio

entirely in Duke Vincentio's hands. Incidentally, the point is made that the Provost is a trustworthy official who obeys orders, whether he agrees with their import or not, except when the true ruler of the state intercedes. Shakespeare, because of his conception of the Duke, was forced to create more dramatic-machinery for carrying off the substitution of Ragozine's head for Claudio's than either Cinthio or Whetstone had had to do. Among other things, this had the effect of making Claudio a more prominent figure in Measure for Measure than the brother-figure is allowed to become in the earlier versions; this, in its turn, befogs our view of Isabella in the last two acts of the play.

In all four earliest versions, it is implied that the death-sentence is more than the crime of sexual transgression deserves, but only in Cinthio's Epitia is the view offered that ante-nuptial cohabitation with one's betrothed is no transgression at all. We must note that Cinthio did not extenuate the brother's criminality in this way, but that he used this as one of Juriste's arguments to convince Epitia to yield before their nuptials. That this explains Shakespeare's almost casual reference to this extenuating circumstance in the Claudio-Juliet relationship seems highly improbable to me, for it would appear more likely that the existing ambivalence of attitude concerning betrothals (sponsalia per verba de futuro and sponsalia per verba de praesenti) in both Italy and England lies be-

hind the apparent 'parallel' here.[1] An over-riding consideration must be made of the fact that only Shakespeare insists upon the marriage (or marriedness) of the brother and the virgin he is accused of violating. (Whetstone's Polina is represented as being deeply in love with Andrugio and willing enough to let marriage 'erase her shame,' but she is never presented as the prisoner's betrothed; in Cinthio, we learn nothing of the brother's victim.) In a very real sense, Shakespeare must be accused of inartistic handling of his plot in this instance, for, by raising the question concerning the secret troth-plight between Claudio and Juliet, he succeeded in introducing an element of considerable relevance to the whole question of Claudio's 'guilt' but which is left to perplex us as an entirely extraneous and irrelevant detail.

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1 The whole matter of Elizabethan betrothal-practices has been recently resurveyed by Davis P. Harding (in "Elizabethan Betrothals and Measure for Measure," JEGP, XLIX (April, 1950), 139-158). It is doubtful if Harding has added anything to the material earlier compiled by Chilton L. Powell in the earlier English Domestic Relations, 1487-1653 (Columbia University Press: 1917), but Harding has taken issue with the implications of W. W. Lawrence's remarks on Claudio's crime, bringing into clearer focus the whole vexing problem. Harding concludes:

> It can be categorically stated that there is not a single play of Shakespeare in which lovers whom the author has obviously intended to represent as being above moral reproach knowingly consummate their union before the church has blessed it. It is instructive, moreover, to see how painfully careful Shakespeare has been to protect his ideal lovers from any possible taint of immorality. (150)

It was, I suggest, Shakespeare's dilemma in Measure for Measure to decide how to present Claudio and Juliet as at once 'tainted' and 'untainted.'

However, the lack of dexterity in this particular instance is to be treasured as one of the more revelatory glimpses of Shakespeare the Man.

Enough has been said concerning Shakespeare's debt to Promos and Cassandra alone for the general conception of the comic underplots. It should, however, be pointed out that, despite the parallels between Whetstone's comic characters and Shakespeare's, Shakespeare could well have invented — quite independently of Whetstone — the same characters to bolster the dramatic pattern of the whole play. As so many sympathetic critics have noted, the comic characters of Measure for Measure are not far removed from those Shakespeare created in the Henry IV plays, in Henry V, in The Merry Wives of Windsor, and Twelfth Night, to mention only the most notable instances. Granted the decision to dramatize the Promos-Cassandra story, Shakespeare could easily have been expected to sketch in the background of Vienna by supplying variations on the characters already created to populate Eastcheap.

For all the similarities between Shakespeare and Whetstone's comics, there are important differences not to be overlooked. As I have suggested elsewhere, Whetstone's Lamia is a seductive creature, an influential and still provocative practitioner of the oldest profession. By comparison, Shakespeare's Overdone arouses our compassion instead of titillating us. Aged, one who has "worn her eyes almost out in the service" (by standing guard against raids by the constabulary?),

Mistress Overdone is, as characterized by Shakespeare, a commentary on the ravages and scars left by her many years of professionalism. In a sense, whatever sermonizing Shakespeare does here, it is implicit in the characterization itself: a decrepit, exhausted bawd-prostitute is the most devastating argument against bawdry and prostitution. In general, it would seem to have been Shakespeare's practice to present his courtesans in an unflattering light. Except for the shadowily characterized Bianca in Othello (written about the same time as Measure for Measure?), there is no evidence that Shakespeare interested himself deeply in the volatile and seductive prostitute whose stageworthiness was being so systematically and thoroughly explored — and exploited — by Dekker and Marston in the first years of the seventeenth century. Shakespeare's thoroughgoing alteration of Whetstone's Lamia is a singular instance of his deliberate rejection of the sensational stage-values implicit in the gaudily full-blown prostitute-enchantress.

Of Shakespeare's comics in Measure for Measure, only Overdone and her man, Pompey, have unmistakable counterparts in Promos and Cassandra. Again, however, in the case of Pompey, Shakespeare's success in characterization is to be measured in the essential humanity which he endowed on Whetstone's Rosko. Shakespeare's intentions in retaining the Rosko figure are not so easily captured, however, as in the case of Lamia-Overdone. Apart from the need for the conventional comic byplay in the underplotting, it is impossible to asse

with any certainty what function Pompey was designed to fulfill. In Promos and Cassandra, Rosko is an almost choric character at the same time that he is a messenger and reporter of off-stage events. In Whetstone's mélange of comics, Rosko comes near being submerged as a character in his own right. Although Pompey first appears as a messenger (Folio I, 3) and has on occasion been taken by critics to be a Chorus-commentator (and even Shakespeare's 'mouthpiece'), he becomes in Shakespeare's hands a clearly individualized character. Without him, the play would lose much of its widely praised scope; at the same time, it remains difficult to determine precisely what he adds to the whole mosaic. His contribution to the low comedy elements in the play is overshadowed by Lucio's role; yet, one of the more memorable comic moments would be impossible without Pompey as fall guy for Lucio's cruel thrusts (modern editions III, 2, 42-90). Although Pompey becomes something more than Shakespeare allowed Fabian to become in Twelfth Night, the two characters are fundamentally alike in relation to the plays in which they appear — we should be lost without them but we remain somehow unable to account satisfactorily for their presence. In the case of Measure for Measure, however, Shakespeare's sources do provide us with some means of understanding why Pompey Bum, the quondam Rosko, is

one of the most important characters in the play.

Beyond Overdone and Pompey, Shakespeare's comic characters are, if copied at all, but lightly copied from figures in Promos and Cassandra. Constable Elbow is more easily recognized as blood-relation to Shakespeare's own members of the constabulary than as an imitation of Gresco, Rapax or Gripax in Whetstone's play. Abhorson the Executioner bears but slight resemblance to Whetstone's Hangman. Froth, a character about whom Shakespeare concerned himself almost not at all, could derive from many similarly unlimned brothel-customers in Promos and Cassandra. We are left with Lucio and Barnardine, neither of which has any obvious correspondence with any Whetstone characters; although there is no good reason to doubt the possibility that Lucio was suggested by Whetstone's Phallax, the resemblances are slight enough to be considered accidental.

We should also recall that Shakespeare declined to use a great number of Whetstone's comic characters, including Dalia, Grimball and John Adroynes. Perhaps the major reason for Shakespeare's condensation in this connection lies in the practical limitations imposed on him by the size of the Globe company, but it it worth adding to this eminently prosaic consideration the esthetic fact that Measure for Measure gains a coherence notably absent from Promos and Cassandra. Izard

has noted that Whetstone's "consuming interest in civic corruption" was not quite so dominant a concern in Shakespeare's dramatic pattern, but that, although Shakespeare was most interested in "inconstant human character as represented by Angelo," he did carry over some of Whetstone's preoccupation with moral laxity when he explored "the incompetence of a political hireling in Escalus's interrogation of Elbow" and revealed in his underplot "the general corruption of Vienna."[1] Izard's analysis is shrewd in this instance, but it conveys a somewhat darker view of Shakespeare's Vienna than that embodied in Measure for Measure. However that may be, much of Whetstone's comic material is not very clearly related to the theme of civic corruption and Shakespeare undoubtedly knew, as Whetstone did not, that a good comedy is marked, not by the number of its clowns, but by the extent to which they are individualized and fitted into the overall design.[2]

There are countless minor deviations from the composite-source which various special pleaders have emphasized or rejected according to their interests in particular sources. To rehearse them all would be time-

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1 Op. cit., 65.

2 I have never seen an explanation for Whetstone's large number of characters. The matter is tangential to a study of Measure for Measure apart from the important fact that Shakespeare's source-play is over-populated. However, for whatever it may be worth, I shall include my guess: Whetstone probably wrote Promos and Cassandra in some sort of academic milieu, most probably, I think, to include parts for as many schoolboys as possible. It is certain that, unless Whetstone was almost unbelievably naive, he could hardly have written the play with a professional acting company in mind.

consuming and, considering the highly conjectural nature of most of these alleged 'exclusive parallels,' it is doubtful whether our understanding of Shakespeare at work on Measure for Measure will be greatly advanced. If one enjoys thinking of Shakespeare as a man who wrote plays while he was eying four or more earlier treatments of similar material, it might be possible to 'explain' everything in this play but its essential greatness. However, this way of thinking about Shakespeare leads one to wonder how, if he worked in the way implicit in source-studies, he managed to write more than a handful of plays in a lifetime. In the particular instance of Measure for Measure, moreover, we wonder why there are no recognizable verbal echoes from any of the alleged sources. Even Promos and Cassandra, where so many other parallels are apparent, yields up nothing very impressive in the way of verbal echoes.[1] In addition, Whet-

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1 I mention this because verbal echoes between Cinthio's Epitia and Measure for Measure have been suggested, most recently by Ball (who admits, however, that he is on very shaky ground). Granting the possibility that a 'verbal parallel' may involve two different languages, the whole question of Shakespeare's ability to read Italian (or any other language besides English) remains debatable. Ball assumes, of course, that Shakespeare read Italian easily and well. A good case for his point of view can be made by citing the Italian in Loves Labours Lost and those Italian 'sources' (like Cinthio's Hecatommithi for the Othello story) for which no translations have been discovered. However, it is also possible to argue away Ball's view by pointing to Shakespeare's association with Florio and other Italians in England who knew English and by insisting that reading is not the only avenue by which writers find stories. In all events, Ball's alleged verbal parallels between Epitia and Measure for Measure are tenuous and unconvincing in the extreme.

stone's play is the only source from which Shakespeare clearly did not borrow even one character-name.[1]

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1 It used to be decisive to cite Whetstone's use of the proverbial "The hood makes not the monk" and Shakespeare's "Cucullus non facit monachum" as certain evidence of verbal borrowing. The appearance of the popular Latin tag in Twelfth-Night diminishes the force of the argument considerably.

The thorough dissimilarity of character-names in the two plays is even more puzzling. Although I have not been impressed by any of the arguments adduced in this connection, it remains possible that each of the three other most widely accepted sources (the prose tale in Whetstone's Heptameron and the two Cinthio versions) has contributed something to the naming of the characters in Measure for Measure. As noted earlier, Isabella may stem from the Heptameron. Lodowick (the name assumed by Shakespeare's Duke in his disguise) may derive from both Cinthio versions where the diminutive form, Vico, is used for the brother. Angelo may have been suggested by Angela, the magistrate's sister, and Lucio, by Lucillo, the magistrate's adviser, in Epitia.

All of these 'debts' are perhaps more easily to be explained by examining Shakespeare's character-names in plays which we believe antedate Measure for Measure. Shakespeare had a Queen Isabel in Henry V and an Isbel is mentioned in All's Well. There are Angelos in The Comedy of Errors and (though possibly later) in Othello. Although Lucio is unique in Shakespeare, it appears in the guest-list for the Capulet ball (Romeo and Juliet, I, 2, 73) and is altogether in keeping with Shakespeare's use of many names built on the prefix, Luc! A Lodowick is briefly mentioned in All's Well and Othello contains a minor character named Lodovico.

Earlier appearances of these names in Shakespearean and non-Shakespearean drama does not, of course, preclude the possibility that their appearance in Measure for Measure may echo alleged sources, but coupled with the absence of other obvious verbal parallels, it would seem pointless to insist on these 'debts.'

Again, it is possible to explain the aptness of the names Shakespeare chose for his characters by considering their effectiveness in setting the audience's responses to the characters. This is dangerous territory to tread, for no one has yet systematically explored the connotative values of Elizabethan surnames and given names, but it seems likely that Angelo would have been (as it still is) an economical way of establishing the dominant characteristics of the outward-sainted deputy. Isabella, Claudio and Lucio (even) are neutral-valued names appropriate to these characters as they are first presented in the play.

When one has surveyed all the source-studies on Measure for Measure, four conclusions concerning Shakespeare's indebtedness to and deviations from his sources emerge clearly enough. It may be helpful to state those conclusions before analyzing the most important of Shakespeare's departures from the sources:

(1) No convincing verbal parallels (or echoes) have been uncovered;

(2) For the rough outline of the comic-subplot characters, Shakespeare could have been indebted only to Promos and Cassandra;

(3) For the general outline of the Isabella-Angelo-Claudio story, Shakespeare could have been indebted to any of the four Cinthio and Whetstone versions (=the composite or archetypal source);

(4) The most striking departures from all of the earlier versions concern the overlord-figure and the Isabella-figure.

In previous studies of Measure for Measure, the changes affecting the Isabella-Epitia-Cassandra character have been more interesting to their authors than the expanded role of the Duke. That Shakespeare's conception of Duke Vincentio differs more radically from his sources than his working-out of Isabella's rescue may become immediately apparent by close examination of the following statistics. Whetstone wrote approximately 200 lines of dialogue for his King Corvinus[1] as compared with the nearly 900 (884, by Baldwin's count) Shakespeare wrote

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1 In general, blank verse is Whetstone's medium for the King's speeches, but there are some fourteeners which, if proper allowance could be made, might give a somewhat higher total than the 196 lines which, in my rough count, I give Corvinus.

Cinthio's Emperor (in Epitia) has an even smaller rôle.

for the Duke. Line-counts, or any purely quantitative method of explaining the nature of a work of art, must not be pushed too far in determining the relative importance of characters in a total dramatic design, but there is a limited value to be gained by employing them discreetly. In the case of Promos and Cassandra and Measure for Measure, such statistics clearly enough indicate the major difference in effect between the two plays. Curiously enough, no scholar has, so far as I have been able to discover, noted this difference before. The total length of Whetstone's work is 2539 lines (of which 118 lines are accounted for by the nine songs Whetstone included); Measure for Measure (in Chambers' metrical tables) is 2820.[1] Corvinus'

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1 Izard rightly notes that Promos and Cassandra is frequently condemned because of its great length, an impression to be explained largely as the result of the awkward division of the play into ten acts (or, to follow Whetstone, two plays). However, Izard's undocumented statement that Whetstone's play is "only slightly longer than Measure for Measure" (75) is erroneous, unless he has evolved some method for converting Whetstone's longer lines into their Shakespearean equivalents. In my count, I included each complete line as a single unit on the theory that the one-word lines (in the stichomythic exchanges, for example) would compensate for the longer lines. A foolproof system for counting on a comparative basis could hardly be devised and, indeed, it is questionable whether there is any need for anything more than a proximate, moderately accurate system. Shakespeare's practice is as complicated as Whetstone's: how, for example, can one count all the prose passages in Shakespeare's play when there is no prose (except in the royal proclamation in the second part) in Whetstone?

Allowing, then, for my embarrassingly primitive system, I should insist that Promos and Cassandra and Measure for Measure must be regarded as plays of roughly identical length, with the Shakespearean play shaded as the longer of the two. This is, admittedly, not the impression the casual reader would have after lumbering through Whetstone and, in all probability, reading easily through Measure for Measure.

196 lines represent less than 8% of the total play; Duke Vincentio's 884, on the other hand, represent almost a third (31%) of the total. This is striking enough in itself, but when compared with the relative weight of the other characters in the two plays, the information gains greater significance. Whetstone's other major characters all have approximately the same importance as Corvinus, whereas Shakespeare's other characters have considerably less importance than the Duke:

Corvinus (196 lines) 8%	- Duke (884 lines) 31%
Cassandra (332 lines) 13%	- Isabella (420 lines) 15%
Promos (248 lines) 10%	- Angelo (320 lines) 11%
Andrugio (225 lines) 9%	- Claudio (112 lines) 4%
Phallax (251 lines) 10%	- Lucio (326 lines) 11%
Rosko (208 lines) 8%	- Pompey (161 lines) 6%
Lamia (170 lines) 7%	- Overdone (30 lines) 1%

One is also struck by the fact that the size of the parts of Cassandra-Isabella, Promos-Angelo, and, if the equivalence is valid, Phallax-Lucio remains almost undisturbed from Promos and Cassandra to Shakespeare's play.

Out of all this emerges substantiation for Izard's comment that Shakespeare — and Shakespeare alone — must be held accountable for most of the elements in the characterization of Duke Vincentio which have puzzled earlier critics.[1] Whether his innovations and alterations were ruinous or advantageous in relation to the whole play is a question to be

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1 Op. cit., 72. Izard is protective of Whetstone's reputation and concerned, in this instance, to make certain that Promos and Cassandra is not blamed for faults not to be charged to Whetstone. A similar gambit is followed by W. W. Lawrence, whom Izard quo approvingly.

fought out in the combat zone of esthetics. It is my hope here merely to bring the extensiveness of Shakespeare's deviation into the open. We will have moved a great distance along the way to understanding the specialness of Shakespeare's design in Measure for Measure once we have established the expanded rôle of the Duke as at least as important a deviation from the sources as Shakespeare's slily tendentious maneuvers to preserve Isabella's honor.

The redesigning of the dramatic structure of Measure for Measure necessary to convert Promos and Cassandra into a cohesive whole can hardly be appreciated if one believes Shakespeare was merely "filling in the outline" provided by Whetstone's play.[1] It is true, as many critics have complained, that the introduction of the Mariana-character in Act IV is not very smoothly contrived. However, I am reluctant to accept the implications which so frequently accompany this complaint, namely, that Shakespeare did not know what means he would use to effect Isabella's devitalizing escape. Granted the assumption that the play was written in the usual order — from beginning to end, without any cutting back and forth,[2] I cannot

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1 Cf. R. H. Wilson's conclusion, quoted above on page 282.

2 Such an assumption is, admittedly, a purely gratuitous one. Scholars and critics all rely on it, however, whether they admit it or not. In actual practice, however, plays are not always — or even usually — composed in their final order. Certainly, the Romantic myth of the poet-dramatist writing while the afflatus is visited upon him was dependent upon this unwarranted view.

conceive that Shakespeare refashioned his Duke without intending to introduce Mariana. If I am right, Shakespeare must have considered the old play almost entirely in terms of what he might have to do — as well as what he could do — with the Duke. This involved working out all the details of the opening scene painstakingly — how could the ducal authority be transferred temporarily to Angelo without Angelo's suspicions being aroused, this is a detail which requires careful planning. The choice of disguise poses special problems and, once having decided that the friar-disguise would give him the greatest possible range of dramatic incident and flexibility, Shakespeare had to 'explain' how his Duke could so easily assume the hood. The Folio I, 4 is the result of such speculations — and it is important to recall that this scene between the Duke and Friar Thomas precedes the scene in which the audience is given its first glimpse of Isabella in a nunnery. (If Shakespeare did not intend to pair off Isabella and the Duke later, why should he have bothered to stress the very important fact that Isabella is 'yet unsworn'?) Shakespeare did not solve — or perhaps he did not even think of — some of the problems which the friar-disguise thrust upon him. The violation of the confessional, a matter that has caused many Catholic critics great anguish, could hardly have given Shakespeare any great concern in light of the cavalier manner with which he handled the matter in the play. (Yet, after all, we wonder, is the confessional really violated here? The Duke is not repr

sented as a real friar — he is merely shown to be a Duke pretending, for political purposes, to be a friar.)

No, it will not do to think of Shakespeare "composing with a copy of Promos and Cassandra before him" (with R. H. Wilson). Measure for Measure, as it stands in the Folio, reflects a far more involved procedure. It reflects, in short, a complete overhaul of the Whetstone play with the overlord moved from the background solidly and boldly into the central position in the later play. What we should most like to know is, of course, why Shakespeare interested himself so greatly in his Duke. In Part Two, I suggested that the last act of Measure for Measure would, in 1604, have reminded Shakespeare's audiences of the unprecedented actions of James I in connection with the Main and Bye Plots. If I were more certain than I am that Measure for Measure was composed after the "affair at Winchester" (9 December, 1603), I should not hesitate to suggest here that Shakespeare was primarily interested in Duke Vincentio because he was interested in the character of the new king, a ruler with a demonstrated theatrical flare for doing things in the grand manner. Tempting as such a hypothetical cause-effect relationship is, I remain unwilling to advance it as anything more than an attractive theory which could never be tested without more reliable information on the date of Measure for Measure's composition. I shall content myself with the more acceptable suggestion that the play might have been understood in 1604 as, in some sense, a topical reflection

of James' melodramatic show of clemency.

Quite apart from my reluctance to insist on the Winchester affair as a possible explanation for Shakespeare's expansion of the Duke-figure because of the absence of evidence on the play's composition, I am aware that Marston (among others, as we shall see) was exploiting the ruler-in-disguise theme in such plays as The Malcontent (which may have been written as early as 1600) and The Fawn (perhaps contemporaneous with Measure for Measure). That Shakespeare, long interested in disguised-rulers as part of the standard equipment of comedy-writing, may have been concerned to emulate Marston's success is a distinct possibility as an alternate explanation for his conception of Measure for Measure.[1] This matter requires fuller treatment and introduces source-problems more subtle but at least as real as any which have been explored by the students of Cinthio and Whetstone — this is the subject of the following chapter.

Again, as a curb on reckless conjecture, we must recall that, for all Shakespeare's shifts of emphasis in reworking Whetstone's play, he did not radically alter the function and characterization of Whetstone's King Corvinus. Consider the composite-source story and some of the practical difficulties it presented each

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1 There is nothing definite enough in our knowledge of the chronology of Marston's plays to preclude the strong possibility that Marston, rather than Shakespeare, may have been the imitator. In point of fact, by 1603-4 Shakespeare's craftsmanship was well established whereas Marston was, although an established writer, still a relative newcomer to the ranks of popular dramatists. Who is the more likely candidate for the imitator?

writer who interested himself in it. The magistrate who passes sentence on the heroine's brother can hardly be the ultimate authority; if he is, there is no one to whom the wronged lady may appeal and, thus, the happy ending is ruled out. The archetypal story contains the means of circumventing the tragic outcome: the sentencing magistrate has a boss. This introduces a new problem: Why isn't the overlord on hand to prevent the magistrate's decision to capitalize on his judicial authority? Cinthio's efforts to solve this problem are largely unsuccessful. Although it is evident that he was clearly concerned to bring the Emperor on the scene without straining his audience's credulity or playing an unfair trick, his decision to prepare his audience for the Emperor's arrival by having Irene (Epitia's aunt, a minor character) report the news is perfunctory and uninspired.[1] In Promos and Cassandra, which Whetstone wrote independently of Cinthio's play, the problem is solved in a manner which some have found more credible than (and therefore superior to) Shakespeare's solution. Whetstone opened his play by establishing the fact that

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1 Budd notes that "the overlord arrives for the final judgment not at the heroine's request but by accident," a statement of fact concerning Epitia. He regards this development as an 'exclusive parallel' with Measure for Measure where, however, "the accident is only apparent." (724) Considering the magnitude of the difference here between appearance and reality, I do not believe Budd is entitled to argue for any kind of parallel.

Promos has been ordered by the King to attend to the administration of justice in Julio. Having thus introduced the fact of the King's existence, when Whetstone was ready to show the wronged Cassandra determined to seek redress for her grievances from the King, he had only to set the lady on her journey (Part I, V, 6). Shakespeare denied himself the opportunity to use this simple device when he decided to place the Duke, rather than Isabella or Angelo, at the controlling center of the play. His Duke, though shown to be absent in the minds of the other characters, is never allowed to be absent from the audience's consciousness. In Measure for Measure we find the somewhat surprising incident in which the Duke-as-friar exerts considerable pressure on Isabella to appeal her case to the Duke-as-Duke.[1] Such a moment, partaking as it does of something close to high comedy, becomes possible only because of Shakespeare's redistribution of emphases in the direction of a carefully planned and maintained artificiality.[2] It is impossible to resist the suggestion that Shakespeare was determined that his audiences should not be-

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1 The incident is analogous to the highly successful scene in As You Like It in which the disguised Rosalind teaches Orlando how to make love to Rosalind. A sophisticated audience can be trusted to enjoy this scene in all its blatant theatricality, but, as always seems to be the case, there are those who are impatient with such goings-on. I should merely insist that there is no sadism in either Rosalind or Duke Vincentio if one accepts the incidents in the proper spirit: the tone of the incident in Measure for Measure is more serious perhaps, but it is still to be understood as comic.

2 Artificiality is a snarl-word to some Shakespeare[illegible] but there is nothing intentionally pejorative in my use of the term. Artifice is taken as the essence of comed[illegible]

come too deeply involved in the struggle between Angelo and Isabella. Accordingly, Shakespeare's handling of the Duke is to be understood as his means of attaining the Verfremdung or alienation which is supposedly the discovery of the twentieth-century Epic Realists, but which has always been the mainstay of writers of comedy.

When Shakespeare had recognized that Whetstone's play was 'unfunny' because Whetstone had failed to provide a reading-glass, so to speak, and to insist that his audiences were not to take the Promos-Cassandra story too seriously, Shakespeare had diagnosed the major ailment with which Promos and Cassandra was beset. That the critics of Measure for Measure have not always recognized the necessity of interpreting all the action of Shakespeare's play through the raisonneur Duke is largely explicable in terms of the inadequacy of earlier source-studies of the play, with their authors' failures to recognize that a carefully established and maintained psychical distancer (=the Duke) renders Shakespeare's adoption of characters found in his sources almost negligible in importance. However, it must be said in defense of the source-hunters that they were merely doing what they were most encouraged to do by a generation of highly-regarded critics who, like A. C. Bradley, were incapable of distinguishing between characters qua characters and characters qua 'real people.' By insisting on the necessity of accepting Measure for Measure as a very deliberately artificial comedy to be understood in es-

sentially Pirandellian terms (that is, by recognizing all the dramatic irony which Shakespeare achieved by relying obviously and deliberately on the theatrical context of drama), I may appear to be reading Measure for Measure in a rather too rigidly twentieth-century spirit.[1] This is not my intention. I recognize all too well the need which most students of the drama pamper, especially in their study of tragedy and approximations of tragedy, to 'empathize' with the characters, which means, of course, that they wish to take characters qua 'real people.' By recognizing this need, in a sense I respect it. At the same time, however, I should insist that there is little — perhaps no — justification for tolerating this desire for empathic involvement on the part of students of comedy.[2] It is, then, as a comedy — not necessarily Pirandellian — that I believe we should interpret and evaluate Measure for Measure. The supreme irony in the history of the scholarship and criticism of the play is that it has almost never been accepted on

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1 Strindberg's There Are Crimes and Crimes is another play which, like Measure for Measure, has baffled many students because, however much it may seem like tragedy, it is essentially comic (or serio-comic, to use a monstrosity of semantic confusion to which modern students are addicted). Unfortunately, it is only when one sees an actual production of There Are Crimes and Crimes that one can fully appreciate Strindberg's comic and ironic design. In this respect, I think we must blame the misunderstanding of Measure for Measure on the paucity of adequate productions of the play.

2 Cf. the inadequate criticism of Shaw's comedies that has resulted from the insistence on interpreting his characters (especially his female characters) as real people to be admired or despised in their 'real-life' existence outside Shaw's plays. Even the best modern critics of Shaw have barely resisted the impulse to write a Girlhood of Shaw's Heroines.

Shakespeare's terms as a comedy.

Once he had determined to expand Whetstone's King Corvinus into the omnipresent Duke Vincentio, Shakespeare had to solve a problem with which Whetstone had not been confronted. He had to decide to what degree he should try to explain the Duke's stratagem of testing Angelo and the citizens of Vienna. He might, without violating any of the conventions of comedy, have settled for the mere establishment of the fact that the Duke had determined to live among his subjects. Haroun al Raschid was never given a better reason than friendly curiosity about the way his subjects lived for his excursions among them. He could, in short, have settled for showing that Duke Vincentio was the sort of ruler who might test his subjects for no particular reason at all. Apparently, however, Shakespeare felt that some motivation, even though it be minimal, was in order. This motivation is the raison d'être for Shakespeare's having included the short scene (I, 3 in modern editions) between the Duke and Friar Thomas. There we watch Shakespeare working his way out of the maze of difficulties proceeding from his initial decision to bring the overlord to some sort of life without, however, encouraging an audience to take the Duke as an altogether realistically-conceived character. I am not sure that Shakespeare solved his problem in this instance. The excuse -- to let Angelo perform the unpleasant task of cleaning-up the city so

that the Duke can not be accused of tyranny — is flimsy, but it suffices for the comic occasion. It is worthy of note that Shakespeare does not insist on this bit of motivation elsewhere in the play. Even in the concluding lines of the Duke's recital of his reasons for adopting his disguise, Shakespeare interjects a clue concerning the testing of Angelo:

Friar Thomas: It rested in your Grace
To unloose this tied-up justice when you pleas'd:
And it in you more dreadful would have seem'd
Than in Lord Angelo.

Duke: I do fear, too dreadful.
Sith 'twas my fault to give the people scope,
'Twould be my tyranny to strike and gall them
For what I bid them do; for we bid this be done,
When evil deeds have their permissive pass
And not the punishment. Therefore indeed, my father,
I have on Angelo impos'd the office;
Who may, in th'ambush of my name, strike home,
And yet my nature never in the sight
To do it slander. And to behold his sway,
I will, as 'twere a brother of your order,
Visit both prince and people; therefore, I prithee,
Supply me with the habit and instruct me
How I may formally in person bear me
Like a true friar. Moe reasons for this action
At our more leisure shall I render you;
Only, this one: Lord Angelo is precise,
Stands at a guard with envy, scarce confesses
That his blood flows, or that his appetite
Is more to bread than stone; hence shall we see,
If power change purpose, what our seemers be.
(Modern editions I, 3, 31-54)

It is Shakespeare's bow in the direction of realistic motivation and, having once made it, he proceeds to the more exciting business of exposing Angelo and winning Isabella for the Duke.

After I, 3 the Duke goes into the various plots with a freedom of movement Shakespeare had achieved for Puck and Oberon in A Midsummer Night's Dream. I suspect that we must view his movements in the same spirit of detachment -- and enjoyment -- we accord to those earlier supernatural manipulators of dramatic action. Although there are clues in Whetstone's long judgment-scene for Shakespeare's Duke as a ruler who enjoys playing cat-and-mouse, Promos and Cassandra does not convey an impression that Whetstone recognized all the possibilities for entertaining his audience in the scene of revelations, rewards and punishments. In Promos and Cassandra, the judgment-scene does not terminate the action. Instead, Whetstone uses the scene to set into motion another line of action -- we go on to witness the spectacle of Cassandra pleading for her husband's life and, finally, to experience still another judgment-scene. Shakespeare, not surprisingly, settled for a single judgment-scene more in keeping with the spirit of comedy. To be sure, after he introduced Mariana into the play, he had little occasion to incorporate the backing-and-filling which had been incumbent on Whetstone to provide and which had the bad effect of dissipating the final effect through sheer prolongation beyond the time an audience could sustain its interest in the lamenting Cassandra's fate. The hand of the practical man of the theater is apparent in Shakespeare's condensation and combina-

tion of Whetstone's two judgment-scenes into one. It is also apparent in the preparation for and full realization of the theatrical values in the Lucio-Duke exchanges. The winding-up is, as befits a comedy, perfunctory and quite in keeping with the closing scenes in Shakespeare's other comedies.[1]

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1 Not infrequently one finds critics complaining that Shakespeare left Vienna as corrupt as he portrayed it in Act I. The implication is that the Duke who has "seen corruption boil and bubble,/ Till it o'er-run the stew," should be made to indicate how he intends to cleanse the city. G. Wilson Knight, for example, notes that we are not told "what will become of Vienna," although there is "a hint": "the Duke is to marry Isabel, and this marriage, like the others, may be understood symbolically. It is to be the marriage of understanding with purity; of tolerance with moral fervour." (The Wheel of Fire, 95) Similarly, L. C. Knights feels that the question of how "to produce order in an imperfect society" is left unanswered with the result that "the process of clarification is incomplete, and one finds not paradox but genuine ambiguity." ("The Ambiguity of Measure for Measure," The Importance of Scrutiny, 149-150)

Whetstone took pains to establish the fact that order was restored to Julio by introducing the scenes showing the departure of Phallax and, most memorable, Lamia being led off for her punishment. If Whetstone, a heavy-handed amateur at play-making, could see the need for cleaning up this plot detail, so, it might be argued, should Shakespeare. My answer to such criticism is that Shakespeare was too wise to offer a Plan To Wipe Out Civic Corruption as a tidying-up device in his otherwise unflinchingly direct consideration of the nature of man. It should also be noted that, although never so insistent as Whetstone in exploring the causes of civic venality, Shakespeare did take pains to show Escalus' attempt to tighten the slipshod policing in Constable Elbow's ward, to give his audiences their last view of Pompey and Overdone in jail along with all the bawd's old customers. Also, it would be a mistake to ignore the effect of showing the Duke disposing of Lucio, Barnardine and, indirectly, Kate Keepdown in the closing scene. A final consideration is the inevitable fact that a play must end somewhere, even if it does not answer such unanswerable questions as 'How can vice be eliminated?'

Shakespeare seems, then, to have placed the Duke at the center of Measure for Measure primarily for esthetic reasons. He sought to achieve a unity of effect, to frame, as it were, the other incidents in ironic detachment and, thus, to control his audience's responses to the Isabella-Angelo-Claudio material.[1] Whetstone had lacked the skill to construct such a framework: he relies all too obviously on letting the characters talk out their own problems. When we compare Shakespeare's Duke with Whetstone's Corvinus, we recognize that the different conceptions of the characters account for the fact that the two plays do not effect us in the same way. Shakespeare, by never allowing his audiences to lose sight of the Duke, was making certain that the play would be understood as a comedy.

Finally, we are in a better position to deal with the commonly held critical opinion that Measure for Measure is unique in Shakespeare's works in that it lacks a central character to whom we unhesitatingly give our sympathy. Those who believe this insist that Angelo is a bounder, Isabella a frigid prude, Claudio a jellyfish, and the Duke a crafty sneak who is all too aptly labeled (by Lucio, just another unsympathetic

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1 This esthetic coherence is the very effect most critics have found so conspicuously absent from the play. It is easy enough to account for the failure of critics to recognize the effect, however; for the effect is recognizable only in the theater. Even in the theater (where Measure for Measure is not frequently performed, after all), the star-system and the overemphasis on realistic character-portrayal (à la Stanislavsky) defeat Shakespeare's intentions.

character) "the old fantasticall duke of dark corners." (This tack in the criticism of Measure for Measure violates the comic nature of the play in the same way that the psychological-realist critics have distorted Gay's The Beggar's Opera by psychoanalyzing MacHeath and his colleagues.) The best answer to such criticism is to understand the extent to which Shakespeare's Duke differs from Cinthio's Emperor and Whetstone's King Corvinus. Shakespeare's intention was to let the Duke's humane and tolerant personality permeate the play. It was not merely by moving the Duke to the forefront of the dramatic action that Shakespeare accomplished this. He created Escalus, for whom there is no real counterpart in any of the sources,[1] as an extension of the Duke, the embodiment of the ducal philosophy of moderation and a temperate justice. Escalus is properly to be understood as another of the Duke's disguises: he, rather than Angelo, is the Duke's real deputy during the Duke's absence. Similarly, we will best understand Angelo as an extension of the Duke — his sternest and perhaps least likable side, but the side necessitated and brought into play when "liberty plucks justice by the nose" and "quite athwart goes all decorum." This is

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1 Cinthio's play contains, in the Secretary to Juriste (Promos-Angelo), a mouthpiece for the precept of justice tempered with mercy. However, neither this character nor Whetstone's Sir Ulrico (who resembles Escalus slightly) is made to carry the weight Shakespeare gives Escalus. I believe that Escalus is one of Shakespeare's most important innovations; his presence and function in the play is not easily explained except as I have attempted to explain it here. (Question: is Escalus the role Shakespeare created for himself?)

emphasized perhaps in the Duke's declaration to Friar Thomas (I, 3 again!) that Angelo may, in "th'ambush" of his name "strike home" and restore order. Again, significantly, Angelo is more insistently developed as the Duke's stand-in than the Juriste-Promos figure had been in any of the sources.[1] On the lower levels, the Provost is, like Escalus, another fragment of the Duke's humane side. Even Constable Elbow, ignorant noddy that he is, is proud that he is "the poor Duke's constable." Shakespeare seems to have intended to present both the top and the bottom of the long chain of justice — when he established the fact that Elbow has been taken advantage of by his neighbors in his ward, Shakespeare created a mirror to the Duke who, no less than Elbow, has dunderheadedly but doggedly tried to maintain order in his bailiwick (the city-state of Vienna is but a macrocosm of wards policed by the Constable Elbows). The inept policing of Elbow's ward is identical with the Duke's laxity in relation to the whole of Vienna.

The play is, as none of the sources can have suggested to Shakespeare, built upon the Duke — as Duke, as Friar Lodowick, as deputized in Angelo, as Escalus the true deputy, as Provost, as Elbow. It is as if Shakespeare, who had already shown himself interested

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1 It is, of course, true that Promos and Juriste are servants of their ruler. However, they are presented as career Department of Justice officials, civil servants as it were. Only Shakespeare presents the elaborately developed picture of Angelo (appointed even though Escalus is "first in question") endowed as acting Duke with full ducal authority.

in such matters in the Henry IV plays, had decided to explore all the possibilities of the situation in which a ruler (Alfred the Great or Haroun al Raschid or Prince Hal in Eastcheap or Henry V visiting his soldiers on the eve of battle) moves unknown among his people. To achieve the coherent effect he desired, he shattered his central character into as many fragments as the play could easily accommodate. Shakespeare turns the Duke's deputies and officers into ducal disguises, each of which reflects and refracts a different light back to the Duke, himself the illuminating center of the play.

If I am right in asserting that Shakespeare began by thinking about Measure for Measure as a play about the difficulties facing a ruler who would be at once just and merciful (rather than as a play about chastity and hypocrisy, as most critics have maintained), such criticism as that recently offered by Tillyard must be regarded as erroneous. Tillyard began promisingly enough by rejecting the older 'realistic' character-criticism as well as the newer — or 'symbolical' — approach of seeing nothing wrong with Measure for Measure. Nevertheless, in his final view the play is a failure because it is "not of a piece but changes its nature halfway through." This inconsistency "is the most serious and complete possible, being one of literary style," by which Tillyard means that the

first two and a half acts (through III, 1, 151) are poetical and the last half of the play is "comic or at least prosaic."[1] This is, as Tillyard confesses, simply a restatement of an old objection "not quite in the old terms." In his remarks on Measure for Measure, Tillyard devotes a few pages to Shakespeare's sources, but, like most of his predecessors, he does not get much beyond the Isabella-Angelo material.[2]

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1 Shakespeare's Problem Plays, 130 ff.

2 Tillyard notes that Promos and Cassandra contains "a lot about justice...including disquisitions on the true meaning of what Shakespeare called measure for measure." He admits "that Shakespeare was drawn to that theme, and possibly in the first stages of roughing out his plot, may be conjectured." He continues with a fuller discussion of those things in Whetstone "that kindled his imagination more warmly than the theory of justice [i.e., the Promos-Cassandra material]."

I am aware that I have appeared to minimize the Isabella-Angelo episodes in my insistence on the greater importance of recognizing the artistic effects Shakespeare achieved by expanding the role of his Duke. However, I realize that the Isabella-Angelo material is, to most students of Shakespeare, far more exciting to conjecture about. I doubt that there is little to be added to the already extensive discussions of Shakespeare's alterations of the Isabella-Cassandra character. As Alfred Harbage has recently reminded us (in Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions [1952], 351, 356), Shakespeare regularly "in line with popular practice but with greater consistency, tends to eliminate from his plays acts of illicit love found in his sources, and rarely invents any of his own." Harbage's synoptic consideration of Shakespeare as 'expurgator' of Whetstone and Cinthio is a valuable summary:

> In Measure for Measure fornication occurs but is followed in each case by marriage, in line with the tragicomic pattern of the play. The offenses of Julietta and Mariana are only technical, and even Kate Keepdown, who is mentioned but does not appear, is made an honest woman in the end! Lucio is forced to marry this girl whom he seduced

(continued)

When, however, Tillyard explains the 'real problem' in Measure for Measure, he offers an hypothesis which merits close examination:

> Whether in the second half Shakespeare reverted to an original plan from which he had played truant, or whether he began to improvise when he found himself stuck, we shall never know. But conjecture may be easier when we recognize the large differences in the material from which he derived the two portions of his play. That we can do so is largely due to W. W. Lawrence. Lawrence distinguishes two kinds of material in Measure for Measure. The central episode of a sister having to decide whether to save her brother's life at the expense of her honour may go back to an historical incident and anyhow is related to real life and not to folk-lore. Similarly the setting in

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with false promises (III, ii, 210-215, V, i, 524-526). Epitia in Cinthio's Hecatommithi, VIII, v, [Harbage seems not to know Cinthio's play] and Cassandra in Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra, 1578, and Heptameron of Civil Discourses, 1582, are equivalent to Shakespeare's Isabella; but, unlike Isabella, they yield their bodies to the unjust deputy. Shakespeare does not permit Angelo to use certain formidable arguments against Isabella's refusal — to wit, that her virtue, as he admits about his own (II, iv, 10), may be mostly only pride, that she demonstrate her contention that Claudio's sin is venal by committing it herself, and that the saintly stand ready to do more for others than for themselves — although the fashion in which he skirts such arguments suggests that they were in the dramatist's mind. Isabella's arguments, too, in extenuating her brother's offense, although bitterly regretted by her later, are more inhibited than those in Cinthio (see Raleigh, Shakespeare, pp. 168-169). Whetstone's heroine, like Cinthio's, is freer in extenuating the offense. We hear in Shakespeare that the Duke has seen "corruption boil and bubble" in Vienna (V, i, 320-324); but in Whetstone more corruption is displayed. In Whetstone the wicked deputy is attended by lecherous Phallax, in Shakespeare by virtuous Escalus. In place of Whetstone's courtesan Lamia and her enticements, Shakespeare gives us Mistress Overdone. (356)

Incidentally, Harbage has given us good evidence for believing that Measure for Measure was written for the public theater rather than for any special audience or the coterie theater. Unfortunately, his work appeared too late to be of the use it might have been in the earlier chapters of this dissertation.

> the low life of a city, not found before Whetstone, is realistic and not traditional or magical. But Shakespeare grafted onto the realistic material of Whetstone two themes that belong to the world of the fairy tale: first, the disguised king mingling with and observing his own people and second, the secret substitution of the real bride in the husband's bed.... Exactly what happened in Shakespeare's mind we shall never know. He may or may not have meant initially to write a play on the great themes of justice, mercy, and forgiveness. If he did, he seems to have changed his mind and above all sought to give his own version of the human potentialities of Whetstone's theme. Self-defeated half-way, through the turn he gave that theme, he may have reverted to his original, more abstract intentions, to help him out. More likely, to my thinking, he sought help from the methods and the incidents of the play, written shortly before and still in temper akin to his present self, All's Well That Ends Well. (139-141)

Now, there is much here with which I cannot agree. I am not at all certain that we are entitled to separate 'realistic' and 'folkloristic' into opposed categories; however, even if we grant the separation as valid, who is to determine finally whether the Isabella material should be called 'realistic' or, more properly perhaps, 'folkloristic'? For that matter, it is doubtful that the disguised-ruler material is widely accepted as 'folkloristic' when we recall that Shakespeare (at a later date, to be sure) represents 'slumming' as a favorite pastime of Cleopatra and Antony.[1]

My major objection to Tillyard's conjecture, however, is his implied charge that the Isabella-Angelo

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1 Lawrence's scheme for classifying thematic material is too arbitrary to be very helpful in studying Elizabethan drama, most of which — successful and unsuccessful, 'problem' or no-problem — contains a mixture of 'realism' and 'folklore.' The trouble is well enough illustrated when we try to decide exactly why we should label the substitution-device folkloristic rather than 'realistic.'

material (which Tillyard all too vaguely calls "Whetstone's theme") does not belong in "a play on the great themes of justice, mercy, and forgiveness." Shakespeare may not have succeeded in conjoining such matter with the justice-mercy conflict — this is a matter of individual tastes and, thus, there is room for considerable differences of opinion between critics. But to argue, even in defense of Shakespeare, that the worlds of "the fairy tale" and of "real life" cannot be combined in a single play, would seem deliberately misleading.

I do not see any signs that Shakespeare was "self-defeated" because he had made Isabella resist Angelo's offer and Claudio's appeal to save his life. Nor do I see signs that Shakespeare "reverted to his original, more abstract intentions, to help him out." It is impossible to write a play on the subject of Justice-Mercy in the abstract: there must be some sort of human entanglement of a very serious nature to bring the Mercy-Justice conflict into focus. The Isabella-Angelo-Claudio story serves precisely that purpose in Measure for Measure and certainly it was to Shakespeare's credit that he constructed the play in such a way as to dramatize the Justice-Mercy conflict on two quite different levels, first with Angelo as the judge and second with the Duke and Isabella as judges of Angelo. It may be unfortunate — but I believe that inevitably the propelling-incidents are dramatically more exciting than any of the winding-up

and solving of problems which follows.[1] Especially when Shakespeare was dealing with so humanly engaging a theme as the conflict between Mercy and Justice where it is almost a foregone conclusion that Mercy will prevail in the end, it would seem a naive error to forget that Shakespeare, having established the comic and ironic framework in his handling of the Duke in the first act, would have to dramatize the Isabella-Angelo-Claudio story before his Duke could really be made to function as observer, ironic commentator and final authority. There should be no question here, then, of Shakespeare abandoning or reverting to "original, more abstract intentions," improvising or trying to write his way out of unforeseen difficulties.

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1 I am not at all sure that the scenes between Isabella and Angelo (II, 2, and II, 4) are any more carefully written than any of the other scenes in the play. Coldly analyzed, both scenes tend toward repetitiousness and one cannot fail to note the very considerable obscurity in Angelo's speeches. This is not to deny the theatrical effectiveness of both scenes. I would merely suggest that the two scenes are memorable because of the sensationalism in Angelo's proposal, a fact that has unfortunate consequences in causing these scenes to assume an importance all out of proportion to their significance in the total play.

PART THREE

CHAPTER FOUR

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

AND

OTHER PLAYS IN LONDON THEATERS IN 1604

In this chapter I propose to compare Measure for Measure with other plays presented in 1604. I have sought to use for comparative purposes plays which bear some similarity to the Shakespearean play and which are known to have been on the boards in 1604.[1] There will be no attempt made to establish specific debts, either of Shakespeare to other playwrights or of other writers to Shakespeare, although it will be immediately apparent that I have interested myself in determining whether any of the topical significances considered in Part Two are manifest in other plays in 1604.

It may be useful to consider my principles of selection of plays with which it may be fruitful to concern ourselves. At one point in planning this chapter, I had thought it might be possible to com-

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1 The uncertain state of our 'knowledge' of the chronology of plays in this period has posed a very considerable problem. Wherever possible, I have tried to avoid using plays which have been only too tentatively dated.

pare Measure for Measure with other plays of its type, but I quickly discovered that genre-study has provided no safe ground on which to conduct such an investigation. What kind of play is it? I have adopted the easiest — and perhaps the vaguest, I have not been able to decide — line by insisting that the play is a comedy because the editors of the 1623 Folio included the play among the 'Comedies.' I am certain that this fact cannot be controverted in spite of the great number of critics who followed Swinburne in arguing that it is clearly 'tragedy manqué.' Fletcher's definition of 'tragi-comedy' fits Measure for Measure admirably, but no Shakespearean drama is known to have borne that label. O. J. Campbell's researches into the effects of Jonson on his contemporaries led him to the view that Measure for Measure was "Shakespeare's second attempt [his first was Troilus and Cressida] to adapt to his genius some of the conventions of comical satire." The core of Campbell's formulation is contained in the following:

> According to this view Angelo was first designed as clearly as Malvolio or Troilus to serve as an object of ridicule. The Duke was as certainly a satiric and moral commentator as were similar figures in earlier dramas of Jonson and Marston. Isabella's first duty, then, was to serve as the main agent in the exposure and derision of Angelo. The Viennese background of corruption and moral filth is as harmonious with the sin of the principal culprit as was the disorganization of the Greek

> and Trojan hosts with the passion which destroyed Troilus and Cressida.
>
> This satiric structure is now obscure because Isabella completely outgrew the role in which she was first cast. A modern audience is properly much more concerned for her fate than for her success in laying bare the hypocrisy of Angelo. Consequently the play does not end as a satire should. Angelo is exposed but not ejected from the play with a final burst of derision....Shakespeare has lost his chance for an effect denouement. So he falls back upon the conventional ending of romantic comedy; a marriage for both the deserving and undeserving. This offers no proper resolution of the emotions aroused by the characters and is a perfunctory and aesthetically unsatisfactory close to the complicated action.[1]

There are many questions to be raised concerning this view, the most important of which would seem to be: How should a 'satire' end? The very fact that Measure for Measure ends without 'ejecting' Angelo (though it should be noted that Lucio is handled roughly enough!) may simply indicate that Shakespeare did not conceive of himself as adapting "some of the conventions of comical satire." In the end, if we accept Campbell's explanation, we are saddled with only another view that Shakespeare was working under compulsions to 'fashion a comedy out of unsuitable material,' that he was, in

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1 Shakespeare's Satire (1943), 124-125.

It should be noted that Campbell's explanation of what he terms the play's "aesthetic confusion" proceeds from the older tradition that the play is unsatisfactory. Curiously enough, Campbell's hypothesis leaves an impression not unlike that left by two kinds of older explanations for the play's failure which draw Campbell's fire. He disapproves of explanations which "attribute mythical woes to the author or find in him resented inner or outer compulsions to fashion a comedy out of unsuitable material" (124). In a useful summary of the criticism of Measure for Measure, Campbell cites W. W. Lawrence, E. K. Chambers, Mark Van Doren, among others unnamed, as examples of criti who have supported or offered explanations of the second type.

short, a bungler.[1] M. C. Bradbrook, however, saw the play as an artistic success and treated it as a morality play, a view implicit also in the critical writing of G. Wilson Knight, F. R. Leavis, R. W. Battenhouse, and

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1 Other questions I should insist on raising concerning Campbell's view are legion, but among the most specific are the following: Is it altogether clear that Angelo was "first designed...as an object of ridicule" — like Malvolio or Troilus? Shakespeare obviously tried to endow Angelo with superlative qualities in order to render his 'fall' (St. Anthony in the desert) more exciting as that of a good man (forgetting for the moment his treatment of Mariana) suddenly subverted by a part of his nature he had believed to be under strong control. It appears to me that Angelo is, as a figure in comedy, much more akin to a Leontes than to a Malvolio who clearly was designed as an object of ridicule. (Whether Troilus was another Malvolio seems questionable yet.)

Again, considering the extensiveness of Shakespeare's refashioning and elevating of the source-Duke, to call the Duke only "a satiric and moral commentator" (which he is in part, to be sure) is to ignore the way in which Shakespeare used the ducal presence to control, superintend and unify the entire dramatic action. There is nothing comparable in Marston (as we shall see) or Jonson to this reliance on the raisonneur.

I find myself also perplexed by Campbell's view that a modern audience is "properly much more concerned for" Isabella's "fate" than for her "success in laying bare the hypocrisy of Angelo." Is not the latter consideration — within the context of the play — the most important part of her "fate"? The "fate" of fictional characters is surely to perform all the functions for which they are created. The determinant of those functions is the story (=plot) which the writer is concerned to tell in a meaningful relation to the central themes (=meaning or, to use I. A. Richards' term, tenor, rather than the misleading 'message') the writer is concerned that his story should embody. The story (Juriste-Epitia or Promos-Cassandra) is an embodiment of many themes; one of the most obvious is the theme of mercy (or the highest justice) opposed to strict letter-of-the-law justice. Shakespeare clearly saw in the Isabella-Angelo conflict more opportunities for exploring paradoxes and ironical situations than Cinthio and Whetstone had; he could hardly have lost sight of his central theme as would have to be the case if, as Campbell believes, Isabella "completely outgrew the role in which she was first cast," by which Campbell seems to mean her "fate."

Henry M. Battenhouse, to name only a few of the most avid supporters of the "perfect" Measure for Measure.[1] Weighing such diverse value-judgments and genre-formulations against each other, I found that a comparison on the basis of types or genres would be bootless, if not impossible. Instead, I determined to compare plays

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1 M. C. Bradbrook, "Authority, Truth and Justice in Measure for Measure," RES, XVII (1941), 385-99. In her more recent Shakespeare and Elizabethan Poetry (1952), there is an indication that she had modified her position: "Measure for Measure is like a morality play, but it is not a morality play, and the differences are as significant as the likenesses" (81).

I have alluded to Knight, Leavis, and R. W. Battenhouse elsewhere. R. W. Battenhouse's essay, "Measure for Measure and Christian Doctrine of Atonement"(in PMLA, LXI [December, 1946], 1029-1059), is an elaborate attempt to construct a Christian esthetics by which to measure the play: "Now the one pattern which most finally sets the norm for Christian ethics and Christian art is the story of the Atonement" and this Atonement story is one in which "a sovereign disguises himself in order to visit his people and reform them" (1032). Such is the view of Henry M. Battenhouse (in Poets of Christian Thought [1947]) who, like his son, believes that "In the final analysis, it is the play's anagogical or mystical meaning that is most important." I find such criticism salutary for its recognition of the artistic unity of Measure for Measure in such passages as the following in H. M. Battenhouse:

> "The plot is carefully constructed; the ideas form an artistic pattern; the style is purposefully restrained..." (39)

However, the further reaches of the Battenhouse (son or father) leave me restive:

> "[continuing the above passage] the symbolism is theologically correct; its spiritual insight is extraordinary. The characters, obviously, are types: Angelo, of the Pharisee; Isabella, of the chaste Puritan; Lucio, of the worldly pagan; Claudio, of the wretched sinner; the Duke, of ... Christian mercy and justice. The play's thesis... is a double one: the good life and the last judgment are treated together, — as they are in the Sermon on the Mount. One cannot read the play without thinking [of the Parable of the Talents]" (39)

Unfortunately, just as Christian ethics are an amalgam of other ethical systems, a Christian esthetics becomes

following up suggestions by such writers as J. M. Robertson interested in divided-authorship and revisional theories. Accordingly, because Robertson had argued so persistently for Chapman's hand in Measure for Measure, I read all of Chapman's comedies only to find nothing, either in the way of artistic handling or in the way of verbal parallels, suggestive of Shakespeare's play. Older editors had detected the hack-hand of Wilkins in Measure for Measure; I followed up this clue and found nothing but dreariness in The Miseries of Enforced Marriage. Having explored these two lines, it seemed pointless to read Munday or any of the other lesser writers whose hands have been at one time or another detected in Measure for Measure. Moreover, by the time I had finished reading Chapman in Professor Parrott's admirable edition, I was more mistrustful than ever of the dates assigned the large number of plays not mentioned in Henslowe or any other

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a mixture of other esthetic systems. R. W. Battenhouse rightly notes that "Artistically, it [the Atonement story] fits neither classical 'tragedy' nor 'comedy,' since it is, properly described, 'beyond tragedy' [following Niebuhr]." Unfortunately, it is a questionable procedure to construct at this late date an esthetic system to explain a play written three and a half centuries ago. However, Miss Bradbrook also insists on the Christian ethical formulation of Elizabethan drama. She has recently pointed out that the "two archetypes" of dramatic disguise-situations were the "disguise of the serpent and the disguise of the Incarnation," both of which can be illustrated in Measure for Measure in Angelo and the Duke ("Shakespeare and the Use of Disguise in Elizabethan Drama," Essays in Criticism, II [April, 1952], 159-168).

reputable Elizabethan-Jacobean record-keeper. A different tack seemed in order, one founded, quite frankly, in my own evaluation of Measure for Measure as a play considerably better and certainly more carefully designed than older critics have credited it — but by no means the flawless gem which some more recent critics have argued that it is.

I decided to consider three other plays which were presented on London stages in 1604: Samuel Rowley's When You See Me You Know Me, John Marston's The Malcontent, and Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice. The inclusion of this comparative material here at the end of Part Three should not, however, be interpreted as an indication that I have examined the plays as sources for Measure for Measure. To have placed this chapter at the end of Part Two might have been as misleading, for I did not investigate the plays with any notion that they would have held the same topical significance for a 1604 audience that I suggested in the case of Measure for Measure. I have compared these plays in the belief that they provide parallels which, against a 1604 background, increase our understanding of Measure for Measure as produced, received and, less certainly, written in 1604.

The plays were not selected capriciously. After making a list of the handful of plays definitely known

to have been acted in 1604, I found that only these three bore any resemblances to Measure for Measure. I rejected some moderately interesting possibilities (e.g., The London Prodigal) because the problem of anonymous or unknown authorship seemed merely another obstacle in a course already hazardous to the point of discouraging entrants. The three plays were not all chosen for the same reasons. Rowley's play is interesting for its treatment of Henry VIII visiting his people in disguise and because of the fact that it was clearly designed for a royal patron, Henry, the new Prince of Wales. Marston's play is instructive for its reliance on the device of a disguised (but deposed) ruler, for its insights into attitudes toward tragi-comedy, for its indications of the composition of the Globe company around 1604, and for the treatment of themes similar to those which are central in Measure for Measure. The Merchant of Venice is interesting on almost as many counts as The Malcontent, but I have concentrated on resemblances of themes and dramatic form. Only in the case of The Merchant of Venice and Measure for Measure will I invite the view that the earlier play may have been an important 'source' for the later, but even here I will not insist on the possible connection between the two plays.

Exactly when in 1604 or early 1605 Rowley's When You See Me You Know Me was acted, is not known. The

Stationers' Register entry for the play's publication is dated 12 February 1605 and the title-page indicates that it was played by "the high and mighty Prince of Wales His Servants." That the play was designed to interest the young patron-prince is best suggested by its subtitle:

> THE FAMOUS CHRONICLE HISTORY OF
> KING HENRY VIII, WITH THE BIRTH
> AND VIRTUOUS LIFE OF EDWARD,
> PRINCE OF WALES.[1]

Prince Henry would have found particularly entertaining the parallels provided by those episodes dealing with another Prince of Wales and lessons in the arts of the ideal prince, with the young prince's compassionate intercession with his father for the life of Queen Katherine Parr after the lady had been victimized by slanders spread by the hated Papist agents, Bonner and Gardiner, close associates of the villainous Wolsey. As loosely constructed as a later play on the same subject, All Is True (in which Shakespeare seems to have interested himself), Rowley's play is, however, notable for the lack of pomp and pageantry which flavors the later Henry VIII play in a curiously opulent way.

The play opens with Wolsey engaged in court intrigue. At the Pope's behest, he is promoting a marriage between King Henry's sister Mary and the aged King of

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1 I have used the Tudor Facsimile Texts reprint of the 1613 edition of the play, a reprint of the 1605 edition but better for reproducing. I have altered spelling throughout for my own and the reader's convenience.

France. The King and his Queen Jane Seymour, who is near her hour in bearing a royal heir, enter to receive emissaries; the Queen suddenly asks to be excused. Rowley's flair for theatrical effects can be seen in his handling of the crisis precipitated by the news that Queen Jane can be saved only at the price of losing her child. What will the King decree? It does not matter, really, but he chooses to save the queen. She chooses to sacrifice herself in order to give England — at long last — a Prince of Wales. This seems to mark the ending of what Rowley must have regarded as Act I.[1]

Earlier Wolsey has alluded briefly to "certain new devised Articles for ordering those brothels called the stews [eliminated]," and the second episode of the play is built upon this hint. At the end of a session in which Henry has received an embassage from the Pope and news of his sister, now married to the French king, the King suddenly announces:

> This night we mean in some disguised shape
> To visit London, and to walk the round,
> Pass through their watches, and observe the care
> And special diligence to keep our peace.
> They say night-walkers hourly pass the streets,
> Committing theft and hated sacrilege,
> And slightly pass unstayed, or unpunished.
> Go, Compton, go, and get me some disguise,
> This night we'll see our City's government.

Rowley next introduces some surefire comic material: a

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1 There are no indications of acts and scenes, but the play has a clearly recognizable five-act structure.

London Constable is shown instructing members of the watch.[1] Before he retires to bed, he asks that the vigilance of the watch be stiffened, but his reasons for this request are not, as it turns out, such as to achieve the desired effect:

> Much theft and murder was committed lately,
> There are two strangers, merchants of the Steelyard,
> Cruelly slain, found floating on the Thames,
> And greatly are the stews had in suspect,
> As places fitting for no better use;
> Therefore, be careful and examine all,
> Perhaps we may attach the murderer.

A Dogberrian member of the watch, Capcase, tells Prichall, "the merry Cobbler of Lime Street," that the "stew-houses" are

> places of much slaughter and redemption, and many cruel deeds of equity and wickedness are committed there, for diverse good men lose both their money and their computation by them, I abjure thee.

Prichall, a more realistic soul, answers Capcase in a manner most remindful of Justice Shallow (2 Henry IV, III, 2, 25-28):

> I have in my days walked to the stews as well as my neighbors, but if the mad wenches fall to murdering once, and cast men into the Thames, I have done with them; there's no dealing, if they carry fire in one hand and water in the other.

This crew soon falls to complaining — like Elbow — that they have been on the watch for too long a period. Capcase says that "some of us has discharged the place this forty year." The members of the watch settle down

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1 The popularity of the London constable as a stage-type is nowhere better illustrated than the title of Middleton's play, Blurt Master Constable (1601-2), in which the character who gives the play its title is the very minor figure that constables are in most plays.

to nap — the scene is now set for the arrival of the King disguised somehow as a courtier.

To his companions, the King insists on traveling alone. His first encounter is with Black Will, a renegade of no mean stature who is eager to leave London:

> The stews from whence I had my quarterage is now grown too hot for me; there's some suspection of a murther lately done upon two merchants of the Steelyard, which indeed as far as some five or six stabs comes to, I confess I had a hand in.

The King suggests that Black Will join the King's Guard, but the burly rascal, while affirming his great affection for the King, refuses to abandon his present position for any sum. How eminent this position is may be judged from the proposal Black Will makes the disguised-King:

> leave the Court, and shark with me; I tell thee, I am chief commander of all the stews; there's not a whore shifts a smock, but by my privilege, nor opens her shop before I have my weekly tribute: And to assure thee my valor carries credit with it, do but walk with me through the streets of London and let me see the proudest watch disturb us.

To be sure, Black Will is able to conduct his new-found friend easily through the streets: the watchmen all stand in awe of this underworld czar.

Rowley now sets in motion the device which will land the King in jail. For no reason apparent in the text, Black Will and the King are fighting. The ruler lands the better blows, but Black Will claims the greater skill. The disturbance fetches up a watch who, though

very sympathetic toward Black Will, leads the two off to the Counter. Before showing us the King in jail, Rowley gives us a glimpse of Prichall who has been told to find the King's friends and bring them to the jail.

The jail scene opens with a soliloquy by the King:

> Well, Master Constable, you have made the Counter
> This night the Royal Court of England's King,
> And by my crown I swear I would not for
> A thousand pound t'were otherwise.
> The officers in cities, now I see,
> Are like an orchard set with several trees,
> Where one must cherish one, rebuke the other;
> And in this wretched Counter I perceive
> Money plays fast and loose, purchases favor,
> And without that, nought but misery.

As the King describes some of his prisoner-companions, the 'misery' is amply defined:

> A poor gentleman hath made complaint to me,
> I am undone, quoth he, and kept in prison
> For one of your fellows that serves the King,
> Being bound for him, and he neglecting me,
> Hath brought me to this woe and misery.
> Another citizen there is, complains
> Of one belonging to the Cardinal [Wolsey],
> That in his master's name hath taken up
> Commodities valued at a thousand pound;
> The payment being deferred hath caus'd him break,
> And so is quite undone. Thus Kings and Lords, I see,
> Are oft abused by servants' treachery.

In answer to a request from the disguised-king, some of his fellow prisoners are brought into his cell for a party. One of the participants proudly announces that he is a hunted man hiding out in safety in jail under an assumed name. Before the celebration is in full swing, however, the King's rescuers arrive and the King's identity is revealed. The prisoners tremble, but the King shows what a fine, merciful fellow he is

by distributing money and calling for their petitions for redress. He takes Black Will under the royal wing, promising that such a loyal subject to the King will be looked after.[1]

This episode, which I take to be the long comic interlude of Act II, illustrated, in a lesser writer, the same sort of open-eyed awareness of vice in the city that Shakespeare as clearly betrays in Measure for Measure as he had in the two parts of Henry IV. It would be heretical to suggest anything but that Rowley was borrowing from Shakespeare, but, in point of fact, the whole question of any sort of indebtedness would seem irrevelant here. The device of the ruler passing disguised among his people to learn of their ways was, by 1604, a well-established and apparently popular plot-devise, the common property of any practicing playwright. V. O. Freeburg has listed the extant plays prior to Measure for Measure and When You See Me You Know Me built around the spying-out situation:

> The earliest use in English drama, so far as we can discover, is in Fair Em (1590), where the king disguises himself and goes off on a wooing expedition. The anonymous comedy A Knack to Know a Knave (1592), presents a king and two

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1 Perhaps it is worth noting that later in the play the King attends to the two victims of the courtiers' abuse, but we hear nothing more of Black Will. The hapless courtier for whom the prisoner Hopkins is standing surety is Rookesby, whom the King personally examines in the midst of other more pressing business. This brief scene, which I have not digested, is faintly reminiscent of the final disposition of Lucio by the Duke. It is not so effective, however, for Rookesby was not sufficiently characterized by Rowley and, unless one is reading closely, the significance of the scene is almost lost.

> courtiers...spying out one of the kanves of the land....In George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield (mentioned by Henslowe in 1593), the spy motive is used incidentally (V, 1) but with much comic irony and theatrical effect. ... Armin's Valiant Welshman (1595) presents incidentally the hero disguised as a common soldier spying on his enemy. In I Sir John Oldcastle (1598) Henry V disguises himself.[1]

Although Freeburg notes earlier non-dramatic pieces in which the trick is central, he excludes Shakespeare's Henry V because Henry is only without royal insignia and, therefore, not disguised. Concerning the use of the disguised-ruler nearer to 1604, Freeburg offers the guardedly conservative conclusion:

> It is interesting to see how in a brief period, say from 1601 to 1604, the disguised spy was used as the basic element in four plays so important as the Malcontent, the Fawn [Marston's], Measure for Measure, and the Phoenix [Middleton's].[2]

For this development, Freeburg offers no explanation except for his opinion that Shakespeare and Middleton were influenced by Marston's success in employing the device. Whether Marston's two plays antedate Measure for Measure is not known (though, when Freeburg was writing, Stoll's argument for a 1600 date for The Malcontent was largely unquestioned) and another skeptical caveat seems in order so far as Freeburg's explanation is concerned.

If we cannot determine the identities of the lenders and borrowers, we can at least note several important

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1 Disguise Plots in Elizabethan Drama: A Study in Stage Tradition (1915), 161-2.

2 Ibid., 172. The mispunctuation is reproduced from the text.

rules for employing this trick by comparing Rowley's spying-out with Shakespeare's. The ruler, if the trick is to be adequately motivated, must recognize that all is not as it should be in his land: there must be a sensible enough excuse to warrant the putting-on of the disguise, but the comic spirit seems to require that the excuse should not raise too many serious questions in an audience's minds. In a land where the overlord is supreme (whether England or Vienna), the ruler is, of necessity, in some way responsible for tolerating the situation he chooses to investigate. In Rowley's play, unlike Measure for Measure, there is no great insistence on the king's responsibility for the licentiousness of his subjects; it is merely implicit in the greater insistence on the royal officers' remissness in their duties. The links in the chain from ruler through his administrators to the people are all shown clearly in both plays, but Rowley uses the disguised-ruler action for only a comic interlude (approximately a fifth) of the dramatic whole and, thus, differs most notably from Shakespeare. In both plays the allegiance to and affection for the ruler is made abundantly clear, a fact I take to be a sure sign that the playwrights were concerned with spectators who might identify the ruler-characters with James I. Indeed, the monarch must be beloved if his spying tactics are

not to become merely the actions of a sneakily officious snooperkin.

Nowhere in Henry VIII's travels through the London underworld, however, does Rowley allow him to encounter a detractor like Lucio. Less imaginative perhaps and more cautious certainly, Rowley leaves no question concerning Black Will's great loyalty to the King. Because he took the customary precautions and removed his action to a distant land, Shakespeare had an advantage which Rowley, writing a chronicle play about a recent English monarch, was denied. Shakespeare could, then, create a Lucio who slanders his prince and becomes the one real rascal in Measure for Measure. At the same time, in showing the untrussing of his calumniator, Shakespeare was in a position to pay — less obviously — a compliment to rulers (and particularly, perhaps, James I:

> Lucio: I beseech your Highness, do not marry me to a whore. Your Highness said even now, I made you a duke; good my lord, do not recompense me in making me a cuckold.
> Duke: Upon mine honour, thou shalt marry her. Thy slanders I forgive; and therewithal Remit thy other forfeits. Take him to prison;
> And see our pleasure herein executed.
> Lucio: Marrying a punk, my lord, is pressing to death, whipping, and hanging.
> Duke: Slandering a prince deserves it. (V, 520-530)

Another set of differences between the two plays proceed from the nature of the disguises. Rowley put Henry VIII in the garb of one of his own courtiers and thus in a position to draw from Black Will the

kind of confession a friar could not elicit. Moreover, it gave Rowley the opportunity to show what the underworld thinks of the court nobles as well as the King's self-sufficiency at self-defense. Shakespeare's plotting problem was far more complicated. He had to find a disguise which would permit his Duke to penetrate to the inner core of his other characters' emotions; he had to enable the Duke to move freely through such different milieux as the prison and the moated grange at St. Luke's; he had to provide some sanction for legitimizing Mariana's substitution for Isabella in Angelo's bed; he had to provide a disguise easily managed on a stage so that the fifth-act uncasing could be expeditiously and not clumsily managed by the Duke- and Lucio-actors. There are, in fact, so many purely technical reasons for the friar-disguise that all the elaborate efforts to interpret the Duke as Shakespeare's combination of Church and State (whether to synthesize the two 'powers' or to assert the supremacy of one over the other) seem to border on the ridiculous. So far as we can ascertain, Shakespeare had never used the friar-disguise before Measure for Measure (and he never used it again); the care with which he tried to make plausible the Duke's adoption of the friar-disguise in I, 3 convinces me that Shakespeare did not take his problems lightly.

In this connection, we should recall that Chap-

man's May Day, which Parrott, on no hard evidence, dates 1601-2, contains the description of the friar's weed as "worn threadbare upon every stage, and so much villany committed under that habit that 'tis grown as suspicious as the vilest" (II, 1, 475-7). Recalling that Freeburg lists ten extant plays prior to 1604 in which friar or hermit disguises had been used,[1] one can glimpse something of the justice of Chapman's complaint. Certainly, the latter part of Chapman's description may offer a clue concerning the opening of Shakespeare's I, 3. If the friar-disguise was most widely used to conceal evil actions or to set up lovers' illicit meetings, we can see why Shakespeare may have felt it incumbent upon him to prepare his audiences quickly for that fact that his Duke-about-to-become-friar was not up to any of the customary nefarious doings:

> Duke: No, holy father, throw away that thought.
> Believe not that the dribbling dart of love
> Can pierce a complete bosom. Why I desire thee
> To give me secret harbour, hath a purpose
> More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends
> Of burning youth. (I, 3, 1-6)

If the attitude toward friar-disguise revealed in Chapman's May Day was prevalent enough for Chapman to joke about the matter, we may be entitled to the view that

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1 Freeburg lists the following: Magnificence; Satire of the Three Estates; Dr. Faustus; Mucedorus; Edward I; Look About You; The Merry Devil of Edmonton; The Malcontent; The Fair Maid of Bristow, and I Honest Whore (168-9). In all these plays, however, the disguise is used in such a perfunctory manner that we need not feel Shakespeare was greatly influenced by them.

actors and audiences alike must have appreciated the dexterity with which Shakespeare handled a shopworn stage device. Chapman also commented on the use of any kind of disguise and his remarks give further point to my conjecture:

> take such a transformance as you may be sure will keep you from discovery; for though it be the stale refuge of miserable poets by change of a hat or a cloak to alter the whole state of a comedy, so as the father must not know his own child, forsooth, nor the wife her husband, yet you must not think they do in earnest carry it away so; for say you were stuffed into a motley coat, crowded in the case of a base viol, or buttoned up in a cloak-bag even to your chin, yet if I see your face, I am able to say, 'This is Signor Lorenzo,' and therefore unless your disguise be such that your face may bear as great a part in it as the rest, the rest is nothing.[1]

We need not worry about a possible jibe at Shakespeare here. Chapman, a past master at constructing intricate disguise-plays, must have been poking fun as much at himself as at any of his contemporaries. What is certain is that Elizabethan audiences would have responded enthusiastically to instances in which playwrights avoided the worn-out uses of disguise with which their theatre-going experience had been saturated.[2]

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1 May Day, II, 1, 478-89. The speech seems a clear instance of Chapman voicing his own opinions through one of his cynical characters.

2 M. C. Bradbrook believes that disguise is coming back into its own in our modern drama but that "even in its revival, disguise has not attained the manifolf significance which it enjoyed in the Elizabethan theatre, and which Shakespeare alone fully revealed." Later in

To compare Rowley and Shakespeare's treatments of their chosen disguise-mechanisms is to see how inextricably the nature of the disguise is involved in the postulates of plot — Rowley could no more have disguised Henry VIII as a friar than Shakespeare could have disguised the Duke as a courtier. Most importantly, however, we are enabled to see how Shakespeare exercised himself to avoid the banalities into which disguise, the most theatrical of dramatic contrivances, had fallen.

The remaining three-fifths of Rowley's play need not long detain us. There are several minor matters which cast some light on our understanding of Shakespeare's handling of the Mercy-Justice conflict, however. Many critics have been repelled by what they conceive to be the unnaturally tortuous manner in which Duke Vincentio tests the mettle of other characters in the play; we have already explored King James' melodramatic stunt at Winchester for its parallels with the design of Shakespeare's Act V. Now we must note that Rowley also introduced — rather as a tempest in a teapot, to be sure — a similar deviousness into his characterization of Henry VIII and it will be fruitful to compare the esthetic effect in the two instances.

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the same essay ("Shakespeare and the Use of Disguise in Elizabethan Drama") Miss Bradbrook singles out Measure for Measure as "Shakespeare's fullest study of disguise," an opinion in which I concur. However, when she reads the "two archetypes" of disguise in Elizabethan (=Christian?) drama ("the serpent" and "the Incarnation") into the play, I feel that she has too conveniently managed to overlook the fact that disguising is of the essence of drama. Play-acting (and playwriting) is disguising, and no one need invoke two Biblical instances to explain its widespread use in any single 'period' in the history of drama.

It will be apparent at once that this craftiness is a concomitant of the dramatic incident introduced to demonstrate the desirability of a 'higher justice' (or Mercy) over legalistic justice. The best that a playwright dramatizing this conflict can hope to accomplish is to suggest somehow that character-participants in this conflict are not to be taken by an audience as seriously or 'realistically' as the conflict in which the characters are but necessary symbols.

Rowley's "Act III" is largely concerned with the romance between Brandon, one of the King's most trusted friends, and the King's newly-widowed sister, Queen Mary of France. Brandon had been dispatched to conduct Mary back to England after the death of her husband. On the way, however, the two are married. Henry receives this news with a great display of anger climaxed with the decree, "Off with Brandon's head!" The Queen (now Katherine Parr) and trusted courtiers beg mercy for the condemned man. Suddenly King Henry announces that he has only feigned anger to learn which of his supporters were sychophants and which were capable of honest and forthright judgments. At the conclusion of this episode, the King embraces Brandon as his new brother-in-law.[1] In a later episode, the

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1 This marks the end of what I would call Act III. Act IV is devoted to showing the education of the Prince of Wales and developing the characterization of Cranmer; this part of the play is clearly designed to please Prince Henry, England's new Prince of Wales. Apart from the fact that it is rather too casually put together, "Act IV" is not without its merits. That Rowley enjoyed writing this part is clearly shown by the details of schoolboy-prince education introduced here.

mercy-justice conflict is more seriously approached. "Act V" brings to a head the Papist plotting which has been intermittently introduced into the dramatic action. Queen Katherine is shown arguing down the Papist agents, Bonner and Gardiner, on the subject of Martin Luther's defection. Although King Henry is greatly pleased with the Queen's dialectical skill, he is, when alone with Wolsey's confederates, moved against, not only Luther, but the Queen as well. She is committed to the Tower and victory for Wolsey is apparently achieved. Prince Edward begs his father to hear the Queen's story because he believes (with Cranmer in the background) that the Queen has been grievously wronged. The King agrees to the Prince's request and, after hearing the Queen speak in her own defense, he releases her from prison and orders the imprisonment of Bonner and Gardiner. Here, not surprisingly, the Queen begs for their lives:

> King: Stand up, good Kate, thou wrongest thy Majesty
> To plead for them that thus have injured thee.
> Queen: I have forgotten it, and do still entreat
> Their humble pardons at your gracious feet.
> King: Mother of God, what a foolish woman's this!
> Well, for her sake we revoke our doom,
> But come not near us as you love your lives.

The supremely forgiving nature of the maligned woman

is once again demonstrated under circumstances not unlike those of Isabella's intercession in behalf of Angelo. If further proof be needed that Shakespeare's audiences were probably not disturbed one whit by Isabella's plea for Angelo's life, When You See Me You Know Me should provide a useful parallel. In Rowley's play the pardonings are not, however, so central as in Shakespeare's play where, beginning with the change-of-heart in the reluctant Isabella, there is finally a hands-around affirmation of the greater value of mercy; Toads, vipers and whited sepulchers all share equally in the final meting-out of royal clemency.

We have also noted instances of critics who have boggled at the suggestion that Measure for Measure with all its 'filth' may have been written or produced for a royal audience. Most of these critics reconstructed the court of Elizabeth I and James I on an analogy with the court of Queen Victoria, it is true, and nowadays the voice of Mrs. Grundy is almost silenced. When You See Me You Know Me is, however, also instructive in this connection. Rowley took human vice and frailties for granted — with the result that Henry VIII, like Duke Vincentio, is not characterized as one to lose his mind over the harsh facts of human existence revealed in the play's most sordid part. Moreover, Rowley seemed to have felt that the most heinous offenses were not those

of the denizens of London's underworld, but rather the intrigues of the Papist forces. The balance-sheet in Rowley's play is, finally, similar to that in Measure for Measure — the worst villains are not the common folk who maintain the stews, but the higher officials and would-be courtiers (Rookesby, Lucio; Wolsey, Gardiner, Bonner, Angelo).[1] We need only compare Prichall's "I have in my days walked to the stews as well as my

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1 It is noteworthy, however, that Rowley was rather more content than Shakespeare merely to talk about the vicious life in the stews. Neither author can be said to have taken any obvious pleasure in graphically delineating the underworld life for his audiences. Shakespeare had come as close to showing this world in the Henry IV plays as he was ever to come and the various interpretations placed on the Prince Hal "I know you all" soliloquy (1 Henry IV, I, 2, 218-240) are a reliable measure of the kinds of difficulty Shakespeare apparently learned to avoid after the experience of writing those plays. (It is interesting to speculate on the fact that the Henry IV plays depend on suggestions in the source-play, The Famous Victories of Henry V, in much the same way that Measure for Measure is related to Promos and Cassandra.)

Again, we must note that both Rowley and Shakespeare resisted whatever temptation there must have been to present a seductively attractive young whore with a heart of gold (such as we find in Dekker's popular The Honest Whore, Part I [c. 1604]) or even such a vixenish but vile-tempered creature (as we find in Marston's The Dutch Courtesan [1603-1605]). Neither the sentimental strain of Dekker nor the satirical impulse of Marston offered any clues to either Rowley or Shakespeare concerning the portrayal of a stage-type popular to an unprecedented degree in 1604.

Shakespeare never betrays any deepseated sympathies for the few members of the oldest profession he created. Our last real view of Doll Tearsheet is of a shrill doxy being carried off to jail. The Courtezan in The Comedy of Errors is like Bianca in Othello, a lady who appears so fleetingly that we scarcely think of her as anyone but an old girlfriend of Cassio's. In Timon, Alcibiades' mistresses are unpleasant vultures and in Pericles, Marina is a white lily of purity with the conversion powers of a Salvation Army major (cf. Shaw's Major Barbara) in dire straits but the best position to argue against prostitution. I doubt that Shakespeare disapproved of prostitution except as an unpleasant but real fact of human existence.

neighbors" with Pompey's matter-of-factness to see the similarity of moral attitudes in the two plays:

> Escalus: ...Pompey, you are partly a bawd, Pompey, howsoever you colour it in being a tapster. Come, tell me true; it shall be the better for you.
> Pompey: Truly, sir, I am a poor fellow that would live.
> Escalus: How would you live, Pompey? By being a bawd? What do you think of the trade, Pompey? Is it a lawful trade?
> Pompey: If the law would allow it, sir.
> Escalus: But the law will not allow it, Pompey; nor it shall not be allowed in Vienna.
> Pompey: Does your worship mean to geld and splay all the youth of the city?
> Escalus: No, Pompey.
> Pompey: Truly, sir, in my poor opinion, they will to't then. If your worship will take order for the drabs and the knaves, you need not to fear the bawds.
> Escalus: There is pretty orders beginning, I can tell you. It is but heading and hanging.
> Pompey: If you head and hang all that offend that way but for ten year together, you'll be glad to give out a commission for more heads. If this law hold in Vienna ten year, I'll rent the fairest house in it after three-pence a bay. If you live to see this come to pass, say Pompey told you so. (II, 1, 230-257)

Shakespeare's attitudes were probably not identical with those expressed by Pompey, but it is clear, I think, that there was a part of Shakespeare's mind which saw the irrefutable logic of Pompey's argument and which could not, through Escalus, offer any satisfactory answer. In this encounter, Pompey is allowed to carry the day. The vagueness and ambiguity of the moral issues involved are best understand when we recall that, despite his dialectical victory in this scene, Pompey is last seen entrenched in jail as a trusty, assistant to a hangman who regards Pompey's trade as lower in the occupational hierarchy than the

'mystery' (guild?) of public executioners.

Nevertheless, When You See Me You Know Me contains in its closing scene more slimy jesting than even the most tenderminded Victorian was ever able to dredge up out of Measure for Measure. Most importantly, the dirt is clearly provided for its own sake; in no sense is it part of the philosophical rubric of the play. Rowley concluded his play by bringing the redoutable Charles, Archduke of Austria,[1] to England to inquire why Henry has broken off their alliance. The devious plotting of Cardinal Wolsey is suddenly brought to light, for he alone has been responsible for subverting the English monarch's amicable foreign-relations program. Wolsey is exposed and then undone. Finally, to conclude the play merrily, Rowley brings in Will Summers,[2] a clown of such great fame

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1 It is useless to do more than note the appearance of another dignitary associated with Austria in another 1604 play. The character's full title, as it is mellifluously announced in the play, suggests, however, that Rowley wanted to establish clearly and economically the supremacy of Henry VIII over the rest of the world: "Great Charles, the first Emperor of Almayne, King of the Romans, Semper Augustus, warlike King of Spain and Sicily, both Naples, Navarre and Arragon, King of Crete and great Jerusalem, Archduke of Austria, Duke of Millaine, Brabant, Burgundy, Tyrell and Flanders."

2 Summers (or Sommers) was first seen as a bravely witty clown in "Act I" where he is given a good speech on the way news and court gossip travels among the common people. Sommers is used throughout as a counterpoise to Wolsey and, as such, Rowley manages to give the play whatever thematic unity it has through him. (See Leslie Hotson's chapter on Will Sommer [Hotson's spelling] in Shakespeare's Motley [1952], 71-83.)

that Archduke Charles has heard of his clowning skills in far-off lands. In the rhyming bout which follows the clown vanquishes in turn King Henry, the Archduke and the Queen. The rhymes with which Summers' victory is achieved were not written with an eye toward one day pleasing Thomas Bowdler,[1] but they must have seemed acceptable enough to the original audiences. In all events, if the Rowley play provides an accurate guage of what audiences (courtly or popular) could tolerate, we see again that Measure for Measure was relatively inoffensive.

When we come to The Malcontent, we are in a better position to assess another important difference between the Rowley play and Measure for Measure. The Malcontent contains a very considerable amount of vilification of the human race, but, even so, Marston directed most of his vilification at profligate courtiers. As we have seen, there is something of this in When You See Me You Know Me: what Henry VIII is made to uncover is the negligence of his own royal servants and their responsi-

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1 It is important to remember that Measure for Measure, along with the Henry IV plays and Othello, caused the arch-expurgator the greatest difficulties. Moreover, Measure for Measure was "torn bodily from" the 1632 Second Folio Shakespeare which is preserved at Valladolid, a fact which seems to suggest the Jesuits found the play offensive in the extreme during the seventeenth century.

However, as I confront the question of quoting Rowley's dreary smut, I suddenly find myself in considerable sympathy with the expurgatorial aims of Bowdler.

bility for most of the human miseries he uncovers in the Counter. There is almost nothing of this in Measure for Measure: we are told very little about Angelo but there is nothing to suggest that he had been a nobleman at Duke Vincentio's court. Indeed, this difference is not surprising for Shakespeare directed the action of his play away from the court and, unlike Rowley, kept to the streets and offices of Vienna throughout. Even the final scene which we might expect to take place back in the ducal palace, where the opening scene was set, is very carefully located in Vienna's streets.[1] It is also noteworthy that Shakespeare's Duke blames no one but himself for the state into which his subjects have fallen. Shakespeare insists on this characterizing detail not only in I, 3, 19-43, but also in the important soliloquy with which Shakespeare concluded Act III:

> Duke: He who the sword of heaven will bear
> Should be as holy as severe;
> Pattern in himself to know

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1 Angelo is made to raise questions which call attention to the street-setting: "Why meet him at the gates and reliver our authorities there?" (to which Escalus answers, "I guess not") and "Why should we proclaim it in an hour before his entering, that if any crave redress of injustice, they should exhibit their petitions in the street?" (IV, 4, 5-12) Although this passage was probably designed merely to prepare the audience for coming events, some critics have beem disturbed by Shakespeare's motives in setting the judgment-scene outside the court. See, for example, Denton Snider's suggestion that Shakespeare set the scene where neither Church nor State has jurisdiction in order to transcend both forces and provide an appropriate bridal bower for the marriage of Church (Isabella) and State (Duke); unfortunately, the Duke is described as having entered the city gates — and no marriage takes place during the action of the play.

> Grace to stand, and virtue go;
> More nor less to others paying
> Than by self-offences weighing.
> Shame to him whose cruel striking
> Kills for faults of his own liking.
> Twice treble shame on Angelo,
> To weed my vice and let his grow. (III, 2, 274-284)[1]

Shakespeare's work is far more forthright than Rowley's play. Recognizing the human propensity for sinfulness, Shakespeare seems to have felt that no one but a ruler is properly to be held accountable for the behavior of his subjects. He makes little attempt to extenuate the Duke's responsibility by shifting responsibility (as Rowley did) or by dwelling on the bestiality of the human race (as Marston did). Recognizing this, we can see evidence once more of Shakespeare's interest in the Duke as something more than a mere puppet-master.[2]

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1 Miss E. M. Pope ("The Renaissance Background of Measure for Measure," 74-76) has considered the importance of the Duke's admissions of his own laxity to Shakespeare's audiences:

> The Duke, at the beginning of the play [i.e., after I, 3], would be recognized at once as the type [of ruler] who had failed because he was too merciful to enforce the laws properly....The Duke is essentially a wise and noble man who has erred from an excess of good will; he has put an end to his foolishness before the action proper begins, and so can step gracefully into the role of hero and good ruler; but Shakespeare does not disguise the fact that he has been wrong: he himself frankly describes his laxity as a 'vice' and as such any Renaissance audience would certainly consider it.

2 Although Sen Gupta (Shakespearian Comedy, 189-190) regards Isabella as the protagonist of Measure for Measure, his remarks on the Duke reflect a shrewder appreciation of that character than is to be found in other criticism dwelling too much on Isabella. He sees the Duke as "neither a puppet nor a nothingness but a live human being whose actions are slightly enigmatic but not inexplicable...many of his devices are questionable, but they are redeemed by the desire to order things in such a way that all may live."

A final difference between the Rowley play and Measure for Measure that is emphasized by consideration of The Malcontent is concerned with Shakespeare's view of kingship. In this respect, Shakespeare's play has much more in common with his own earlier plays than with similar plays by his contemporaries. Under Rowley's inspiration, Henry VIII emerges as a king who thoroughly enjoys being king. Nowhere does Rowley allow himself to suggest that kingship is an onerous and wearisome job. (Perhaps, if he wrote to please young Prince Henry, such an implication would be inappropriate.) In The Malcontent, the deposed duke is eager enough to reinstate himself but his driving motivation seems to be injured pride. In Shakespeare's play, however, we find another instance of his debt to the old pastoral tradition as we note this comedy-Duke prefers a simple — "removed" is Shakespeare's word — life to court life and all it implies:

> Duke: My holy sir, none better knows than you
> How I have ever lov'd the life removed,
> And held in idle price to haunt assemblies
> Where youth and cost, and witless bravery keeps. (I, 3, 7-10)

Elsewhere he is described as a contemplative and temperate man, "One that, above all other strifes, contended especially to know himself" (III, 2, 246-7). Here again is Shakespeare's poor-little-rich-king, one more in a gallery of similar figures stemming from

a pastoral tradition that Shakespeare seems never to have outgrown. His earlier counterparts include Ferdinand of Navarre in whom Shakespeare combined sex nausea with court nausea for high comic effect,[1] Duke Senior and even Duke Frederick who seem to prefer the Forest of Arden or a religious life to the 'pompous court' (As You Like It, V, 4, 188), the tired old King of France who looks back fondly on the days when his court was peopled with men like Bertram's father (All's Well, I, 2, 24-70). These were all unwilling rulers, but it was in the Henry IV plays that Shakespeare had most systematically explored a hint in his sources only to emerge with a prince capable of referring to his regal obligations as "the debt I never promised" (I Henry IV, I, 2, 232) and who, as a king, seemed to owe his greatness to his common touch and his impatience with the stiff formalities of court life.[2]

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1 Perhaps it should be recalled here that Love's Labor's Lost was spoken of as having been revived in 1604.

2 Shakespeare seems always to have been most attracted to the portrayal, invariably more sympathetic than we expect, of men who, through no particular fault of their own, were not cut out to be happy rulers. Henry VI, to the extent that Shakespeare had any part in his creation, and particularly Richard II both emerge as wishfully pastoral types. (Cf. Marlowe's un-pastoral conception of Edward II with Shakespeare's Richard II.) Richard is clearly shown to be a ruler more interested in playing at than in being king, and therefore as much of an escapist as Prince Hal. The same sympathetic attitude is apparent in the treatment of Hamlet, Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, all of whom are shirkers longing for some sort of Arcadian retreat denied them by the more exalted office they have inherited or which has been thrust upon them.

Much of this buried pastoralism which sets Measure for Measure apart from the Rowley and Marston plays comes inevitably in the wake of the technical problem of motivating a ruler's voluntary retreat from office, a problem that only Shakespeare had to solve. However, he need not have characterized Duke Vincentio as one who clearly preferred 'the life removed' in order to accomplish his removal,[1] and we can conclude that Shakespeare, at the time he wrote Measure for Measure, was still thinking, perhaps unconsciously, of ruling as one of the most burdensome and unattractive occupations to which man could fall heir. His estimate of courtiers and court life was probably not flattering, either, but there is little hard evidence in Measure for Measure on which to base this conjecture. The pastoral convention of asserting the superiority of the simple or 'natural' life over that of the court (and, by extension, the city) reflects an attitude toward life Shakespeare had always found attractive, and although pastoralism wears a strange face in

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1 Some unsympathetic critics have alleged that Vincentio, as characterized, is better suited to his friar-rôle than to being a duke. Such criticism is meaningless, especially when we recall that, when he put his characters into disguise, Shakespeare always made them play to the hilt the roles assigned them in their disguises. This is, after all, the fun that makes disguise an attractive gambit. However, such complaints are encouraged by Shakespeare's portrayal of the Duke as (like Hamlet) more clearly a Man of Thought than a Man of Action. Lucio's slanders, es-

Measure for Measure, it is present as a significant element which, perhaps more than any other quality, marks the play as totally Shakespearean.[1] It is this quality which ties Measure for Measure most firmly to As You Like It, another play with a puzzlingly effective combination of cynicism and affirmation concerning the human spirit.

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pecially those which call our attention the Duke's celibacy by emphasizing his sexual habits, also have the effect of making Duke Vincentio seem a notably abstemious ruler. In addition, Vincentio's bachelorhood, his deep interest in scourging vice, and, finally, the (unintentionally?) comic effect of coupling Vincentio with another highminded soul with similarly ascetic proclivities — all of these facts become details which quite understandably plague critics in any age. (It has only been in this sexually enlightened age that anyone has seriously suggested, for example, that Shakespeare intended to satirize Isabella, a possibility I cannot countenance except by recourse to Freud and Havelock Ellis.)

Vincentio's bachelorhood was a fact Shakespeare had to establish because he planned — from the outset, I believe — to pair off the Duke and Isabella at the end of the play. Having done this, it was perhaps inevitable that he remind his audience of the Duke's abstemiousness in order to make Lucio's remarks the slanders they were intended to be. Only by a strongminded insistence on the essentially artificial and unrealistic nature of the play can this whole question be properly approached.

1 Compare these remarks with William Empson's treatment of The Beggar's Opera as pastoral drama in Some Versions of Pastoral (1935). In Empson's essay on Measure for Measure, however, he does not consider, as he might have, Shakespeare's play as partaking of this tradition.

For the view that Shakespeare "revealed the pastoral, critically, for what it really was — a precious and highly artificial form of writing and a fashionable mode of escapism from the court-life of the time, which most courtiers of sensibility and intelligence discovered from experience to be more sordid, exhausting and dangerous than it appeared from a distance," see E. C. Pettet's Shakespeare and the Romance Tradition (1949), 131.

There is good reason to believe that When You See Me You Know Me was like Measure for Measure in being designed for popular audiences. In the case of The Malcontent, however, we seem to be confronted with a play written by what Harbage has recently called "a coterie playwright" for a "coterie" audience.[1] Yet, from the famous Induction we learn that the Globe actors presented The Malcontent at the Globe and we hesitate to settle too easily for the view that Marston's play was written with a very special addience of intelligentsia in mind. It is clearly a play which, in its early history in the theater, gives the lie to any hard and fast distinctions between the "popular" and "coterie" traditions.

In its time, The Malcontent must have been reckoned as one of the most popular plays of the early seventeenth century. If the number of editions through which it passed in the short space of six months is a reliable index of its popularity, the play must have been a Jacobean bestseller. The Stationers' Register entry for "An Enterlude called the Malecontent, Tragicomoedia" is dated 5 July 1604. Two editions were issued before the famous 'augmented' edition appeared — all before the end of 1604.

On the assumption of Professor Stoll that The Mal-

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1 Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, 347-349. Harbage is aware that The Malcontent was played at the Globe (cf. page 89), but he includes the play as one written for the "select" audience at Blackfriars where the Queen's Company (the former Chapel Boys) played. It is also important to note that Harbage places the play in the 1604-1608 period.

content was first written in 1600, many scholars have systematically explored the play for its bearings on Hamlet and As You Like It. However, as I have noted elsewhere, the 1600 date is no longer widely accepted; Stoll's basis for assigning the early date was primarily a hazardous topical reference easily attacked by Small and others. I do not see that either 1600 or 1604 has been conclusively proved as the date for the writing or for a first production of the play by any company of boy-actors. I doubt that final proof is forthcoming. What we are entitled to accept, however, is the fact that the King's Men had borrowed Marston's play and that a special Induction for the Globe production had been written between 5 July and the end of 1604. This suggests that the King's Men had The Malcontent in their repertory before Measure for Measure was presented at Court on 26 December, 1604.[1]

The third — or 'augmented' — edition of 1604 differs from the earlier editions primarily in the inclusion of the Induction and in the addition of considerable comic under-plot material. The part of Passarello, a fool, is perhaps the most notable augmentation and I assume that the rôle was specially written for Robert Armin. In the Induction

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1 E. K. Chambers categorically dates the play 1604 (Eliz. Stage, III, 431-2). Not surprisingly, he doubts Stoll's contention that Shakespeare borrowed anything from Marston. In the following pages, it will be apparent that, though I can recognize that Thersites may reflect Marston's influence on Shakespeare, I see nothing clearly Marstonian in Measure for Measure.

the whole question of the Globe production and the necessary additions for that production is considered in some detail. I am not certain in my own mind that the information contained in the following passage is trustworthy, but, enigmatic as it is, the student of Jacobean drama must be grateful for it as one of the few surviving mines of information on the practical, everyday workings of the London theaters:

> SLY: I would know how you come by this play.
> CONDELL: Faith, sir, the book was lost; and because 'twas pity so good a play should be lost, we found it, and play it.
> SLY: I wonder you would play it, another company having interest in it.
> CONDELL: Why not Malevole in folio with us, as Jeronimo in decimo-sexto with them? They taught us a name for our play; we call it <u>One For Another</u>.
> SLY: What are your additions?
> BURBAGE: Sooth, not greatly needful; only as your sallet to your great feast, to entertain a little more time, and to abridge the not-received custom of music in our theatre. I must leave you, sir.
> SINKLO: Doth he play the Malcontent?
> CONDELL: Yes, sir.[1]

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1 For my own convenience, I have used Hazelton Spencer's collated edition of the play in his textbook, <u>Elizabethan Plays</u> (1933), 561-97. The quoted lines are therein numbered 97-114. On the whole question of the authorship of the Induction (a matter which I found, to my surprise, to be still unsettled), I stand with the majority opinion that John Webster was responsible. I am not so sure, however, that Webster provided the additional dialogue, all of which seems consistent with Marston's style.

Because of the introduction of Passarello, there was a concomitant expansion of the parts of Bilioso, who now becomes Passarello's employer, and Bianca, Bilioso's young wife.

Working from the Induction, it is possible to reconstruct much of the casting in the Globe production. There is no room for doubt, for example, that Burbage played the Malcontent Altofronto-Malevole; his sudden departure in the Induction passage quoted above is explicable in terms of the early entrance of the Malcontent in the play. The other actors who appear in the Induction, Sly, Condell, Lowin and the mysterious Sinklo, cannot have had early entrances. Logically, then, those actors who do not appear in the Induction probably do not appear because they were holding themselves in readiness to start the play. Fitting the missing actors to the characters who appear earliest in the play, we have Shakespeare, Heminges, Phillips, Cowley and Armin to play Bilioso, Prepasso, Duke Pietro, Ferrardo, Count Equato, Count Celso, and Guerrino, the seven characters who, with Malevole, open the play.[1] Passarello, the role Armin played, does not begin until later. It is not my intention to assign actors to parts, a hazardously conjectural undertaking at best, but I am certain that we can place Burbage, Lowin, Armin and Cowley in The Malcontent with reasonable assurance. To Lowin I assign the villainous Mendoza because Mendoza's first entrance comes late enough to enable Lowin, in 1604 the 'second actor' in the Globe Company, to appear in the Induction. To Cowley I assign Bilioso because it is a comic role not out of keeping with Verges and Constable Elbow.

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1 I have used only the actors whose names are mentioned in the royal documents naming The King's Men.

Comparing Measure for Measure with The Malcontent, I have been struck by the fact that, character for character, the two plays are remarkably alike in the demands they would place upon an acting company. I know that many — if not most — scholars will not be inclined to infer that similar characters were necessarily played by the same actors in the two plays, but, without pressing the matter, I should insist that the inference is valid inasmuch as it is consistent with what little we know concerning the "lines" of parts in which particular actors specialized:

Duke Vincentio	Malevole-Altofronto (Burbage)
Claudio	Pietro, Duke of Genoa
Angelo	Mendoza, villain-usurper (Lowin)
Escalus	Celso, Altofronto's friend
Elbow (or Pompey)	Bilioso (Cowley)
Lucio	Passarello (Armin)
Isabella	Aurelia, Pietro's wife
Mariana	Maria, Altofronto's loyal wife
Mistress Overdone	Maquerelle, an old pandress
Julietta	Bianca, Bilioso's young wife
Francisca	Emilia, a lady-in-waiting

Marston's play is peopled with otherwise indistinct courtiers for whom there are no particular counterparts in Measure for Measure. Both plays, however, require approximately the same number of supporting players. The parallels are astonishingly close, particularly in relation to the number of female roles. When one remembers that Marston apparently wrote the play for another company, one must conclude that all acting companies were of approximately the same size or that one of the reasons the King's Men decided to borrow the

play was that it so nearly suited the resources of the Globe's acting strength.

The construction of the play and the sweep of Marston's language would account for the popularity of The Malcontent in any period, but perhaps in 1604 audiences would have uncovered some exciting topical values that would not have been so apparent earlier. Hazelton Spencer states that

> in Bilioso and Maquerelle the courtiers of James I were treated to a scathing indictment which, bitter as it is, yet remains truly comic.[1]

I do not agree with this in its implication that Marston set out to excoriate James' courtiers in particular, but in a more general sense there is indeed much justice in the view. It is, however, pointless to argue this matter. If Stoll is right in relegating the play to 1600, there can be no sound basis for regarding Marston as critical of James' court. Even if the play was written in 1604, however, it would be folly to insist on such a reading. Does Shakespeare's satirical treatment of such courtier-types as Osric and Polonius betoken a 'scathing indictment' of the courtiers of Elizabeth I?[2]

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1 Elizabethan Plays, 560.

2 For some allusions to James' courtiers at a later period, see A. W. Upton, "Allusions to James I and his Court in Marston's Fawn and Beaumont's Woman-Hater," PMLA (December, 1929), 1048-1065. It is important to recall that Marston had a hand in Eastward Ho (S.R. 4 September 1605), a play of undoubted — and unflattering — topicality. Marston's The Fawn is difficult to date any more definitely than 1604-1606.

Again, however we may doubt specific topical thrusts in The Malcontent, it is still possible to conjecture that, like Measure for Measure, Marston's play would have had general topical bearings in 1604. Plays in which court intrigue figures prominently had an honorable history in English drama, but certainly the realignment of power at King James' court would have given the play overtones of immediacy for a 1604 audience. That this is true is suggested clearly enough through the disclaimer Marston attached to all three 1604 editions of his play. This brief introductory epistle is, unfortunately, not as clear as we should like it to be. All such introductions were in some sense conventional and it is dangerous to take Marston's any more seriously than the usual apologies for an author's "poor talents." Marston appears to have differed from Shakespeare in that, as a very self-consciously literary figure, he was reluctant to pass up an opportunity to speak out in print. Yet, despite all these caveats, the epistle attached to The Malcontent editions seems a reliable index of the critical responses evoked by the play in some quarters. Moreover, in this play marked by a special eloquence we associate with satirists, it is easy to imagine how members of an audience well stocked with court gossip might read topicalities into the play which the author

may not have intended. In all events, the letter raises many questions concerning the popular reception of the play:

...

> ...in some things I have willingly erred, as in supposing a Duke of Genoa, and in taking names different from that city's families; for which some may wittily accuse me, but my defence shall be as honest as many reproofs unto me have been most malicious; since, I heartily protest, it was my care to write so far from reasonable offence that even strangers, in whose state I laid my scene, should not from thence draw any disgrace to any, dead or living. Yet, in despite of my endeavors, I understand some have been most unadvisedly overcunning in misinterpreting me, and with subtlety as deep as hell have maliciously spread ill rumors, which, springing from themselves have heavily returned. Surely I desire to satisfy every firm spirit, who, in all his actions, proposeth to himself no more ends than God and virtue do, whose intentions are always simple; to such I protest that, with my free understanding, I have not glanced at disgrace of any but of those whose unquiet studies labor innovation, contempt of holy policy, reverend comely superiority, and establish'd unity: for the rest of my supposed tartness, I fear not but unto every worthy mind it will be approved so general and honest as may modestly pass with the freedom of satire. I would fain leave the paper; only one thing afflicts me, to think that scenes, invented merely to be spoken, should be enforcively published to be read, and that the least-hurt I can receive is to do myself the wrong. But, since others otherwise would do me more, the least inconvenience is to be accepted. I have myself, therefore, set forth this comedy; but so, that my enforced absence must much rely upon the printer's discretion...[1]

It is noteworthy that again we find a blurring of distinctions between types of plays. Although the play registered as a 'tragicomoedia,' Marston here refers

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1 The reference to the 'enforced absence' has evoked many conjectures. Unfortunately, like every other allusion to the author's difficulties over the play, it is all too vague. Marston's biographers have not yet been able to fill in the missing pieces.

to it as a 'comedy' and invokes 'the freedom of satire.' Most noteworthy, however, is the effect of Marston's defense of his own work. This plea of innocence is repeated — whether by Webster or Marston is immaterial — in the following bit of dialogue in the Induction. In this passage, the actor, Will Sly, was portraying a customer used to seeing plays at one of the private theaters (presumably Blackfriars); he boasts that he is "one that hath seen this play often" and has "most of the jests here in my table-book." Speaking to the actors who were enacting themselves (Burbage, Condell and Lowin), Sly becomes the embodiment of what must have been the common view of the play:

> SLY: Do you hear, sir? this play is a bitter play.
>
> CONDELL: Why, sir, 't is neither satire nor moral, but the mean passage of a history; yet there are a sort of discontented creatures that bear a stingless envy to great ones, and these will wrest the doings of any man to their base, malicious applyment; but should their interpretation come to the test, like your marmoset, they presently turn their teeth to their tail and eat it.
>
> SLY: I will not go so far with you; but I say, any man that hath wit may censure, if he sit in the twelve-penny room; and I say again, the play is bitter.
>
> BURBAGE: Sir, you are like a patron that, presenting a poor scholar to a benefice, enjoins him not to rail against anything that stands within compass of his patron's folly. Why should not we enjoy the ancient freedom of poesy? Shall we protest to the ladies that their painting makes them angels? or to my young gallant that his expense in the brothel shall gain him reputation? No, sir, such vices as stand

not accountable to law should be cured as men heal tetters, by casting ink upon them. Would you be satisfied in anything else, sir?

SLY: Ay, marry, would I! I would know how you came by this play. (68-97, Induction)

The mere fact that such elaborate precautions have been taken to avoid any misinterpretation of the play gives considerable credence to Samuel Calvert's complaint concerning the lack of restraint in the London acting companies at a time not much later than this:

> The Players do not forbear to represent upon their stage the whole course of this present time, not sparing either King, State, or Religion in so great absurdity and with such liberty, that any would be afraid to hear them.[1]

Yet, our knowledge of the background suggested here is so sparse that we can do little more than conjecture that 1604 was a period in which Londoners' sensibilities were tender and the fear of reprisals, on the part of the actors, remarkably great. We are now in a position to assess the important fact that, for some reason, The Malcontent was taken to be good enough for a Globe production (under a highly irregular arrangement) but was not offered at Court during the same Christmas Revels which Measure for Measure opened.[2] The description of The Malcontent as "neither satire nor moral, but the mean passage of a history" hardly suffices as evidence against the pointedness and potential dangerousness of the play.

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1 Calvert's letter to Winwood is dated 28 March, 1605. (Winwood's Memorials, II, 54)

2 The Malcontent may, however, have been seen o[illegible] by Christmas of 1604, read by too many members of th[illegible] Court to justify presenting it during the Revels.

In all honesty, I must admit that The Malcontent has been primarily interesting to me for the light — admittedly too dim — it sheds on Measure for Measure at the Globe in 1604. As examples of drama, however, the plays seem to be different in many more respects than they are similar. Indeed, perhaps they are only significantly similar for the prominence which the writers allowed the disguised-ruler to assume. Rather stubbornly, perhaps, again I must insist that I do not believe it possible to determine in which direction any borrowing took place. More importantly, I am not certain that it is even possible to prove that any borrowing, in the sense of conscious plagiarism, took place.[1] In the case of Measure for Measure, where it is impossible to ignore Shakespeare's debt to Whetstone, perhaps no censure of any great consequence would be attached to Shakespeare if one admitted that possible admiration for Marston's success in handling the disguised-ruler may have been a formative influence on Shakespeare as he redesigned the structure of Promos and Cassandra. I am not, after all, intent on building a case for Measure for Measure as Shakespeare's finest and most original contribution to the world's corpus of dramatic literature. Nevertheless, at the

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1 "Plagiarism" is a snarl-word in our time and, in spite of the illuminating implications in H. O. White's Plagiarism and Imitation during the English Renaissance (1935), I am not personally convinced that it was notably less pejorative in Shakespeare's time. In all events, after reviewing all the controversial articles on Marston and Shakespeare borrowing or not borrowing from one another, I have concluded that, unless I cho to be a special pleader and ignore one side, nothing been established one way or the other.

risk of protesting the matter too much, I should insist that Shakespeare owed nothing to Marston in the case of Measure for Measure. Conjectures concerning the relationship in this instance might prove as interesting as those concerning Hamlet and Antonio's Revenge. They would, unfortunately, remain in the realm of interesting conjecture.

A comparison of Marston's handling of his disguised-ruler with Shakespeare's must be conducted at a disadvantage. We can talk of Shakespeare's sources for Measure for Measure with reasonable certainty that Promos and Cassandra provided some grist for Shakespeare's mill in the rather inexpert handling of King Corvinus. We can, in other words, account for Shakespeare's Duke Vincentio adequately without recourse to a consideration of The Malcontent. In the case of Marston's play, no source has been discovered.[1] We may credit Marston with overmuch originality, however, if we do not recall all the instances of disguised rulers in earlier plays (the same plays which may have been familiar enough to Shakespeare). The disguised-ruler was, in a sense, an inevitable out for a writer like Marston whose talents and earlier successes were in the field of literary satire. When Marston interested himself in the satirizing of court-types, he committed himself to a heavy reliance on a commentator-character who could move easily and know-

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1 It should be noted that source-studies of Marston have not kept pace with source-studies of Shakespeare and Chapman. However, Marston was in an excellent position to know — and know well — all the usual sources available to these writers.

ingly through court circles. There is little variation in the way Marston handled his disguised-rulers. In The Malcontent, the deposed Altofronto-Malevole is used to rail on the perfidies of his own former followers; in The Fawn, the disguised Hercules, Duke of Ferrara, spies on his son, Tiberio, during a diplomatic mission to the court of Gonzago, Duke of 'Urbin,' and rails on the perfidies of Gonzago's courtiers. The possibilities of introducing any further variations on this pattern are not numerous; there is nothing to occasion any surprise in the fact that Marston abandoned this line after The Malcontent and The Fawn. Wood has aptly stated the advantages Marston gained in employing his disguised-rulers so extensively, but he has failed to consider how organically this type of character is related to the problems of plotting satirical comedy:

> Faunus, the disguised Duke [Hercules], is one of a whole literature of similarly disguised, benevolently inclined characters in the drama of the time. Vincentio, in Measure for Measure, the Duke in Day's Law Tricks, and (with reservations) Marston's own Malevole are three examples of the type. Faunus is, like Malevole, by virtue of his concealed identity, in a position of tactical superiority, and is able to act as a sort of satirical commentator on the action and on the follies and 'humours' of the actors.[1]

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1 The Plays of John Marston, (edited by H. Harvey Wood, Vol. II (1938), xviii. It is important to note how carefully Wood avoids any implication that Shakespeare was indebted to Marston in connection with the Duke; Wood states that Gonzago in The Fawn is "an obvious derivation of Polonius" (xix).

On the superficial level, some of the major differences between The Malcontent and Measure for Measure proceed from the single element which seems to make the two plays similar. Although we are concerned with two disguised-rulers, their reasons for assuming the disguise lead us into the most important dissimilarities of the plays. Marston's Altofronto has reluctantly assumed his disguise. He has been deposed and he is bitter; his designs are retributive and his intrigue is directed toward a recognizably self-serving end, regaining his throne. (It is important to understand that Marston never really offers any good reasons for Altofronto's dethronement; here the procedure is similar to that followed by Shakespeare and, presumably, in keeping with the comic design of the play.) Essentially, Marston's task was considerably simpler than Shakespeare's. It is easier to motivate an unjustly deposed ruler's attempt to recoup his losses than it is to render credible a reigning and admired ruler's voluntary withdrawal for self-educative and rather arbitrarily examinational purposes.[1] Although

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1 Cf. The Fawn, where Marston had to solve the same problem facing Shakespeare in Measure for Measure. It is significant that Marston wasted little time explaining why Duke Hercules has adopted his disguise. The play opens with Hercules and his brother, Renaldo, within sight of 'Urbin.' Hercules will be conducted no further and bids Renaldo, who will govern Ferrara in the Duke's absence, to return home. Before departing, however, Renaldo would know why Hercules has adopted this disguise. Hercules explains that he wishes to observe his son and how "his cooler blood will behave itself in this business." He hints that there are other reasons (about which we never hear) and the matter is at an end. Marston requires only five speec (approximately 31 lines) to accomplish all this; Shal speare took two scenes (I, 1 and I, 3).

Marston involved his deposed duke in some of the most complex intrigues since Kyd's Spanish Tragedy (to which Marston is indebted), he was able to treat each of Altofronto-Malevole's actions as immediately comprehensible as direct involvement in the action of the main plot. No matter how often Marston ignored his duke's dramatic functions in order to launch his own spurts of invective, he could still pull the character back in order to get on with the plot. Shakespeare's Duke was not capable of being so integrally involved in any plot which moved inexorably toward some clearly foreshadowed end.[1] Marston always kept Malevole at the center of the dramatic action as well as the center of interest; Shakespeare could only try to keep Duke Vincentio — as not many readers of the play will believe — as the center of interest, the focal character, for an audience.[2] Yet both plays proceed from equally artificial premises. This is not immediately apparent because the premises on which

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1 Again, Shakespeare's structural problems are more to be compared with Marston's in The Fawn. Marston thrust Duke Hercules outside the main action, the breakdown of young Tiberio's efforts to win young Dulcimel for his father's bride. Hercules-Faunus is, like Duke Vincentio, a spectator during most of the play; there is little opportunity for him to control the Tiberio-Dulcimel romance. Marston kept Hercules interesting by turning him into another eccentric who rails; Shakespeare succeeded in designing his play in such a way as to give Vincentio a modicum of control over the Isabella-Angelo plot.

2 Perhaps the Duke's testing of Angelo and his subjects is the central action in the sense that it is the enveloping action. Yet, to argue for this view necessitates ignoring the fact that Isabella and Angelo have become the most interesting characters in the play.

Marston built The Malcontent are so susceptible to the realistic psychological motivation which makes a reader overlook the essential transparency of the plot.

Although I have always been mistrustful of a favorite gambit of some dramatic historians, namely, that playwrights steal popular character-types from one another, I realize that any comparison of The Malcontent and Measure for Measure would seem incomplete without a brief consideration of the possibility that Shakespeare's Duke Vincentio reflects Shakespeare's admiration for Marston's Malevole — or vice versa. The similarities between the two characters lie largely in the dramatic functions their creators employed them to perform. The Duke of Vienna is, if viewed realistically, a crafty figure. Altofronto-Malevole is, if viewed realistically, a diabolical figure — and it is important to notice that Marston did not greatly concern himself to provide many characterizing details concerning the undisguised Duke of Genoa. If we do not adopt a Bradleian view of the two dukes, however, we must recognize that they reflect two quite different views of life. Shakespeare had learned to weave relatively innocuous moral sentiments into the speeches of his moralizing characters. This is first of all a technique which has to be learned like any other trick of the writing trade. The nineteenth century critics were content to pick the fine moral

sentiments — the flowers of Shakespeare's verse — out of the plays and gather them into fine bouquets which twentieth-century critics have chosen to deride. Yet the nineteenth-century critics came closer to understanding an important aspect of Shakespeare's art — his fondness for high-sounding sententious passages. If these critics had not been so fearful of the effect the bluntness of Measure for Measure in dealing with the facts of life might have on the young, I am certain that the play would have been plucked as bare of its vatic passages as any of the more 'acceptable' plays. A glance at the passages quoted by G. Wilson Knight in "Measure for Measure and the Gospels" will attest to the heavy overlay of moralizing in the play. It is, as clearly as any play Shakespeare wrote, designed to satisfy a popular audience by at once entertaining and edifying.

Such is not so clearly the case in The Malcontent. By the time Marston wrote this play, I suspect that he had learned to spew out invective as effortlessly as Shakespeare had learned to provide fine moral sentences. This may be explicable, as Harbage has attempted to show, in terms of Shakespeare's familiarity with the popular theater and Marston's popularity in the "coterie" private houses. No matter how we attempt to explain the differences between Shakespeare and Marston, however, it is

important to recognize that the differences clearly exist and are clearly illustrated in the quite different impressions left on us by The Malcontent and Measure for Measure. In this instance, the plays' titles are as eloquent of the plays' differences as the disguised identities of the two dukes. Marston advertises his own interest in the hypercritical railer on human follies and vices. Shakespeare advertises, assuming the title was of his own choosing, his concern with a moral precept (and, recall, there is nothing in his sources which could have suggested his title). Marston's play is, accordingly, marked by brilliantly violent language that overpowers us and, on occasion, is too flamboyant for its own good. Shakespeare's play is marked by simple proverbs and images that suggest homely existence, the exempla suggestive of a moderate, kindly elder speaking to a youthful truant.[1]

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1 In this connection it is important to understand the value of Audrey Yoder's discovery that Measure for Measure contains very few instances of "animal references and comparisons." There are fewer "animal analogies" in this play than in any of Shakespeare's other works:— 36. (The next lowest is The Comedy of Errors with 62.)

Miss Yoder concluded that "animal comparison in Shakespeare, with the exception of the lion-nobility image and such sympathetic animal figures as the lamb, the dove, and a few others, has limited power and application. It is employed mainly for purposes of censure or ridicule. Heroes and heroines generally receive far fewer animal characterizations than villains and buffoons. ...through the use of animal comparisons, Shakespeare can add more horror and evil, more satiric spirit, more pathos, or more humor to the 'atmosphere' of a play." (Animal Analogy in Shakespeare's Character Portrayal [1947], 61-62.)

In view of the critical tradition that Measure for Measure is a 'bitter' play, one would not expect to find the play so barren of animal imagery.

When one compares Measure for Measure with The Merchant of Venice, one is first struck by the fact that the presumedly later play contains no significant verbal echoes of the earlier play on the Justice-Mercy conflict. Whether the temptation to borrow from or repeat oneself is greater than the impulse to outdo another author is a question on which no general agreement could be reached. Nevertheless, it would seem almost incontestable that Shakespeare, who has been so frequently charged with borrowing from Marston, should somehow evidence a comparable tendency to repeat himself — and he rarely does.

There is little evidence of the date Shakespeare composed The Merchant of Venice, and in the remarks which follow there will be no occasion to bemoan this fact. We are concerned only with the probability that The Merchant of Venice was revived and being performed at the Globe in 1604, an inference based on the same slim piece of evidence for believing Measure for Measure was being performed at the Globe prior to 26 December, 1604. The play was, as noted elsewhere, presented at court on 10 February 1605 and, again, at the request of James I, on 12 February 1605. Beyond this all is conjecture. We do not know why James wished a repeat performance — it may have been for reasons quite different from that which turns up in most editions, that he called for a second showing

because he had so greatly admired the play when it was first presented. Whether James enjoyed the play for its consideration of the Mercy-Justice theme or for the characterization of Shylock — any assumptions are, again, gratuitous. The most one can assert with any assurance is the probability that the author of BASILIKON DORON can easily be imagined to have found something congenial with his interests in Shakespeare's contention between Mercy and Justice. Certainly James' interest in clemency as evidenced a year previously at Winchester encourages this view.

So little is known concerning the reasons old plays are revived that it would be impossible to explain why the King's Men chose to include The Merchant of Venice in its repertory in 1604. I should like to think that it was a logical choice at that time because of the affair at Winchester in December, 1603, but I must admit that this is wishful thinking. If we were to account for the revival of The Merchant of Venice on such grounds, should it not also be possible to explain why the other old plays presented at the 1604/5 Court Revels were revived in 1604?

Fortunately, The Merchant of Venice exists in variant editions, some of which antedate the accession of James I and others of which show alterations presumably made during James' reign. Some change would be necessary in the following passage from the First Quarto (1600)

Portia: You know I say nothing to him, for

> he understands not me, nor I him. He hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere.
>
> Nerissa: What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?
>
> Portia: That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able. I think the Frenchman became his surety and seal'd under for another. (I, 2, 73-89)

In the First Folio, "the Scottish lord" is "the other lord." If the point of the joke comparing the Englishman with a Scot is lost, so is the possibility of offending England's new Scottish king. I assume that the alteration had been made before the play was presented at Court in 1605. Interestingly enough, there was apparently nothing in the 'character' of an Englishman (lines 73-81) to warrant any change.[1]

It is impossible to attach too much importance to this change for what it implies concerning Measure for Measure. If care was taken to excise a reference of so little significance within the total context of the play, we can only conclude that Measure for Measure would have been as closely scrutinized for any pas-

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1 Other minor changes in the Folio text involve efforts to obey the blasphemy statute (27 May 1606): "I pray God grant" (1600 Quarto) becomes "I wish" in the Folio (I, 2, 72). All the textualists seem agreed that the majority of Folio variants reflect changes introduced into the promptbook by the bookholder. It should be apparent, then, that The Merchant of Venice was still being played after 27 May 1606.

sages which might offend.

In modern times, we have heard so many recitations of the "Quality of mercy" speech that, in our thinking about The Merchant of Venice, we are inclined to generalize too easily about the play as Shakespeare's "earliest attempt to dramatize the Mercy-Justice theme." However, when one carefully fits Portia's lines back into the play and then proceeds to consider the play as a whole, one cannot fail to be struck by the thought that Shakespeare seems not to have been remarkably interested in them. Stoll and other anti-Romantic critics have now demonstrated that the Mercy-Justice element in the trial scene would hardly have assumed for Shakespeare's audiences the position of importance it is given today. It is obvious enough that the statement of the case for Mercy has no more important function than to further blacken Shylock's character. The final disposition of the Shylock-Antonio material has nothing to do with either Mercy or Justice and it is only by insisting on Portia as a symbol of Mercy that we can arrive at any defensible view that The Merchant of Venice shows the triumph of Mercy. There is, in fact, considerable irony inherent in Shakespeare's treatment of Portia in the trial-scene. Although he wrote the sententious plea for mercy, he proceeded to entertain us by presenting the spectacle of Portia defeating Shylock by her insistence on following the letter of the law. It is legalistic Justice sternly

and unrelentingly applied which wins the day for Portia and, more importantly, Antonio. To speak of Portia's victory as the 'triumph of Mercy' is to ignore the fact that Shakespeare gives Mercy short shrift — in twenty-two lines of versified extracts from a debater's manual.[1]

Shakespeare was, as the title of the play indicates,[2] interested in too many other things in The Merchant of Venice to allow the Mercy-Justice theme to figure very prominently. The trial-scene enlivens Act IV — it does not, as in Measure for Measure, come as a carefully foreshadowed moment of revelations and a spectacle to close the play. Yet, no matter how close Shakespeare came to submerging the Mercy-Justice material in a welter of other plot threads, it would be a mistake to ignore its appearance in the play. We have an important hinge on which to hang a discussion of two plays acted in 1604 which have become similar for the problems — in definition, interpretation and evaluation — for later critics to battle out.

The topical background out of which The Merchant of Venice had grown had contained a significant instance of Justice triumphing over Mercy. The execution of

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1 A recent statement of the traditional view against which I am arguing is to be found in Donald A. Stauffer's Shakespeare's World of Images (1949):

> Justice and mercy, the Old Testament and the New Testament, fight out once more their ancient battle, and the plea is for the freedom of love, not for the compulsion of passion. (64-5)

2 I should not like to build too heavily on the val of Shakespeare's titles, but The Merchant of Venice does suggest different emphases than Measure for Measure.

the mysterious Dr. Lopez in 1594 was an influence on Shakespeare's mind in ways quite opposite to the last-minute reprieves King James had engineered for the traitors on the scaffold at Winchester in 1603. If we recall this when we compare The Merchant of Venice with Measure for Measure, perhaps we can better understand why, in the earlier play, the case for mercy was so briefly made and why, in the later play, the whole play becomes a searching examination of the implications of the Justice-Mercy conflict. Shakespeare's understanding of the theme had deepened by the time he wrote Measure for Measure.[1] He had come to recognize — as he was, in a sense, prohibited from recognizing at the time he wrote The Merchant of Venice — that, as a human problem rather than as a mere schoolboy exercise in a sic et non textbook, the conflict between the forces for Justice (or 'Equity,' to use the term most frequently encountered in BASILIKON DORON) and the forces for Mercy (Christian or non-Christian, it makes no difference) does not admit of easy solutions. I suspect that if Shakespeare had written Measure for Measure at the same period in his career as The Merchant of Venice, he would have expelled Angelo as unceremoniously as he expelled Shylock.

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1 I do not intend to imply here that Measure for Measure could only have been written after 9 December, 1603. It is not to be forgotten that Promos and Cassandra provided Shakespeare with the general outlines of the play's conclusion. Also, if other parallels from history are recognized, one would do well to recall that Elizabeth I remanded the death-sentence in Southampton's case (as she failed to do for Essex).

The Lopez hanging, an exciting enough topic in 1594, could not have been weighing on anyone's mind in 1604. An audience at the Globe production of The Merchant of Venice in 1604 would simply have enjoyed the play for its variety of character and incident. In all probability, they would have seen the same boy-actor who played Isabella in Measure for Measure playing Portia; Armin perhaps assumed Kemp's old role as Launcelot Gobbo, a part giving him fewer opportunities than he found in Lucio (but then, there is a strong probability that Shakespeare wrote Lucio for him); Cowley undoubtedly played Old Gobbo in much the same way as he played Constable Elbow; Burbage and Lowin would be playing together as Antonio and Shylock in much the same spirit as they were doing Duke Vincentio and Angelo.

In 1604 a popular audience would have recognized that The Merchant of Venice and Measure for Measure were alike in the fact that in neither play was Shakespeare purveying primarily the more conventional boy-girl plot-stuffings of romantic comedy. The earlier play has its fair share of romances, to be sure, but the central action could hardly have seemed anything but the Antonio-Shylock bond. The importance in both plays of the serious matter suggests a kinship which has too often been lost in the shuffle that results from the over-insistence on the "dark comedies" as

a homogeneous trio of plays which only a discouraged playwright might write. It is, of course, not heretical any longer to say that The Merchant of Venice is one of Shakespeare's earliest approaches to tragi-comedy or comedy with serious overtones. (The Two Gentlemen of Verona was an earlier step in the same direction.) For our purposes, we should merely note that a popular audience would not have been greatly surprised to receive Measure for Measure from the same hand that had given them The Merchant of Venice. They might have noted that the later play scarcely nodded in the direction of 'love-interest,' but they might also have noted appreciatively that the later play contained more in the way of comic subplot. Although many Victorians would hardly countenance the notion that the underworld of Vienna might serve as an acceptable replacement for the moonlit world of Belmont, one suspects that an audience which had come to respect Shakespeare for his realization of the Eastcheap world would not have taken Pompey, Overdone and Lucio as a poor substitute for Gratiano and Nerissa — or even Bassanio and Portia. If anyone in Shakespeare's audiences in 1604 worried greatly over such matters as preoccupy modern critics, he might have noted that the differences between The Merchant of Venice and Measure for Measure are not so much qualitative as quantitative — the serious overtones of the later play are simply more serious than those of The Merchant of Venice.

In a recent reputable handbook ("merely a combination biography and critical handbook to Shakespeare's dramatic work, written for the student and the general reader who wants to know as well as to appreciate"), I find the following opinion expressed in a chapter entitled "Shakespeare's Audience":

> That Shakespeare was more interested in his people than in his plots is further evidence that he understood his auditory well. Sometimes, when he had a particularly illogical story, such as Much Ado, by slightly tarnishing the figures of his main plot, and by making his minor characters more attractive, he could use a tale of pathos and potential tragedy for high comedy. Certainly, Shakespeare was only rarely concerned with a problem, as is so often the modern dramatist. It is interesting to reflect that those plays of Shakespeare's which deal with problems, like All's Well, Measure for Measure, Troilus and Cressida, and Cymbeline, are the least appealing on the stage.[1]

This is a view to which few teachers of Shakespeare would object in these times, but the implications are not to be trusted. One wonders, specifically, what the "problem" in Measure for Measure can be conceived to be. Incontinency? A ruler's responsibilities in governing and ministering to his subjects? Mercy as a seasoning of Justice? Prodigality? To select one or to combine several may be tempting, but it is doubtful if there would be any general agreement. The fact is, of course, that, if Measure for Measure can be called a 'problem play' (as if it were another Mrs. Warren's Profession), we are entitled to the same view

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1 Holzknecht, The Backgrounds of Shakespeare's Plays (1950), 179.

of The Merchant of Venice. In the earlier play the problems with which Shakespeare was preoccupied are perhaps even easier to define: usury, the Mercy-Justice conflict, and the problem of the 'outsider' in a Christian community. Whatever else we are entitled to infer about the reasons for reviving old plays during Shakespeare's time, few would quarrel with the conjecture that popular approval (if not popular demand) must have been an important factor in accounting for the Globe revival of The Merchant in 1604.

We have in Holzknecht's remarks a reflection of the widespread — if understandable — fallacy of assuming that post-Shakespearean stage history is a reliable index of the nature of popular acceptance of a play in Shakespeare's time. Yet, surely there is no necessary connection between modern embarrassments and Elizabethan-Jacobean predilections or embarrassments. We are, finally, in a position to observe that the difficulty in considering the "appeal" of "problem plays" stems from the particular problems with which a writer concerns himself, rather than from the simple fact that he concerns himself with problems. We are in a position now to see The Merchant of Venice disappearing as one of the most frequently revived Shakespearean plays because more and more moderns are embarrassed by Shakespeare's handling of the problem of anti-Semitism. This would perhaps

seem to support the popular notion expressed by Holzknecht — another of Shakespeare's plays which "deal with problems" has become one of the "least appealing on the stage." Yet, we recognize that The Merchant of Venice, well-received in Shakespeare's time and presumably "appealing," has not changed over the centuries even if it no longer speaks to us or affects us in the same ways or to the same degree it affected Shakespeare's audiences. It cannot even be said that the "problems" have changed. Certainly, none of them has been solved. The changes have all taken place in the popular attitudes on the problems which are reflected in the play.

One of the greatest ironies in the history of Shakespearean criticism may well be — if the current resurgence of interest in Measure for Measure continues — the replacement of one anti-Semitic 'problem play' by another, but "profoundly Christian," 'problem play' in modern esteem.[1] To 1604 audiences in the Globe, however, Measure for Measure would undoubtedly have been accepted in much the same spirit as The Merchant of Venice.

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1 Prophetic utterance is as alien to me as it will be to my readers, but I have indulged in a bit of prophecy warranted, I think, by the recent bearings of criticism on these two plays. We have yet to see Measure for Measure widely revived, but a glance at the records of recent Shakespearean productions will suffice to discover that revivals of Measure for Measure are being more frequently attempted. The verdict of George S. Kaufman after seeing the 1950 Stratford production augurs well: "It was a play that I had neither seen nor read before, and I can only give it as my conviction that Brook's production, imported as it stands, would run a solid year in New York" ("Gothamite in London," New York Times, 6 August, 1950).

PART THREE

CHAPTER FIVE

CONLUSION: THE MEASURE FOR MEASURE OF SHAKESPEARE'S 1604 AUDIENCES

Having considered this play in light of its sources and its 1603-1604 topical background, it remains only for me to suggest the bearings of my reconstruction on future studies of this play which has evoked so much critical discord. It would be naive to believe that future critics will reverse the value-judgment of older critics that Measure for Measure is not one of Shakespeare's finest achievements. Although I believe that it is a far better play than it has been credited with being by most critics, I remain doubtful that it can sustain the eloquent encomiastic efforts of G. Wilson Knight and F. R. Leavis. During the nineteenth century when the bardolators ruled the roost, the play had its most sympathetic appraisal and, if the Romantic critics could not transport Measure for Measure to an unquestioned preeminence among Shakespeare's works, it would be folly to expect the present group of debunking, skeptical,

lukewarm Shakespeareans to do the job. If the play is not first-rate as an artistic entity, no amount of close scrutinizing for Biblical allusions and Christian symbols by even the most expert of moralist critics can make it first-rate. It is well to remember that the Romantic and bardolatrous critics of the nineteenth century were as moralminded as the most influential and dexterous twentieth-century moralists: it could hardly have been only the allegedly rigid moral standards of Victorian critics which prevented an appreciative understanding of Measure for Measure.[1]

Yet, having painted a bleak picture of the critical future of Measure for Measure, I should insist that the play's meaning and design — and, therefore, Shakespeare's intentions — are coming into clearer focus. If we cannot make students of Shakespeare like Measure for Measure, we are certainly in a better position to make them understand it. I assume that better understanding leads to a keener — but not necessarily more idolatrous — appreciation of any work of art, but that better understanding can be achieved only when the facts concerning the work have been separated from critical opinions about the work, especially those critical opinions which harden into facts.

Our understanding of Measure for Measure can be 'improved' in the sense that more facts can be

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1 Coleridge admired All's Well, another play most students have always found distasteful for its unpleasant subject matter, but he could not excuse Shakespeare for having written Measure for Measure!

collected for others to bear in mind as they read or see — or even produce — the play. A study of the play in its earliest surroundings would seem to be the first requisite in any attempt to arrive at a complete understanding of Measure for Measure.

In 1604, theatergoers would have viewed the play without the damaging prejudgments of modern audiences at a revival of Measure for Measure. This is to suggest that Shakespeare's 1604 audiences would not have shut their eyes and ears while they waited for the exciting scenes between Isabella and Angelo and between Isabella and Claudio. Without any preconceptions, Shakespeare's audiences would have followed the play for the story Shakespeare first introduced. That story is concerned with a humane but, in his own eyes, over-merciful Duke who suddenly discovers that conditions in his domain call for a thorough housecleaning which he lacks the heart ("tyranny") to initiate. Shakespeare's first efforts were bent toward establishing the primacy of the Duke's dilemma as the major dramatic question in the play. He was also concerned at first to suggest that the problem confronting the Duke is a problem that touches the experience of everyone.[1]

Shakespeare began by showing the departure of the Duke from Vienna. He deliberately presented

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1 Shakespeare accomplished this through characterizing imagery in I, 3: "fond fathers" who display but fail to use "the threatening twigs of birch," babies beating their nurses, and "liberty" plucking "justice" by the nose (I, 3, 23-30). These vivid and homely images are also a clue to Shakespeare's interest in the Duke's problem as a universal problem.

this leave-taking in a mystifying light in order that the Duke, rather than either of his two deputies, would be impacted most prominently in his audience's consciousness. Next Shakespeare provided a panoramic view of Vienna and shows the effects of the Duke's departure on his subjects. The new severity in law-enforcement is not the only topic of conversation of the Duke's subjects, but it is the most prominent. The discussion of heads falling for sexual transgressions would have a startling effect on any normal audience — the penalty would seem severer than the crime deserves. In this scene, it appears that Deputy Angelo is responsible for reviving old laws and inflicting the punishments under which the Claudios and Overdones must suffer.

It is important to understand why Shakespeare waited to explain the Duke's strategy until after he has shown the effects of that strategy. He has invited his audiences to involve themselves on the side of Claudio by showing that the Viennese citizens interpret the new severity as Angelo's, rather than the Duke's. Having encouraged this empathic engagement, he can reverse it by suddenly placing Angelo's "severity" in a new light.[1] Shakespeare suddenly reveals the strictness as emanating from the Duke himself. After

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1 Had Shakespeare wanted his audience to focus their attention primarily on Angelo, he would have had the Duke reveal his plan to Escalus in the opening scene before he brought Angelo into the action. A writer intent on satirizing the pharisaical deputy would certainly have initiated the play in that manner

he has done this, Shakespeare was finally in a position to unleash the secondary plot (Isabella's efforts to save Claudio's life). He would do this in the knowledge that Angelo would be recognized as an extension of the Duke and, thus, that the exciting scenes between Isabella and Angelo would not assume an inordinately major significance in his total design.[1] If he has encouraged his audience to compare Angelo with any figures in their own experience, he has suggested the plight of the upright man whose duty it is to enforce laws and maintain the peace. Angelo is most suggestive of Shakespeare's intentions to represent a Pontius Pilate (another Brutus, perhaps) rather than a screeching and vindictive Puritan.[2]

Shakespeare took pains to present a good case for Justice. I suspect that he recognized that, in the popular imagination, Justice is the less attractive aspect to human problems in which Justice and Mercy are at loggerheads. In all events, it is only after Shakespeare has revealed all he wants his audience to know about the Duke that he was willing to introduce these lines at the end of I, 3:

> DUKE: ... therefore, I prithee,
> Supply me with the habit and instruct
> me
> How I may formally in person bear me

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1 There is little doubt that the Isabella-Angelo interviews constitute a major inlay in Shakespeare's mosaic, but the relationship of those interviews to the 'absent' Duke's plan represents Shakespeare's efforts to keep them from dominating the design.

2 Claudio and Juliet are both puritans when they admit their guilt, after all. This fact is never recognized by those who argue that the play satirizes purit

> Like a true friar. Moe reasons
> for this action
> At our more leisure shall I render you;
> Only, this one: Lord Angelo is precise,
> Stands at a guard with envy, scarce
> confesses
> That his blood flows, or that his
> appetite
> Is more to bread than stone; hence
> shall we see,
> If power change purpose, what our
> seemers be. (45-54)

In the context of the whole scene, it would be apparent that the Duke appointed Angelo for the very qualities indicated here — his austerity is exactly what the Duke needs if the civic clean-up is to be effected. It is here that we see why Escalus ("though first in question") has not been deputized to act for the Duke — the lenient Escalus is too much like Duke Vincentio in his leniency to push through to a conclusion the unpleasant task the Duke regards as an imperative. The hint that Angelo is to be watched for his success in resisting the blandishments of Clemency is, thus, only subtly — almost incidentally — introduced. Again, had Shakespeare wished to emphasize Angelo as the butt of any satire, he would not have hesitated to devote more of this scene to the Duke's exposition of Angelo's character. The whole of I, 3 (by itself but, more importantly, in relation to the two preceding scenes) attests to Shakespeare's carefully laid plan to ensure that his audiences would not undervalue the case for Justice. It is the best evidence for believing that Shakespeare approached the Duke's dilemma as a universal human problem to be considered in its specifically

human, rather than formalistic allegorical, implications for his audiences.

In addition to preparing his audiences to understand that Angelo is obeying the Duke's directions in standing firm against Isabella's plea for Claudio's life, Shakespeare also took pains to characterize Isabella (one "wishing a more strict restraint/ Upon the sisterhood") as a woman who begins her pleading by announcing that Claudio's vice is one she does "most desire should meet the blow of justice" (II, 2, 30). As anything approaching a symbol for abstract Mercy, Isabella cuts a strange figure after these beginnings. Shakespeare seems again to have been taking precautions against any susceptibility on the part of his audiences for interpreting Measure for Measure as if it were a morality play in which characters are important only for the abstract qualities they supposedly represent.[1]

If Shakespeare's audience had been conscious of the remarkable pains Shakespeare was taking to focus their attention on the Duke's problem, they would have understood his intentions in light of the accession of James I. The natural curiosity of James' new subjects concerning his attitude toward his prede-

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1 The whole design of Measure for Measure is most profitably to be considered "anti-symbolic." Every change Shakespeare introduces in Promos and Cassandra is in the direction of discouraging over-simplification of his play's meaning as 'the triumph of Mercy.' Whetstone's Cassandra is Mercy completely embodied — her submission to Promos in the expectation that she can save Andrugio's life is a perfect illustration of the yielding and self-effacing qualities of Mercy. Shakespeare eschewed the submission to achieve a finer eff

cessor's law-enforcement policies must have been in Shakespeare's mind as he fashioned this play. The affair at Winchester in December, 1603 had certainly dramatized the Mercy-Justice conflict in humanly real terms and it is unlikely that Shakespeare's audiences in 1604 would have missed any obvious parallels. At the end of June, 1604 it was being rumored about that Lord Cobham occupied his time in the Tower of London translating Seneca's De Clementia with the intention of dedicating his translation to King James.[1]

For 1604 audiences, a play concerned with a ruler's voluntary departure to enable an appointed deputy to carry out a clean-up campaign would have seemed almost insistent in raising questions similar to those in the minds of citizens who have just seen a new ruler with a reputation for study of the Equity-Clemency conflict assume the throne. Those audiences would have been familiar with local censorship practices. That knowledge might have led them to understand that Shakespeare could not have come closer to suggesting a parallel with the opening months of James' reign without, in fact, representing a change in ruler as the reason for strengthed enforcement of long-standing laws and thereby perhaps incurring official displeasure.

We cannot know whether Shakespeare's 1604 audiences regarded Measure for Measure in high esteem, but there is no reason to believe that it did not hold their

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1 Harrison, Jacobean Journal, 148-9.

interest.[1] As a popular dramatist, it was incumbent on Shakespeare to find, before he worried about anything else, plots which offered possibilities of incidents to sustain an audience's desire for exciting and humorous situations. At this point, the modern student of sources is at a disadvantage. We do not know how widely Whetstone's versions of the Promos-Cassandra story were known before Shakespeare elected to retell it. This being the case, we cannot easily assert that Shakespeare's audiences would have followed the play with the rapt attention they might accord a story unfamiliar to them. If the Promos-Cassandra was widely known, the suspense Shakespeare could create would be minimal.[2] Yet, the construction of Measure for Measure suggests that Shakespeare did not plan his play in the belief that the Isabella-

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1 In our age of mass communication, to say that a play is capable of sustaining an audience's interest is tantamount to damning with faint praise. By force of present circumstances, I am bound to explain that I intend no disrespect to Shakespeare when I point to Shakespeare as a popular dramatist whose finest wares were clearly and unmistakably displayed where his audiences could see and appreciate them. I have no notion that Shakespeare had to cut his poetic visions down to the uncritical businessman whose alleged tiredness a modern 'popular playwright' is expected to respect.

This emphasis is, of course, not admired by most academics or the experts in close-reading and painstakingly minute poetic analysis. I have been called "anti-Shakespearean" by those who deplore the notion that Shakespeare was, first and last, a popular writer. The professional close-readers fail, however, to recognize that popular success is sometimes won without the writer cheapening his art.

2 Source-students unwittingly foster much misunderstanding when they fail to consider the currency of stories for the implications concerning audience reception as well as the borrower's use of the plot.

Angelo-Claudio story would be well known to his audiences. The action is so ordered to present two long interviews between Isabella and Angelo where, since Isabella will refuse Angelo's bargain, one would have sufficed. It may be that Shakespeare was capitalizing on an opportunity to discourse on the nature of Mercy and Justice at greater lengths, but it is even more certain that he recognized an opportunity to squeeze every drop of suspense out of the Isabella-Angelo contention over Claudio.

The two interviews between Angelo and Isabella must have been recognized as potentially unbalancing moments in his total design. If they are not to assume too great an importance, he saw that he must bring the Duke significantly back into the action. Thus, he inserted the brief Duke-Juliet scene (II, 3) between the first and the second of the Isabella-Angelo encounters.[1] Here we are shown our first view of the Duke in disguise, making what appears to be his first visit to the prison. The Provost sympathetically explains the case of Juliet and Claudio ("a young man more fit to do another such offence than die for this") and the Duke-as-friar questions the young woman who 'repents' but 'take the shame with joy.' The Duke-as-friar says nothing to

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1 This scene has been called "extra-dramatic" and is frequently dropped from productions as distasteful to audiences. However, my former teacher, H. T. Price, regards the scene as a "mirror scene," one which sums up and contains the meaning of the entire play. I agree that the scene is not expendable, but I should insist that very little is said about Mercy here and it is hardly defensible as a "mirror scene."

condone the pair's "most offenceful act," but his reappearance in the play at this moment has a reassuring effect on the Isabella-Angelo scenes. The scene is inserted to remind his audience that the Duke is still the central character. Shakespeare is "framing" the Isabella-Angelo scenes to prevent his audiences from an overly great empathic involvement and, thus, uncritical viewing of the scenes.[1]

In much the same way, Shakespeare put quotation marks around the Isabella-Claudio scene by having the Duke eavesdropping in the background. The presence of the Duke, who has just given Claudio a remarkably un-Christian death-philosophy, during the interview between brother and sister has the very important effect of taking the bitter edge off the scene. Nothing could make such material riotously good fun in a comedy, but Shakespeare realized that, by introducing the Duke, he could keep it from becoming overbearingly serious and tragic in its bearings.

If we can understand Measure for Measure as a remarkable instance of Shakespeare's skill in at once building and, most importantly, controlling suspense,

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1 It should be noted that throughout the two interviews between Isabella and Angelo and the Isabella-Claudio scene, Shakespeare was taking pains to build his audience's excitement to a fever pitch at the same time he was reminding his audience that the Duke is beginning to interest himself in the disposition of Claudio's case. He had to play his hand enough to maintain the comic tone, but he could not play it so obviously as to jeopardize an audience's inclinations to take these exciting scenes seriously.

perhaps we can better understand that Shakespeare was not shortchanging his audiences by withholding information concerning Angelo's connection with Mariana. In most of the adverse criticism of Measure for Measure, the charge is made that, in a sense, Shakespeare was 'cheating' when he held back news of Mariana's existence until she is needed in the play. It should be noted that, except for the brief hint that even Angelo may be corrupted by power (end of I, 3), Shakespeare casts no doubt on Angelo's right to pass judgment on others until after he has exploited all the irony to be mined out of the situation of saint succumbing to saint. To have introduced Mariana any earlier than he does would have been to add an embarrassing blackguardism to Angelo's character during the Isabella-Angelo scenes. Shakespeare's audiences were expected to take matters as the author planned and in the order he presented them. Our modern reading of Measure for Measure is done in full retrospective knowledge of the entire action and we watch Angelo in Act II knowing things Shakespeare does not want us to know if we are to understand Angelo's yielding to Isabella's saintly charms in the manner he intended us to understand it. To view the early Angelo as Shakespeare presented him is to understand that Angelo is a nearly impregnable fort except when he is outsainted by the saintly Isabella. Shakespeare

did not intend that Angelo's fall should have any sinister overtones:

> O cunning enemy, that, to catch a saint,
> With saints dost bait thy hook. Most dangerous
> Is that temptation that doth goad us on
> To sin in loving virtue. Never could the strumpet,
> With all her double vigour, art and nature,
> Once stir my temper; but this virtuous maid
> Subdues me quite. Ever till now,
> When men were fond, I smil'd and wond'red how. (II, 2, 180-187)[1]

However, once the saintly Angelo's severity has been shattered, Shakespeare could reveal the lady who is pining away with unrequited love of Angelo within her garden at the moated grange.

Unexpected surprises are part and parcel of comedy and I am certain that Shakespeare's audiences in 1604 would have accepted without any misgivings the sudden revelation that Angelo's past includes a Mariana. The pointedness of the parallels between the Claudio-Juliet and Angelo-Mariana couples shows clearly enough that Shakespeare wanted his audiences to perceive the irony. An alert audience could be expected to recall an earlier exchange in which Escalus has asked for clemency in Claudio's case by an ad hominem argument:

> Let but your honour [Angelo] know,
> Whom I believe to be most strait in virtue,
> That, in the working of your own affections,
> Had time coher'd with place or place with wishing,
> Or that the resolute acting of your blood

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1 These lines are echoed in Isabella's "I partly think/ A due sincerity govern'd his deeds,/ Till he did look on me. Since it is so,/ Let him not die" (V, 450-453).

> Could have attain'd the effect of your
> own purpose,
> Whether you had not sometime in your life
> Err'd in this point which now you censure him,
> And pull'd the law upon you. (II, 1, 8-16)

In light of later developments (which an alert audience might find foreshadowed in the speech), Angelo's reply becomes prophetic in its irony:

> 'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,
> Another thing to fall. I not deny,
> The jury, passing on the prisoner's life,
> May in the sworn twelve have a thief or two
> Guiltier than him they try. What's open
> made to justice,
> That justice seizes. What knows the laws
> That thieves do pass on thieves? 'Tis very
> pregnant,
> The jewel that we find, we stoop and take't
> Because we see it; but what we do not see
> We tread upon, and never think of it.
> You may not so extenuate his offence
> For I have had such faults; but rather tell me,
> When I, that censure him, do so offend,
> Let mine own judgement pattern out my death,
> And nothing come in partial. Sir, he must
> die. (II, 1, 17-31)

The audience for whom Shakespeare patterned a play with such internally consistent parallelism would seem to have been capable of recognizing and appreciating such a play in its total effect, for it is only in terms of the totality of an art work that we recognize the systems of parallels and contrasts. Such an audience could also be expected, I think, to recognize that such obvious devices as the bed-trick are to be excused as romantic artifices which dramatic necessity and the determination to achieve a unified total effect frequently force playwrights to employ.

This is, finally, to suggest that Shakespeare's 1604 audiences probably accepted Measure for Measure

as a comedy with serious overtones. If members of those audiences recalled the events of 9 December, 1603 at Winchester or if they had read BASILIKON DORON, they may have understood why Shakespeare had been inspired to write such a play and why the King's Men were producing it in 1604. Its so-called symbolic content would have been intuitively recognized, but it seems doubtful in the extreme that the Globe actors would have done anything to call attention to it (as was the case in the 1950 production at the Stratford Memorial Theatre). If members of that audience recognized that Measure for Measure was a reworking of an old play, they could not have missed the point of Shakespeare's alterations, especially where the Duke was concerned. As to its alleged bitterness, 1604 audiences would not have regarded a comedy which ended with a pardon for everyone but the "fantastic" Lucio, as a "bitter" play. (The 1604 audiences could compare the play with The Malcontent which clearly merits the adjective.) Some may have recognized the old morality-play in Measure for Measure as they could recognize it in The Merchant of Venice, but they would hardly have given the matter a second thought as they followed dramatic action far more lively than they had come to expect in moralities. At the end, they would have understood what the title of the play really meant what, as the title of a comedy, it ought to mean — not an eye for an eye,

an Angelo for a Claudio (as "Measure for Measure" as the title of a tragedy would suggest), but the need to temper Equity with Clemency. They would have carried home no easy optimism, for the need for strict application of laws has been lucidly stated. It has, in fact, been so lucidly stated that the final forgiveness may have seemed unforgivable to some of the members of Shakespeare's audiences (as it has to so many later students).[1] If it occurred to them that Shakespeare was trying to convey a message to them, they would have recognized that Shakespeare had not given them a pretty formula but a double vision that embraced both Justice and Mercy.

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1 Miss Elizabeth Marie Pope (in "The Renaissance Background of Measure for Measure") suggested that Shakespeare must have known that he did not, merely because he was writing a comedy, have to conclude the play with a hands-around pardoning: "all the evidence goes to show that the audience would have left for home equally contented — perhaps even more contented — if Angelo, Lucio, and Barnardine had been punished, like Shylock, or remanded for judgment at some future date, like Don John in Much Ado about Nothing." (79) I would suggest that King James' recent manifestation of clemency would have made Shakespeare's 1604 audiences more susceptible to Shakespeare's merciful conclusions than they might normally have been.

APPENDIX A

"ONCE-WORDS" IN MEASURE FOR MEASURE

This list was occasioned by J. M. Robertson's use of a similar — but incomplete — compilation to "prove" Shakespeare was reworking an older play by Chapman. Robertson seems to have regarded "once-words" as words used but once by Shakespeare, rather than words which might have been "invented" by Shakespeare. Publication of the N.E.D. has enabled us to see that the majority of these words were common enough in Elizabethan English.

"Chapmanesque" words which appear in Robertson's list are bracketed. Where an original Folio spelling differs from the emended spelling, I have indicated this problems involved. Bartlett's Concordance to Shakespeare is followed.

I, 1 [institutions] (11)
common justice (12)
[belongings] (30)
bend my speech (41)
advertise (42)
[leavened] (52)
[concernings] (57)
aves (vehement) (71)
safe discretion (72)

I, 2 English kersey (34) - unique as compound
piled (34)
French velvet (35) - unique as compound
custom-shrunk (85)
groping (91) - groped appears in Hamlet

I, 2 (continued)
wise burgher (103) - but burgher alone appears in M. of V. and A.Y.L.I.
immoderate (131)
[morality] (138) - Folio prints mortality, a rare word but not a 'once-word'
[denunciation] (152)
propagation (154) - Folio, propogation
body public (163) - unique as compound
[unscoured] (171)

I, 3 [dribbling (dart of love)] (2)
stricture (12)
common ear (15) - unique compound
birch (24)
[infliction] (28)
permissive (pass) (38)
ambush (41)
seemers (54)

I, 4 unsworn (9)
cheek-roses (16)
ensky'd (34)
renouncement (35)
fewness (39) - cf. seedness below
seedness (42)
adoptedly (47)
school-maids (47)
[snow-broth] (58)
[rebate] (60)
natural edge (60) - unique compound

II, 1 bird of prey (2)
common houses (43)
out at elbow (61)
parcel(-bawd) (63)
bad woman (64)
hothouse (66)
cardinally (pun for carnally) (81)
uncleanliness (82)
fruitdish (95)
china-dishes (97)
[stone (of fruit)] (110) - doubtful, though included by Robertson; a common pun is involved.
All-hallond (Eve) (130)
last out (verb) (139)
action of slander (190)
taphouse (219)
beastliest (229)
[splay] (243)
bay (=window) (255) - bay-window appears in Twelf. N.

II, 2 deputed (60)
new-conceived (96)
[remissness] (96)

II, 2 (continued)
unwedgeable (116)
gnarled (116)
myrtle (117)
angry ape (120)
tested (149)
sicels (=shekels) (149)
[sunrise] (153)
double vigour (184)

II, 3 common right (5)
[offenceful] (26)

II, 4 false seeming (15)
devil's horn (16)
devil's crest (17)
[pose (verb)] (51)
uncleanness (54) - cf. uncleanliness (II, 1, 82)
black masques (79)
enshield (80)
all-building (94)
sliding (noun) (115)
false prints (130)
outstretched throat (153)
unsoiled (155)
austereness (155)
[stifle (intrans. verb)] (158)
[nicety] (162)
prolixious (162)
prompture (178)

III, 1 skyey (9)
death's fool (11)
tender fork (=tongue) (16)
[ingots] (26)
vastidity (69)
[bark (verb)] (72) - a doubtful instance
base appliances (89)
outward-sainted (89)
emmew (=enew?) (91)
prenzie (noun) (94) - Folios 2-4 read princely
prenzie (adj.) (97) - Folios 2-4 read princely
bite the nose (109)
perdurably (115)
cold obstruction (119)
viewless (=invisible?) (124)
weariest (129)
advisings (203)
uprighteously (204)
angry law (207) - unique compound
marriage-dowry (230)
[combinate] (231)
forenamed (248)
first affection (249)

III, 1 (continued)
[plausible] (253)
advantaged (265)
scaled (=weighed) (266)
doubleness (268)
moated (277) - only unique adjectivally

III, 2 white bastard (=a wine) (4)
lambskin (9)
facing (11)
father friar (13) - cf. Brother Priest, T & C, II, 2,37
brother father (14)
[picklock] (18)
whoremonger (37)
cry bail (43)
Pygmalion('s images) (47)
unshunned (62)
bawd-born (71)
go to kennel (89)
duke (verb) (100) - cf. boy (verb) in A & C
[spawned] (115) - a doubtful instance
generative (119)
clack-dish (135)
[inward (noun)] (138)
shy (138) - cf. V, 54
unweighing (147)
warranted (151)
helmed (151)
testimonied (153)
bringings-forth (153)
unskillfully (156)
tundish (182)
ungenitured (184)
house-eaves (186)
untrussing (190)
back-wounding (calumny) (197)
Philip and Jacob (Day) (214)
all temperance (251)
[straitness] (269)
self-offense (280)
false exacting (295)

IV, 1 brawling discontent (9)
circummured (28)
[planched] (30)
concerning (42)
precontract (72)

IV, 2 direct answer (7)
[starkly (adv.)] (70) - a doubtful instance
[wholesomest] (76)
[paralleled] (82)
mealed (86)
siege (=seat) (101)
quick celerity (113) - cf. swift celerity, V, 399

IV, 2 (continued)
undoubtful (142)
disguiser (186)
over-read (212)
unfolding star (218)
better place (224)
clear dawn (226)

IV, 3 brown paper (and ginger) (5)
ready money (7)
dizy (13) - Folio, Dizie
rapier and dagger man (15)
...for the Lord's sake (21)
rustle (38)
billets (58)
reprobate (noun) (78)
under generation (93) - Folio, yonder generation
cold gradation (104)
dark corners (164)
better woodman (170)

IV, 4 disvouched (1)
unshapes (verb) (23)
tender shame (26)
maiden loss (27)
tongue (verb) (28)

IV, 5 ———
IV, 6 ———

V, forted (12)
razure (13)
virgin violator (41)
wickedest (53)
shy (54) - cf. III, 2, 138
dressings (56)
characts (56) - Folio, caracts
inequality (65)
[refelled] (94)
[concupiscible] (98)
sisterly (100)
blessed ministers (115) - cf. flaming ministers in Othello
unbelieved (119)
temporary (145)
misreport (148)
[vulgarly] (160)
belocked (210)
garden-house (212, 229)
carnally (214)
disvalued (221) - cf. disvouched, IV, 4, 1

V, (continued)
confixed (232)-
[informal] (236)
[touse] (313)
baldpate (329)
notedly (335)
[fleshmonger] (337) - cf. whoremonger, III, 2, 37
baldpated (357) - cf. baldpate, V, 329 above
treasonable (347)
[sheep-biting] (359) - but see sheepbiter, Tw. N.
advertising (388) - cf. advertise, I, 1, 42
[attorneyed] (390) - a doubtful instance
[remonstrance] (397)
swift celerity (399) - cf. quick celerity, IV, 2, 113
double violation (409)
promise-breach (410)
[reproach (verb)] (426)
confiscation (428)
instate (429)
definitive (432)
due sincerity (451)
all of luxury (506)
[gratulate (adj.)] (535)

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1 In accordance with general practice, the following abbreviations have been used for annuals, publications, and journals:

EC	—	Essays in Criticism
ES	—	English Studies
JEGP	—	Journal of English and Germanic Philology
MLN	—	Modern Language Notes
MLQ	—	Modern Language Quarterly
MLR	—	Modern Language Review
MP	—	Modern Philology
N & Q	—	Notes and Queries
PMLA	—	Publications of the Modern Language Association
PQ	—	Philological Quarterly
RES	—	Review of English Studies
SAB	—	Shakespeare Association Bulletin
SJ	—	Shakespeare-Jahrbuch
SN	—	Shakespeare Newsletter
SP	—	Studies in Philology
SQ	—	Shakespeare Quarterly
SS	—	Shakespeare Survey (followed by volume)
TLS	—	[London] Times Literary Supplement

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