

## From Myth to Drama

But, to return from whence I have digressed to the consideration of the Ancients' writing and their wit . . . he of them who had genius most proper for the stage was Ovid.

(John Dryden, *Of Dramatic Poesy*)

### I

Shakespeare refined his skills in the writing of narrative and his mastery of verbal wit in his early anatomy of sexuality, the overtly mythic and metamorphic *Venus and Adonis*; he wrote a formal imitation of Ovid in *The Rape of Lucrece* and used the tale of Philomel as a structural model for *Titus Andronicus*. And in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* he mingled direct and indirect dramatization of Ovid, whilst simultaneously following and outdoing the example of John Lyly in bringing to the stage a world of desire and change bathed in an aura of classical mythology. Though these early works bear the most obvious marks of Shakespeare's Ovidian education, the *Metamorphoses* and to some extent also the lesser works such as the *Heroides* remained, as I have shown, an underpresence in the mature plays, both comedies and tragedies. In the last plays, as Shakespeare tried out a more mythic mode of composition, Ovid returned to the surface of the drama.

*Cymbeline* is best regarded as Shakespeare's most experimental play: tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, it would have been Polonius' favourite work in the canon. One aspect of its experimentation is its way of reinvoicing Ovid but dramatizing his myths at one remove. As in *Titus Andronicus*, a copy of the *Metamorphoses* is actually brought on to the stage as a prop. It is Imogen's bedtime reading:

She hath been reading late,  
The tale of Tereus. Here the leaf's turned down  
Where Philomel gave up.

(II. ii. 44-6)

The allusion marks the moment at which Imogen is 'given up'. But where in *Titus* Lavinia's quoting of Philomel's tragic tale is a revelation of her own rape, here the rape is metaphorical. The text that is opened out in *Titus* is folded back in *Cymbeline*. Iachimo completes the line 'Where Philomel gave up' with 'I have enough': the sight is all he needs. His removal of the bracelet from Imogen's arm is a symbolic violation of her chastity, but where Ovid's Tarquin pressed violently down on Lucrece's breasts, Iachimo merely observes Imogen's:

On her left breast  
A mole, cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops  
I'th' bottom of a cowslip.  
(II. ii. 37-9)

It is the eyes of a spectator that do the undressing here, not the tearing hands of a Tarquin. When Iachimo himself alludes to Tarquin—'Our' Tarquin, a fellow-Roman—he rewrites the night-scene of *Lucrece* as something gentle:

Our Tarquin thus  
Did softly press the rushes ere he wakened  
The chastity he wounded.  
(II. ii. 12-14)

The sibilance seems tender rather than sinister: 'Softly press' suggests not only stealth, but also a lover's touch. And 'wounded' grossly understates the severity of Tarquin's deed. This has the effect of sublimating the image of rape—Philomel gives up as in a dream, not in brutal reality as on the stage of *Titus*—and thus making it easier for the theatre audience to put itself in the position of Iachimo. To note and to wonder at the beauty of the sleeping Imogen does not seem to do any harm. But of course Iachimo does work harm, and it takes all the play's twists and turns, including an apparent death and an actual physical violation when Posthumus strikes Fidele/Imogen, to undo that harm.

The audience, then, is forced to confront its own complicity in Iachimo's deed. His gaze is ours. Shakespeare makes the point by means of the chimney-piece in the bedroom. At the time, Iachimo records 'the contents o'th' story' (II. ii. 27), and in his subsequent narration to Posthumus he reveals those contents:

The chimney  
Is south the chamber, and the chimney-piece  
Chaste Dian bathing. Never saw I figures  
So likely to report themselves; the cutter  
Was as another nature; dumb, outwent her,  
Motion and breath left out.

(II. iv. 80-4)

The gaze is fixed on the naked Diana bathing: Iachimo and with him the audience stand in the position occupied by Actaeon. The motif of auto-destructive desire is activated. But the chimney-piece was never seen by the audience: what we remember instead is the sight of Imogen, as mediated through the language of Iachimo's gorgeous but prurient soliloquy, a language so sexually evocative that the youth playing the part of Imogen seems to become, in the words of Marlowe's *Gaveston*, 'A lovely boy in Dian's shape'.

The slide from the imagined representation of Diana to the dramatically realized figure of Imogen is a mental *trompe l'œil*. The art of the chimney-piece, like that of Hermione's statue in *The Winter's Tale*, is said to have outdone nature. A few lines earlier, Iachimo has reported that the tapestry in Imogen's chamber told the story of Mark Antony meeting Cleopatra at Cydnus; here Shakespeare echoes back his own recent play in which Enobarbus describes Cleopatra at Cydnus as being so desirable that 'but for vacancy' the air would have joined the people of the city in going to gaze on her. The fictive chimney-piece recapitulates and goes beyond this: the artist's figures seem on the verge of speech and movement, they are 'likely to report themselves' and though they are 'dumb' they seem to make nature seem dumber. The air has vacated nature and entered the artwork. When we associate Diana with Imogen, the goddess seems to step down from the chimney-piece and on to the stage. The image effects in the audience's mind what *The Winter's Tale* feigns to deliver in performance: the metamorphosis of art into life.

In one sense, this is what Ovid constantly offers his readers. The *Metamorphoses* works so well as poetry because when its characters undergo transformations, the language takes the reader along too—we are deluded by Ovid's art into thinking that we can feel what it would be like to be, say, a hunted hart or a tree under the axe. It is no coincidence that near the climax of the poem Ovid includes the discourse of Pythagoras, who speaks in favour of vegetarianism and against blood-sports: metamorphosis anthropomorphizes nature—

each animal, each tree, each stream has a human history—and thus demands an empathy between humankind and nature. Pythagoras' theories are the intellectual equivalent of what the poem has achieved imagistically. Shakespeare alludes playfully to the opinions of Pythagoras in *Twelfth Night* and more seriously to his theory of universal flux in the Sonnets, but in *Cymbeline* he is most Ovidian in his sustained use of a language which fuses the characters with the natural world. In Iachimo's soliloquy, Imogen becomes a 'fresh lily' (II. ii. 15) and her breath perfumes the air of the room, while the 'flame o'th' taper | Bows toward her' (II. ii. 19–20) as wind or water, warm with desire, would playfully touch a nymph in Ovid; the mole on her breast takes its identity from the marking on a cowslip; even Tarquin seems to respect the rushes on the floor. Earlier in the play an image adapted from Ovid half-evinces sympathy for a gnat;<sup>1</sup> later, Arviragus establishes a sustained correspondence between the parts of Fidele's apparently dead body and a selection of flowers:

Thou shalt not lack  
The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose, nor  
The azured harebell, like thy veins; no, nor  
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander  
Outsweetened not thy breath.

(IV. ii. 221–5)

Here Shakespeare is writing in the same key as the Ovid who turns his golden lads and girls into flowers which all too quickly come to dust.

But Shakespeare also works actively to transform his audience in a way that Ovid does not. For all our empathy in reading the *Metamorphoses*, its narratives remain myths—stories that evoke wonder by virtue of their strangeness and their distance from the reader's own experience. What Shakespeare does when he makes us into the peeping Actaeon is bring the significance of these stories closer to home. He interprets and dramatizes myth. It is as if he says: of course you're never really going to see the naked Diana bathing, but what the story of Actaeon tells you is something about how it is a form of violation to gaze with desire on a woman when she is in a vulnerable state. But he doesn't say this in the form of a sermon, he

<sup>1</sup> The diminution and disappearance of Posthumus' ship—'till the diminution | Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle; | Nay, followed him till he had melted from | The smallness of a gnat to air' (I. iii. 18–21)—is an *imitatio* of that of Ceyx's ship in Book Eleven (Golding, xi. 537–47), but the gnat is Shakespeare's, not Ovid's.

dramatizes it so that it occurs in the very process of watching the play. The audience's complicity with Iachimo's notings is a reinvention of the Actaeon myth which disturbingly internalizes what was comically external in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Nor is the point made in the traditional language of patriarchy: the sub-text is more complicated than 'thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife', for the prying gaze is the direct consequence of Posthumus' own proprietorial display of his wife's chastity when he brags about it in the wager scene. In his way, he is an Actaeon too, which is why the play has to punish him.

## II

The long and complex history of mythography, manifested in commentators as varied as Erasmus and Bacon in the Renaissance,<sup>2</sup> Frazer and Lévi-Strauss in more recent times, is testimony to the variety of interpretations which may be drawn from ancient stories in which mankind encounters divinities or the origins of natural phenomena are configured into narrative. As was shown in Chapter 4, the Actaeon myth was interpreted politically as well as sexually. A political interpretation is likely to be sparked by a particular historical moment—that of Ovid's exile or the Earl of Essex's intrusion—whereas other ways of reading seek to be transhistorical. Perhaps the most pervasive of these is that which reads myth in relation to the rebirth of natural things within the recurring cycle of the seasons—in Frazer's term, the 'vegetation' myth. Spenser's placing of Adonis in 'the first seminarie | Of all things' at the centre of Book Three of *The Faerie Queene* provides strong support for a Frazerian reading of the death and rebirth of that beautiful young man. But, for the Renaissance, the fundamental myth of spring's return was that of Proserpina. She has all the right qualifications: the daughter of Ceres, goddess of growing vegetation, she is young and fertile; when abducted by Dis (Pluto), she is carrying flowers; the contract by which she resides six months with him in the underworld and returns to earth for the other six is a perfect figure of winter and summer. Long

<sup>2</sup> I cite these two as 'various' because of Erasmus' desire to 'strip classical myth of allegorical accretions' (Terence Cave's phrase, *The Cornucopian Text*, 96–7) and Bacon's attempt to return to full-blooded allegorical reading (in his *De sapientia veterum* of 1609 and the ch. on poesy [ii. 13] in his *De augmentis scientiarum* of 1623). For the latter, see Charles W. Lemmi, *The Classic Deities in Bacon: A Study in Mythological Symbolism* (Baltimore, 1933).

before Ovid told her story, Proserpina (previously Persephone, in some versions Kore, the Virgin) symbolized the seed that had to lie in darkness beneath the earth for the six (in some versions four) months of winter before being reborn in the next spring's corn. Ovid's version of the familiar story states explicitly that prior to the abduction by Dis, 'continuall spring is all the yeare there founde' in the garden where Proserpine gathers flowers, and that the story is resolved when Jove divides the girl between her mother and her husband and thus 'parteth equally the yeare betweene them both' (Golding, v. 490, 700).

*The Winter's Tale* is Shakespeare's most overtly mythic play title. It announces a link between characters and their emotions on the one hand, and the seasons on the other. Since it locates itself within the economy of the seasons, the tale of winter cannot avoid gesturing towards the eventual return of spring. The unstated alternative title of the play may therefore be said to be *Waiting for Proserpina*. If this were a tragedy, as for much of the first half it seems to be, we would go on waiting for her indefinitely; like Godot, she would never come. But this is a play which moves from the winter of tragedy to the spring of romance, so she does come—although not before Leontes has to wait for her some sixteen years.

Shakespeare had already experimented with a Proserpina on stage. The virgin, the teenage daughter, is the key to the redemptive movement of the romance of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*. She first appears with a basket of flowers, among them 'purple violets' which are shared with Ovid's Proserpina. Her first words place her in the arena of vegetation-myth: 'No, I will rob Tellus of her weed | To strew thy grave with flow'rs' (xv. 65–6). Tellus is a female personification of the earth, also invoked by Ovid's Medea in the prayer which Shakespeare freely translated in the mouth of Prospero.<sup>3</sup> Marina, the girl from the sea, begins by setting herself in opposition to Tellus, the girl of the earth. The character is thus established in terms of a quasi-mythic contest, a battle between the powers of the sea and the land. Shakespeare signals that he is moving into the same sort of mythic territory as that of Spenser in his tale of Florimell and Marinell, the flower-girl and the man on the seashore, who eventually fuse in marriage, though not before the girl has been held prisoner in the realm of Proteus, god of sea-changes.

<sup>3</sup> 'quaque magos, Tellus, pollentibus instruis herbis' (*Met.* vii. 196).

Marina's pun on 'weed', implying both vegetation and clothing, is an anticipation of her own rape—by picking flowers, she is violating nature, as she herself will be violated. The weeds that will soon be torn are her own. When the flower-girl is abducted, the correspondence with Proserpina becomes apparent to any audience member with the slightest mythological literacy. If she were to drop her flowers, an obvious bit of stage business, which actually occurs in the dramatization of the rape of Proserpina in Heywood's *The Silver Age*,<sup>4</sup> she would be re-enacting one of Ovid's most tender details:

And, as she'd torn the shoulder of her dress,  
The folds slipped down and out the flowers fell,  
And she, in innocent simplicity,  
Grieved in her girlish heart for their loss too.<sup>5</sup>

The girl's distress over the loss of her flowers is typical of the enchanting psychological details which are shared by Ovid and Shakespeare's last plays.

But, in accordance with the demands of the theatre, Shakespeare naturalizes the myth. Marina is seized by pirates instead of by Dis and the underworld to which she is consigned is a brothel. Mythic resonances are retained at the level of language: the epitaph written for the girl speaks of how she 'withered in her spring of year' and, echoing the opposition with Tellus, redescribes her death in terms of a battle between earth and sea.<sup>6</sup> When she emerges from the sexual underworld, she fulfils Proserpina's function as a bringer of new life, regenerating her father and eliciting a language of fertility: 'Thou that begett'st him that did thee beget' (xxi. 183). In this line, the parallel is slightly and suggestively skewed, for although Proserpina the daughter of the goddess of agriculture reanimates the nature that bore her, she cannot strictly be said to have 'begotten' her own

<sup>4</sup> When Ceres re-enters after the abduction of her daughter, she says, 'Her scattered flowers, | And garland halfe made up, I have light upon, | But her I cannot spy' (Act III, in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood*, iii. 137).

<sup>5</sup> A. D. Melville's trans. of *Met.* v. 398–401; Golding is wooden in his quaintness here ('a sillie simpleness hir childish age yet beares'—v. 501). The detail of Proserpina dropping her flowers certainly caught Shakespeare's eye, for Perdita alludes to it (*Winter's Tale*, iv. iv. 117–18).

<sup>6</sup> The Oxford text prints the full epitaph as an additional passage, and includes in the text of its sc. xviii a shorter version, taken from Wilkins's novella, *The Painful Adventures of Pericles Prince of Tyre*, which explicitly reads Marina as the equivalent of Proserpina, the fairest flower of nature: 'In nature's garden, though by growth a bud, | She was the chiefest flower: she was good' (xviii. 36–7).

parent, since begetting is a male prerogative. By implicitly making Marina into Pericles' father while at the same time retaining the image of her as Proserpina, Shakespeare replaces the unnatural, incestuous relationship between Antiochus and his daughter with which his collaborator began the play with a regenerative parent-child bond which answers to the order of nature.

The first act of *The Winter's Tale* does not include a single mythological reference. Everything seems to come from within Leontes' brittle psyche, nothing from the gods. The only image that is a possible exception is Polixenes' 'Make me not sighted like the basilisk' (I. ii. 388); this figure serves, however, not to make that fabulous monster present, but to highlight the sense of the look that can kill—the point is that Polixenes is no basilisk, rather it is Leontes' vision which is grotesquely distorted.

The other-world beyond the febrile court is present for the first time in Act III, scene i, when Cleomenes and Dion report from Delphos.<sup>7</sup> Suddenly we are in the light and warmth of the ancient world. There is ceremony and awe in the face of the power of divinity:

CLEOMENES. The climate's delicate, the air most sweet;

Fertile the isle, the temple much surpassing

The common praise it bears.

DION. I shall report,

For most it caught me, the celestial habits—

Methinks I so should term them—and the reverence

Of the grave wearers. O, the sacrifice—

How ceremonious, solemn, and unearthly

It was i'th' off'ring!

CLEOMENES. But of all, the burst

And the ear-deaf'ning voice o'th' oracle,

Kin to Jove's thunder, so surprised my sense

That I was nothing.

(III. i. I–II)

But this brief interlude is cut short as the trial scene begins, and its

<sup>7</sup> Shakespeare takes over the conflation of Delos (Apollo's island birthplace) and Delphi (site of the oracle) from Greene's *Pandosto*. Terence Spencer notes that in the Renaissance the island was frequently known as Delphos; he suggests Virgil's *Aeneid*, iii. 73–101, as a possible source for Cleomenes' and Dion's descriptive vocabulary ('Shakespeare's Isle of Delphos', *MLR* xlvii (1952), 199–202). Shakespeare might have noticed Ovid's play on Apollo's presidency over the two like-sounding places, 'vimque dei passam Delphos Delumque tenentis' (*Met.* ix. 332), 'For why the God of Delos and of Delphos had hir frayd' (Golding, ix. 401).

values are rejected when Leontes denies the oracle of Apollo. The denial, however, is the turning point in the action: instantly the gods seem to intervene. Leontes begins thinking in the language of the world of classical myth, where thunderbolts are hurled with abandon: 'Apollo's angry, and the heavens themselves | Do strike at my injustice' (III. ii. 145–6). Cleomenes' association of Apollo's oracle and Jove's thunder has been borne out. Where with the abduction of Marina Shakespeare naturalized myth, here the nature of the events is left ambiguous: the precise cause of Mamillius' death is not given and the nature of Hermione's collapse is not explained. We cannot be sure whether or not the gods have acted directly. Since Hermione falls to the ground at the instant Leontes speaks of divine anger at his own injustice, he may imagine for a moment ('How now there?') that a thunderbolt has been thrown but that by some terrible mistake it has missed him and struck his wife instead, but very soon he reverts to a naturalistic language, expressing the hope that she has merely fainted ('Her heart is but o'ercharged'—III. ii. 149).

Eventually we discover that her removal from the action has been effected by the agency not of a god but of Paulina; at the time, however, the latter's performance is so convincing that the audience shares Leontes' belief that the queen really is dead. And anyone in the audience who had read Shakespeare's source, Robert Greene's novella *Pandosto*, would have been utterly sure of this, for there the queen is gone indeed, never to return. There is nothing in the first half of the play to indicate that the final scene will move away from Greene's 'tragicall discourse' (Bullough, viii. 173) and towards a rare metamorphosis into, rather than out of, life.

When the action shifts to Bohemia, the movement away from interiority quickens apace. External agencies of storm and bear see to Antigonus and the mariners who have been commissioned to dispose of Hermione's baby girl. The clown's description of the storm uses the Ovidian figure of a disruption of the elements so extreme that the sea cannot be distinguished from the sky: 'But I am not to say it is a sea, for it is now the sky. Betwixt the firmament and it you cannot thrust a bodkin's point' (III. iii. 82–4). As for the bear, its presence is usually attributed to the popularity of such episodes in the drama at this time—the version of the romance *Mucedorus* performed at court early in 1610 had a clown tumbling over a bear, and Jonson's *Masque of Oberon*, which may be the source for the satyr's dance in Act IV of *The Winter's Tale*, included a chariot drawn by two white bears. But the

Mariner has begun the scene by interpreting the storm in the same way that Leontes interpreted Mamillius' death:

In my conscience,  
The heavens with that we have in hand are angry,  
And frown upon's.

(III. iii. 4-6)

It would therefore be only reasonable to interpret the bear as a mark of divine displeasure towards Antigonus. To interpret an animal in relation to transgression and supernatural punishment is to begin to read the phenomena of nature as they are read in the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>8</sup> Could this then be an Ovidian bear?

It is not always noticed that there is a good reason for both the entrance of the bear and its violent behaviour. It chases Antigonus because it is being chased itself. The Old Shepherd is understandably annoyed because the local youth are out hunting, despite the dreadful weather, and they have scared away two of his best sheep. It is only because the bear is frightened that it kills Antigonus: the hunted becomes the hunter, inverting the Actaeon story where the hunter becomes the hunted. The Old Shepherd's other cause for complaint about young men is that they go about 'getting wenches with child' (III. iii. 60); the discovery of the baby on stage seems to him to be further evidence of this. There is, then, a kind of symmetry between the bear and the child. Given this, is it coincidental that in the *Metamorphoses* there is a bear who is a wench got with child? Jove's roving eye is caught by Callisto, one of Diana's virgin huntresses; he disguises himself as Diana in order to approach her and is soon kissing her in an immoderate and unmaidenly fashion ('nec moderata satis nec sic a virgine danda'—ii. 431); she resists, but he rapes her and gets her pregnant. A significant length of time passes—'Nine times the Moone full too the worlde had shewde hir horned face' (Golding, ii. 564)—before Diana and her troop strip off to bathe, at which point Callisto's heavy pregnancy is revealed. She is immediately banished for her uncleanness; she bears a son, and then Juno takes her usual revenge on her husband for his infidelity by punishing the rape victim—Callisto is metamorphosed into a bear. Having once been one of Diana's hunters, she is now the hunted:

<sup>8</sup> Mouse, the Clown in *Mucedorus*, wonders whether the bear he meets is a supernatural agency: 'Nay, sure it cannot be a bear, but some devil in the bear's doublet; for a bear could never have had that agility to have frighted me' (i. ii. 2-4). 'Doublet' suggests a bear-costume and consequently an actor rather than a live animal.

How oft oh did she in the hilles the barking houndes beguile?  
And in the lawndes where she hir selfe had chased erst hir game,  
Now flie hirsselfe to save hir lyfe when hunters sought the same?  
(Golding, ii. 607-9)

The story ends with a second metamorphosis and a release: Callisto's son, Arcas (who gives his name to Arcadia), now 16, is out hunting and encounters his bear-mother; in a typically Ovidian moment, they both freeze for an instant—a glimmer of recognition in her case, a nameless fear in his—and in that instant Jove sweeps them into the sky in the form of neighbouring stars, the Great and Little Bears. Once one has read the story one cannot look at those constellations in the night without remembering Callisto.

The detail that will strike readers of *The Winter's Tale* is the passing of nine cycles of the moon as a mark revealing pregnancy. Polixenes' first words in the play are 'Nine changes of the wat'ry star hath been | The shepherd's note since we have left our throne | Without a burden' (I. ii. 1-3). The image comes to suggest more and more as the action unfolds: when Leontes makes his accusation, we remember it and see that it is physically possible that there are grounds for his suspicion (especially given the presence of the word 'burden', which can mean 'that which is borne in the womb'); when the action moves to Bohemia and a shepherd actually appears, we realize that the King of Bohemia has always spoken the language of pastoral ('We were as twinned lambs that did frisk i'th' sun'—I. ii. 69). The link between Polixenes' opening speech and the Old Shepherd's establishes the idea that whilst Perdita is not really the daughter of Bohemia, she will have a Bohemian surrogate father. It is conventional to measure the months by the moon, but the trick of making the measure serve also to reveal a pregnancy may have been learnt by Shakespeare from the Callisto story.<sup>9</sup>

Either just before or just after Shakespeare wrote *The Winter's Tale*, Thomas Heywood's *The Golden Age* was performed at the Red Bull.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Neither the bear nor the 'nine changes' are present in Greene's *Pandosto*: given the close dependence of *The Winter's Tale* on this one literary text for many of its details, it is logical to look to other literary texts for the origination of the details that are added to the events and the language.

<sup>10</sup> *The Winter's Tale* was written some time between 1609 and May 1611; *The Golden Age* was staged some time between 1609 and summer 1611 (it was entered in the Stationers' Register on 14 Oct. 1611, but must have been performed some considerable time earlier, since, according to its preface, its two sequels, *The Silver Age* and *The Brazen Age*, had by then 'adventured the Stage'; it dramatizes elements of Heywood's *Troia*

That play has at least two scenes which resemble parts of *The Winter's Tale*: Saturn intends to have his baby put to death, but Vesta goes to him in the manner of Paulina and persuades him to let it live; also, an enquiry is made of Apollo's oracle at 'Delphos', and a Lord reports how 'After our Ceremonious Rites perform'd, | And Sacrifice ended with reverence, | A murmuring thunder hurried through the Temple'.<sup>11</sup> *The Golden Age* also tells the story of Callisto. Its dramatization of Jupiter, dressed as a virago, attempting to seduce the hapless nymph is possibly the sauciest sexual tease in Jacobean drama—'nay let your skirt be raised . . . You are too wanton, and your hand too free . . . Oh God you tickle me'.<sup>12</sup> But Heywood's dramatization of the Callisto myth has one startling omission: when Arcas hunts her, she is in her original form. Presumably because of the difficulty of staging them, Heywood eschews actual animal metamorphoses; he accordingly follows a version of the story in which there is no bear. A London playgoer of 1610–11 would thus have had the curious experience of not seeing a bear where one would have been expected, in *The Golden Age*, and seeing one where it is quite unexpected in *The Winter's Tale*. Shakespeare reveals himself to be the bolder theatrical innovator: it is as if he shows Heywood that it would have been possible to bring Callisto on to the stage in her metamorphosed form.

To say 'the bear evokes Callisto' opens up some fascinating readings. Callisto and Hermione are both wrongfully accused of conceiving a child out of their own wantonness. The night before the ship lands on the coast of Bohemia, Antigonus dreams that the spirit of the dead Hermione comes to him—it would be ironic indeed if that spirit really did then come to him the next day in the form of a bear. The knowledge that Callisto would eventually become a star and achieve some sort of reunion with her child would open up the same

*Britanica*, which was entered on 5 Dec. 1608). The theatres were closed for much of 1609, due to plague; I suspect that both plays belong to 1610. Ernest Schanzer is, to my knowledge, the only critic to have considered the links between Heywood's and Shakespeare's romances: see his article, 'Heywood's *Ages* and Shakespeare', *RES* NS XI (1960), 18–28. I agree with Schanzer's view that the use of Gower in *Pericles* provided the structural model for the first three *Age* plays, which are narrated by Homer with supporting dumbshows in the choruses, and that the two parts of *The Iron Age*, Heywood's Trojan plays, borrow from the 1609 quarto of *Troilus and Cressida*, but I am not as convinced as he is that *The Winter's Tale* preceded *The Golden Age*—if there is an influence, it could go either way.

<sup>11</sup> Heywood, *Dramatic Works*, iii. 13.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* 34.

kind of possibility for Hermione. But even if the identification of the bear with Callisto is dismissed as fanciful, I still believe that for Shakespeare and those members of his audience who knew their Ovid, a bear would have been more than just a bear—it would have brought with it a narrative that is characterized by destructive sexuality, disguise, abuse of an innocent woman, wrongful accusation, jealousy, and revenge. The story of Callisto shows that you shouldn't treat bears at face value: they may appear to be savage beasts, but they may be victims too. So often in Ovid, as in Shakespeare, you can never be quite sure who is the hunter and who is the hunted. If we put the blame for the death of Antigonus on the bear, rather than the youths who are hunting it, we may be making a misjudgement based on superficial appearances—the very kind of misjudgement that Leontes makes at the beginning of the play.

The story of Callisto also shows that bears may be a means through which the gods work out their arguments with each other and intervene in human affairs. To read mythically is to put every phenomenon *sub specie aeternitatis*. A stage bear, however, owes more to human than divine agency. Either it is a human in a bear skin—an actor who, in the fashion of Bottom as ass or Falstaff wearing the horns in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, has undergone a comic metamorphosis into an animal—or it is a tame bear, from the local pit or wherever, which will inevitably make us reflect upon the art of the tamer, the skill of the keeper. The tame bear thus signifies not the intervention of the gods in human affairs, but the mastery of man's art over nature. Myth ultimately says something about human powerlessness—the archetypal pattern will repeat itself *ad infinitum*—whereas the artistry of actor and trainer says something about human power. In this sense, what is most significant about the bear is that it is *not* given a mythic interpretation. As when Paulina's agency replaces that of the gods, so with the bear Shakespeare replaces Ovid's *species aeternitatis* with a *species humanitatis*.

We may say the same about Time. In Ovid, as in Shakespeare's sonnets, it is uncontrollable, remorseless, the devourer of all things ('tempus edax rerum'), whereas in *The Winter's Tale* Time is a Chorus chatting to the audience and playfully breaking the rules of dramatic illusion. Customarily, the grains in his hour-glass trickle slowly but inexorably away; here, the actor takes control and turns his glass. Shakespeare does not pretend, as a neo-classical dramatist like Jonson would, that time in the theatre corresponds to time outside it. He

establishes an alternative order in which the dramatist is free to lay down his own rules; without compunction he leaps over sixteen years, proving that this world is controlled by his art, not the gods. And he does it with a smile, saying to the audience something along the lines of 'I hope you're having a good time'.

Time moves in a circle even as it moves forward. His intervention marks not only the passing of sixteen years but also the movement from winter to a warmer season. Autolycus enters singing a song that begins with the daffodil of spring and proceeds to the 'summer songs' of lark, thrush, and jay (iv. iii. 1-12). In identifying himself, Autolycus confirms that the play is shifting into the register of myth: 'My father named me Autolycus, who being, as I am, littered under Mercury, was likewise a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles' (iv. iii. 24-6). The littering of Autolycus under Mercury is narrated by Ceyx in Book Eleven of the *Metamorphoses*. Chione, a nubile fourteen-year-old, is desired by both Apollo and Mercury (interestingly, the former sees her while on the way back from Delphos). Apollo disguises himself as an old woman and takes her at night, but before this Mercury has had her, having entranced her with his wand. She bears twin boys, one to each god. By Mercury she has

A sonne that hyght *Autolychus*, who provde a wyly pye,  
And such a fellow as in theft and filching had no peere.  
He was his fathers owne sonne right: he could mennes eyes so bleere,  
As for to make ye black things whyght, and whyght things black appeere.  
(Golding, xi. 359-63)

Shakespeare's Autolycus has learnt from Ovid's this art of making black seem white and vice versa: he can convince Mopsa and Dorcas that there is truth in a ballad of a fish that appeared on the fourscore of April forty thousand fathoms above water.

The twin borne of Chione by Apollo is Philammon, a renowned singer. To Chione, it proves a curse to have been loved by two gods, but in Shakespeare Autolycus has a benign metamorphic power. He represents the two boys rolled into one, bringing not only the filching of Mercury's son, after whom he has been named, but also Philammon's gift of song. He is in fact littered by both Apollo and Mercury; as such, he is a kind of agent of the dramatist who is himself both singer and thief (the plot is snapped-up from Greene). The words of Mercury and the songs of Apollo, divided at the end of *Love's Labour's Lost*, are united. At the end of the fourth act, Autolycus'

Mercurial actions unintentionally serve the Apollonian oracle: because he comes on to gloat over his thieving during the festival he is there to provide garments for Florizel's escape, and because he lives by the principle of knavery he conceals his knowledge of the escape from the king and diverts the shepherd and clown from Polixenes to Florizel.

Perdita first appears after Autolycus' first exit. She is garlanded with flowers and Florizel gives the first description of her: 'no shepherdess, but Flora | Peering in April's front' (iv. iv. 2-3). Shakespeare took this image from Greene's *Pandosto*, where, so to speak, the fauna became the flora: 'Fawnia . . . with a garland made of bowes and flowers; which attire became her so gallantly, as shee seemed to bee the Goddess Flora her selfe for beauty' (Bullough, viii. 176). Perdita, Shakespeare's version of Greene's Fawnia, replies that of course she is not really Flora, goddess of spring and fertility, that she is only dressed ('pranked up') like her. For the audience it is a typically complex moment: we know as Florizel does not that Perdita really is of royal blood, that in being dressed as queen of the feast she is symbolically taking on her true identity, but we also know that (s)he is ultimately a boy actor who is merely dressed up for the duration of the play. Then again, if we can suppose that the boy actor is really a shepherdess acting the part of a princess, who is really a princess but doesn't know it, then we can also suppose that she is also an embodiment of a goddess.

But is the goddess necessarily Flora? We also know that Time has taken it upon himself to name Bohemia's son *Florizel*, so for the latter to call Perdita Flora is to stake a claim for her by grafting his own name to her. This possessiveness is of a piece with Florizel's next mythological allusion, a justification of his own assumption of disguise as a shepherd on the grounds that the gods too have used disguise for the purposes of wooing:

The gods themselves,  
Humbling their deities to love, have taken  
The shapes of beasts upon them. Jupiter  
Became a bull, and bellowed; the green Neptune  
A ram, and bleated; and the fire-robed god,  
Golden Apollo, a poor humble swain,  
As I seem now.

(iv. iv. 25-31)

In terms of the play as a whole, Florizel's assumption of the same



disguise as Apollo suggests that his wooing of Perdita is part of the pattern that will eventually lead to the fulfilment of Apollo's oracle. But, more locally, the allusions are troubling. Golding's preface to his translation of the *Metamorphoses* reminds the reader that Jupiter became a bull 'too winne his foule desyre'. And the ultimate source for the list of the gods' transformations is Arachne's tapestry in Book Six—her weaving shows how 'Europe was by royall Jove beguilde in shape of Bull', Neptunus 'in the shape of Ram | Begetting one Theophane Bisalties ympe with Lam', and Apollo 'in a shepherdes shape was practising a wile | The daughter of one Macarie dame Issa to beguile'.<sup>13</sup> The tapestry so annoys Minerva, 'Bicause the lewdnesse of the Gods was blased so in it' (vi. 164), that she rends the cloth in pieces and turns Arachne into a spider. Florizel seems to realize that it is not exactly tactful to allude at this moment to a series of stories of lewdness, but the language in which he tries to differentiate himself from the rapacious divinities is not entirely convincing: 'my desires | Run not before mine honour, nor my lusts | Burn hotter than my faith' (iv. iv. 33–5). The faith is all very well, but the lusts still burn hot. Shakespeare shares with Ovid the conviction that, whether or not it comes with honour, male desire always speaks the language of sexual conquest. In the final act we see that even after sixteen years' penance, Leontes is still capable of casting a lascivious eye on the fresh young Perdita.<sup>14</sup>

Shakespeare's decision to call Greene's Dorastus 'Florizel' and have him re-create Perdita as Flora displaces the identification and leaves room for an alternative mythological figuration that is not in Greene: Perdita herself appeals not to Flora but to Proserpina.<sup>15</sup> Where *Pandosto* includes an unspecified 'meeting of all the Farmers Daughters' (Bullough, viii. 177), Shakespeare locates his pastoral scene at a particular moment within the rhythm of the rural year. Perdita cannot be 'Flora | Peering in April's front', as Florizel has it, because it isn't April. Sheep-shearing festivals traditionally took place

<sup>13</sup> Golding, Pref. 34; vi. 127, 144–5, 154–5.

<sup>14</sup> v. i. 222–4, probably a vestige from *Pandosto*, where the motif of a potential incestuous relationship between Pandosto (Leontes) and Fawnia (Perdita) is much stronger—so strong, indeed, that when Pandosto discovers how close he has been to committing the unnatural deed, he commits suicide, thus 'clos[ing] up the Comedie with a Tragical stratageme' (Bullough, viii. 199).

<sup>15</sup> In Peele's mythological play, *The Arraignement of Paris*, Flora herself delivers a flower-catalogue that is similar to Perdita's (i. i. 50–71); Shakespeare's departure from this precedent makes the identification with Proserpina all the more striking.

in late June; at this one, the queen of the feast hands out 'flowers | middle summer' (iv. iv. 106–7). The mood is further removed from that of April, indeed it becomes positively autumnal, when the girl addresses the two strangers and alludes to the liminal moment between summer and winter: 'the year growing ancient, | Not yet on summer's death, nor on the birth | Of trembling winter' (iv. iv. 79–81). Perdita has two problems in the sequence when she hands out flowers (a scene not in Greene): the first is that the fairest flowers of the late summer season appropriate to the ageing guests are carnations and streaked gillyflowers, which she lacks because of her distaste for grafting, a process she sees as interference with nature, and the second is the absence of spring flowers to give to the youthful characters who are in the springtime of their lives:

O Proserpina,  
For the flowers now that, frightened, thou letst fall  
From Dis's wagon!—daffodils,  
That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty; violets, dim,  
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes  
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,  
That die unmarried ere they can behold  
Bright Phoebus in his strength—a malady  
Most incident to maids; bold oxlips, and  
The crown imperial; lilies of all kinds,  
The flower-de-luce being one, O, these I lack,  
To make you garlands of.

(iv. iv. 116–28)

The undertow of allusion to the classical gods forces us to read this speech mythologically as well as naturally. Flowers here have a metamorphic power—daffodils can charm the wild winds of March and yellow fritillaries can signify royalty ('The crown imperial'), thus further anticipating Perdita's true royal identity. And the language itself is metamorphic: 'O, these I lack' comes as a shock because in the mind's eye the flowers have been present. For nearly everyone who sees the play, these spring flowers are more 'real', more memorable, than the rosemary, rue, and flowers of middle summer which Perdita has handed to Polixenes and Camillo. Something similar happens with the apostrophe to Proserpina: Perdita is saying that she is not like Proserpina, because she lacks the flowers, but in realizing the

flowers linguistically she becomes Proserpina. She has picked up what her predecessor dropped when whisked away by Dis.<sup>16</sup>

At what moment in her story is Proserpina being reincarnated? In answering this question one sees why Florizel was wrong to mention April. The play does not have the bipartite structure that Time's division of it would seem to imply. To read the first three acts as winter (Leontes' frosty emotions and Hermione's apparent death) and the latter two as spring (Perdita as Proserpina returning from the underworld) is to oversimplify. Through her linguistic art in the flower-catalogue, Perdita is able to bring back the spring, but she can only do so for the duration of the speech; as the scene unfolds, it darkens. Polixenes' exit line threatens the dispatch of Perdita to the underworld:

if ever henceforth thou  
These rural latches to his entrance open,  
Or hoop his body more with thy embraces,  
I will devise a death as cruel for thee  
As thou art tender to't.

(IV. IV. 437-41)

In accordance with the reference to the year growing old, reaching the threshold between summer's death and the birth of trembling winter, this is the autumnal moment when Dis makes his annual reclamation of Proserpina. Florizel's oath to the effect that if he should prove unfaithful nature should 'crush the sides o'th' earth together | And mar the seeds within' (IV. IV. 478-9) raises the terrible possibility of Proserpina, personification of the seed within the earth, not being allowed out of the underworld. There is a chill in the air at the breaking up of the feast; summer is at an end, the holiday is over, and winter will return.

But then there is a turn in the action, effected by the benign agency of Camillo. He saves Perdita from her threatened death, as Paulina had previously saved Hermione—that is why his marriage to Paulina at the end, though it always raises a laugh in the theatre, is symbolically fitting. Thanks to Camillo, instead of going to her death

<sup>16</sup> E. A. J. Honigmann proposes further links between Perdita and Proserpina in his article, 'Secondary Sources of *The Winter's Tale*', *PQ* xxxiv (1955), 27-38: Leontes refers to Mamillius, the child whose loss is partially redeemed when Perdita is found, as his 'collop' (I. II. 139), a word used by Golding's Ceres for Proserpina (v. 651); both girls are daughters of the Queen of Sicily (might this be why Shakespeare made Leontes Sicilian, whereas in his primary source Greene's Pandosto is Bohemian?).

Perdita goes to the winter kingdom of Leontes. Thus the play in fact has a tripartite structure: the first three acts are a sad tale signifying winter, the fourth traverses through the sheep-shearing festival to summer's end, and in the fifth we return to winter but this time Perdita enters it. She does so as Proserpina and we know that Proserpina's sojourn in the kingdom of death will be a temporary one, that she will soon emerge with the new life of spring. As Leontes turns to Perdita, early in the fifth act, he says to Florizel, 'Welcome hither, | As is the spring to th'earth' (v. i. 150-1).

The Proserpina myth invites Shakespeare to enact the arrival of spring at the climax of the play in the form of a nature myth or fertility ritual. But he declines the invitation. In the fifth act, Perdita no longer wears her flowers. The reunion of father and child which gave the language of fertility to *Pericles* ('Thou that begett'st him that did thee beget') is removed from the centre, given only in reported speech. Nor, except fleetingly in Paulina's lines 'Do not shun her | Until you see her die again, for then | You kill her double' (v. iii. 105-7), does Shakespeare turn to the other great Ovidian ascent from the underworld, that of Eurydice, with its tragic end in the wife's 'double dying' (Golding, x. 69). What takes centre-stage instead is a myth that turns back Ovid's normal pattern, a metamorphosis that is driven by art not nature and that takes the form of depetrification rather than the usual petrification.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> I am presupposing here that Shakespeare and his audience would have thought of the story of Pygmalion as the archetype for the animation of a statue. It was certainly much alluded to and illustrated in the 16th cent. It is possible, however, that there is an alternative or additional Ovidian archetype. When Polixenes threatens to disinherit Florizel he says that he will 'Not hold thee of our blood, no, not our kin, | Farre than Deucalion off' (IV. IV. 431-2). Why Deucalion? Is it simply to suggest distance (Deucalion lived a very long time ago)? Or is it to summon up the pattern of destruction and re-creation in bk. 1 of the *Metamorphoses*, where after the coming of death in universal flood, there is an advent of new life from the stones which Deucalion and Pyrrha throw over their shoulders at the command of the oracle of Themis?

Even like to Marble ymages new drawne and roughly wrought,  
Before the Carver by his Arte to purpose hath them brought.  
Such partes of them where any juice or moysture did abound,  
Or else were earthie, turnd too flesh . . .

Thus by the mightie powre of Gods ere longer time was past,  
The mankinde was restorde by stones the which a man did cast.  
(Golding, i. 483-90)

If we link the animation of Hermione's stone to this moment, then the winter/spring pattern finds an antique parallel in that of flood/new life. The parallel is discussed in François Laroque, 'A New Ovidian Source for the Statue Scene in *The Winter's Tale*,

The myth in question is first signalled by an image used by the third gentleman in his account of Perdita's effect on the winter court: 'Who was most marble there changed colour' (v. ii. 89). This is not only in accordance with her spring-like capacity to bring warmth and colour; it also prepares the ground for the animation of 'her mother's statue', which is mentioned for the first time in the third gentleman's next speech. He describes it as 'newly performed by that rare Italian master Giulio Romano, who, had he himself eternity and could put breath into his work, would beguile nature of her custom, so perfectly he is her ape' (v. ii. 95-9). The figures of Perdita bringing colour to marble and the Italian master putting breath into his statue bring into proximity two key elements of Ovid's most celebrated story of artistic creation: Pygmalion and his ivory image of a beautiful girl. But Paulina's animation of Hermione's statue does not so much directly allude to the Pygmalion story as subtly metamorphose it; the relationship is more oblique than that of *Venus and Adonis* to its prototype story (which is told on the heels of that of Pygmalion). In contrast to his earlier practice, Shakespeare ignores the context in Book Ten of the *Metamorphoses*: it is not relevant that Pygmalion devotes himself to his statue because he is disgusted with women (he has witnessed the brazen behaviour of the Propoetides, the first prostitutes, who are turned to stone immediately before his story, with its inverse movement from stone); nor is it relevant that his sexual union with his artwork begets the tragic line Paphos, Cinyras, Myrrha, and Adonis. All these dark contours are removed. The mature dramatist concentrates instead on three positive aspects of the story: the power of imagination or wish-fulfilment, the magic of the awakening, and, crucially, the art that outdoes nature. In emphasizing art, Shakespeare is following Ovid, whose principal innovation in the myth was to make the man who desires the statue not a king but the sculptor himself.<sup>18</sup>

Pygmalion carves an ivory statue so realistic that it seems to be a real girl, so beautiful that he falls in love with it. He desperately wants to believe it is real and there are moments when the perfection of the art is such that the statue does seem to be struggling into life:

N&Q NS xxxi (1984), 215-17. The imagery of stones softening is striking, but ultimately the Pygmalion story is the more potent source because of its interest in the power of the artist.

<sup>18</sup> See Hermann Fraenkel, *Ovid: A Poet between Two Worlds* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1945), 96, and Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh*, 303 n. 52. On Ovid's innovative handling of the story more generally, see Brooks Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet* (2nd edn.,

With many a touch he tries it—is it flesh  
Or ivory? Not ivory still, he's sure!  
Kisses he gives and thinks they are returned;  
He speaks to it, caresses it, believes  
The firm new flesh beneath his fingers yields,  
And fears the limbs may darken with a bruise.<sup>19</sup>

(The image of a blue-black—'livor'—bruise on the snow-white ivory is quintessential Ovid.) Pygmalion acts out a fantasy of bringing gifts to and dressing his love; on the festival of Venus he prays for a bride who will be the living likeness of his ivory girl, when what he really means is that he wants the ivory girl itself. The idea that the 'living' being would be but an image of the statue is characteristic of the story's wholesale inversion of the normative relationship between life and art. When he returns from Venus' altar, his wish is fulfilled and a kiss brings the statue to softness, warmth, and colour:

And he went home, home to his heart's delight,  
And kissed her as she lay, and she seemed warm;  
Again he kissed her and with marvelling touch  
Caressed her breast; beneath his touch the flesh  
Grew soft, its ivory hardness vanishing.

She was alive! The pulse beat in her veins!  
And then indeed in words that overflowed  
He poured his thanks to Venus, and at last  
His lips pressed real lips, and she, his girl,  
Felt every kiss, and blushed, and shyly raised  
Her eyes to his and saw the world and him.

(x. 279-83, 291-6, trans. Melville)

This moment when the eyes are raised is one of the most theatrical in all Ovid. It is exactly the sort of detail that would have attracted Shakespeare to the story.

Shakespeare learnt from this sequence both an idea and a style. If you want something badly enough and you believe in it hard enough,

Cambridge, 1970): 'That it was Ovid himself who changed the indecent or pathological agalmatophily [sexual relation with a statue] . . . to the idealistic love of this episode is, it seems to me, overwhelmingly probable' (p. 389). The Pygmalion story, with its interest in the central Ovidian topoi of art, love, and stone, has been seen as a pivotal story in the *Metamorphoses* as a whole—Douglas T. Bauer, 'The Function of Pygmalion in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid', *TAPA* xciii (1962), 1-21.

<sup>19</sup> *Metamorphoses*, x. 254-9, trans. Melville. Golding lacks the delicacy which the whole sequence in Ovid's original shares with the closing scene of *The Winter's Tale*.

you will eventually get it. It is the idea which tragedy denies but comedy affirms. It is the illusion which theatre can foster, as Paulina insists through her challenge to her double audience, those on the stage and those looking at the stage:

It is required  
You do awake your faith. Then, all stand still.  
Or those that think it is unlawful business  
I am about, let them depart.

(v. iii. 94-7)

Linguistically, Ovid shows Shakespeare that the way to evoke this leap of faith is through pinpricks of sensation. The progression is both precise and sensuous: blood pulses through the veins, the lips respond, the ivory face flushes. Correspondingly, Leontes contrasts the warm life his queen once had with the coldness of the statue, but then he seems to see blood in the veins and warmth upon the lip. And when she descends and embraces him, she *is* warm.

I have shown that throughout his career Shakespeare transformed into metaphors the metamorphoses which Ovid played out at the level of mythic narrative. Malvolio speaks like a Narcissus without actually becoming a flower; it is Othello's language, not his body, that is reduced to bestiality; Lear's metaphor, 'O, you are men of stones', replaces the literal metamorphosis of Niobe into stone. Now near the end of his career, Shakespeare reverses the process, something he had previously done only in comedy (Bottom as ass, Falstaff as Actaeon). Initially, Leontes freezes Hermione out of his life. Her body-contact with Polixenes is 'Too hot, too hot' (i. ii. 110)—he wants her to be frigid. His jealous look is like that of the basilisk or the Medusa: he turns his wife to stone.<sup>20</sup> In the final act, this metaphor becomes a metamorphosis as Hermione is depetrified. The transformation is triumphantly realized on stage both linguistically and visually. 'Does not the stone rebuke me | For being more stone than it?', asks Leontes when confronted with the statue (v. iii. 37-8). The hardened image of his wife forces him at last to turn his gaze inward upon his own hard heart. The final act shows the melting of that heart and the rekindling of love, with its concordant release of Hermione back into warmth, softness, and life.

Although Venus gives Pygmalion a sign that she favours his

<sup>20</sup> 'The husband treats the wife lovelessly, and she becomes a stony lady', writes Leonard Barkan, linking the statue to the 'donna petrosa' figure in Petrarch. His discussion of the scene (*The Gods Made Flesh*, 283-7) is the best that I know.

request and he is appropriately grateful when the metamorphosis into life takes place, Ovid avoids actually saying that Venus quickened the statue. It is the force of Pygmalion's art, imagination, and will-power which seems to have done the trick. The girl becomes a reward for his skill and perseverance; the statue was made with an art that in concealing its own art ('ars adeo latet arte sua'—x. 252) surpassed nature, and the reward for this triumph is that it becomes life.

So too in *The Winter's Tale*. One life-bringing force is Perdita, but the other is Paulina's art, which stands in for Giulio Romano's, which stands in for Shakespeare's.<sup>21</sup> As every critic notices, a debate between art and nature pervades the play—it is there even in the opening dialogue as Camillo remarks that the two kings were 'train'd' together (i. i. 22), a verb suggesting on the one hand that the bond between the two kings is natural (tree-like), and on the other that it depends on the arts of educational nurture (analogous to horticultural artifice). When Perdita and Polixenes have their argument about art and nature in the pastoral scene, the choice is between unmediated nature and the art that shares with nature. But the final scene seems to offer an art like Pygmalion's, 'surpassing the perfection of Nature'.<sup>22</sup> Giulio Romano, it may be said, is at once Pygmalion and Shakespeare: he 'beguile[s] nature of her custom, so perfectly he is her ape'. Nature cannot bring Hermione back from the dead, but art does. In *The Tempest*, one will worry as to whether Prospero's magical art of opening graves is lawful, especially as it is imitated from Ovid's witch, Medea. But *The Winter's Tale* proclaims that Paulina's magic is 'an art | Lawful as eating' (v. iii. 110-11). Those who doubt it are politely told to depart.

It is lawful, of course, because this is not really an animation or a resurrection. Paulina is staging a theatrical coup. Shakespeare has triumphantly moved from Ovid's key of myth into his own of drama. The animation of a statue is a device by no means unique to this play—in Campion's *Lords' Masque*, performed, as *The Winter's Tale* was, in celebration of Princess Elizabeth's marriage in 1613, eight golden statues are 'new-transformed' into ladies<sup>23</sup>—but what is

<sup>21</sup> David Armitage ('The Dismemberment of Orpheus', 130) suggests that the art is also that of Orpheus: the Pygmalion story is in the Orphic section of the *Metamorphoses*, and a parallel is established by the combination of music and the animation of stone. As in *Titus Andronicus* and *Edward III*, Shakespeare implicitly makes an Orphic claim for himself.

<sup>22</sup> Sandys's commentary on bk. 10, *Ovid's Metamorphosis Englished*, p. 361.

<sup>23</sup> *A Book of Masques in Honour of Allardyce Nicoll* (Cambridge, 1967), 113.

exceptional in Shakespeare's effect is the perfect correspondence between the character's performance and the actor's. As the preserved Hermione pretends to be a statue coming to life, so does the boy actor. When we realize that Paulina and Hermione are staging a performance and when we see the correspondence between character and actor, we recognize that the magic which Paulina claims to be lawful is that of theatre. So we see that it is a magic which depends on our complicity: Paulina's demand that non-believers should depart is Shakespeare's demand that the theatre audience should suspend its disbelief, and Leontes' final request that each one should demand and answer to his part performed in the story is Shakespeare's request that we should go away and talk about the play and our role in it.

Although in these after-reflections we become aware of the contrivances of art, which of us can watch the moment of awakening in a good production and not believe for a moment that a statue is coming to life? In that moment, Shakespeare has achieved the seemingly impossible feat of staging an Ovidian metamorphosis. But in two crucial respects it is not a dramatization of the depetrification in the Pygmalion story. First, it is not a divine intervention but a human coup, a manifestation of creative female power: this is the distinctively Shakespearian *species humanitatis*. And secondly, where Pygmalion's statue becomes a beautiful woman in her prime, Giulio Romano's bears the marks of time. To Leontes' dismay, the face is wrinkled as his beloved Hermione's was not. 'So much the more our carver's excellence, | Which lets go by some sixteen years, and makes her | As she lived now' (v. iii. 30-2). Rosalie Colie saw the point and expressed it beautifully:

Beauty's perfection, exemplified in Perdita's smooth cheek, gives way before the meaning and pathos of those wrinkles—even the ideal beauty of a mode emphasizing aesthetic ideals retires before the values attributed to suffering and feeling, validated by being experienced over time. . . . Wrinkles are the anti-romantic attributes of mature life: if Hermione is to be restored to Leontes with any significance to that restoration, she must return at time's full cost, her loss made calculable and conscious. The wrinkles are signs that suffering really means.<sup>24</sup>

It is not enough to say of the statue scene that nowhere does Shakespeare's art substitute more brilliantly for myth, nowhere is there more powerful testimony to the creative, even redemptive,

<sup>24</sup> Colie, *Shakespeare's Living Art* (Princeton, NJ, 1974), 280, 282.

power of drama, nowhere is there a creative coup more wonderful. For it must also be said that the redemption is only partial, it is neither a reversal of time nor a transcendence into eternity. Sixteen years was a very large proportion of an adult life in the seventeenth century; Leontes and Hermione have missed a lot and will not be together much longer. And Mamillius and Antigonus will not return. As a young man writing sonnets, Shakespeare could claim with Ovid that his art had the power to defeat time. Sonnets such as 19, 60, and 65 close with the same confidence as the *Metamorphoses*: 'Yet do thy worst, old time; despite thy wrong | My love shall in my verse ever live young'. As an older man, ending *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare does not wager on the future. He uses the drama not to articulate a mythic vision of the eternal nature of things, but to tell a story about how it is possible to love and to forgive. He asks only that we should have a certain faith in humankind, in its resilience and its capacity to start again.

### III

Ovid told the story of Medea not only in the twelfth letter of his *Heroides* and the seventh book of his *Metamorphoses*, but also in a play. It was praised by Quintilian, but only two lines survive. Ovid's poems are so full of *coups de théâtre*, of supple insights into character, and of gestural precision that one longs for the *Medea* to be found. Euripides was doubtless its model, and it is highly probable that Ovid's tragedy would have been closer in spirit to its Greek original than to the surviving Roman dramatic version of the Medea story traditionally attributed to Seneca. Despite the resemblances between *The Winter's Tale* and *Alcestis*, *Titus Andronicus* and *Hecuba*, it cannot be proved that Shakespeare knew any of the plays of Euripides.<sup>25</sup> But there is no doubt that he derived a Euripidean spirit from Ovid. Euripides taught Ovid what Ovid taught Shakespeare: an art of tragicomedy, a way of writing about the mind under the stress of extreme passion, a sensitivity to female suffering. It is therefore fitting that *The Tempest* alludes crucially to the story that was the subject of Ovid's only play; Shakespeare ended his career by collaborating with Fletcher, but his last solo performance was a kind of collaboration with Ovid.

<sup>25</sup> The strongest, but by no means conclusive, arguments that he did are those of Emrys Jones in *The Origins of Shakespeare*.

*The Tempest* does not, however, have the kind of sustained relationship with the Medea story that *Titus Andronicus* had with the Philomel narrative. Rather, it moves among a bewildering array of mythic materials, echoing in its shifts of mood and tone the patterns of the *Metamorphoses*. *Titus* is Shakespeare's metamorphic tragedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* his metamorphic comedy, and *The Tempest* his metamorphic romance. All three plays apparently lack a direct source of the sort that Arthur Brooke's translation of Bandello was for *Romeo and Juliet*, Lodge's *Rosalynde* was for *As You Like It*, and Greene's *Pandosto* was for *The Winter's Tale*.<sup>26</sup> But all three are in profound ways shaped by Ovid: they represent progressively more distanced transformations of a matter and manner learnt from the *Metamorphoses*.

To describe *The Tempest* as a metamorphic romance is to beg the question of its generic classification. The compilers of the first folio placed it first among Shakespeare's comedies, while twentieth-century criticism has grouped it among the so-called late romances. Both generic terms would have been recognizable to a Jacobean audience, although the latter one was not usually applied to the drama. *The Tempest* shares with Shakespeare's earlier comedies a movement towards reconciliation and marriage, together with a sense of disaster averted. As Don John's conspiracy fails in *Much Ado About Nothing*, so the various conspiracies against Prospero fail in *The Tempest*; the play ends, in the traditional fashion of comedy, with the young lovers united, but also, like all Shakespearian comedies, with certain ends left untied—Antonio does not speak to Prospero when the elder brother offers him grudging forgiveness; the sense of exclusion recapitulates the way in which Shakespeare's earlier Antonios stand apart from the resolutions in marriage at the end of *The Merchant of Venice* and *Twelfth Night*. As for romance, *The Tempest* shares with *Pericles* sea-voyages and storm, lost children, magical transformations and revivals—all features of the romance form which may be traced back through medieval figures like Gower, the narrator of *Pericles*, to Hellenistic sources such as the tale of

<sup>26</sup> This is not the place to rehearse the relationship between *Titus*, the 1594 ballad on the subject, and the prose chapbook *History of Titus Andronicus*: as I intimated in Ch. 3, I agree with G. K. Hunter's argument that the order is play-ballad-chapbook, not chapbook-ballad-play, as most scholars have believed. *Titus* would then be Shakespeare's only 'sourceless' tragedy. My reasons for agreeing with Hunter, together with additional supporting evidence, will be laid out in the introduction to my forthcoming Arden edn. of the play.

Apollonius of Tyre, which lies distantly behind not only *Pericles* but also the romance element of *The Comedy of Errors*.

Recent critical readers have, however, described the play rather differently, proposing that it is an imperial drama. There have been attempts to link *The Tempest* to the Jacobean court: its two earliest recorded performances were at court, one of them during the celebrations for the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth and the Elector Palatine; furthermore, the play includes Shakespeare's most formal masque and may therefore be said to be his nearest approximation to a court drama. Prospero's show manifestly resembles such explicitly courtly and aristocratic works as Ben Jonson's wedding masque of 1606, *Hymenaei*. But Prospero's masque is not the whole play: indeed, it is not even completed and it is a symptom of the vain art that the play as a whole purports to reject. Nor is there any evidence that it was written as an allegory of the betrothal of the king's daughter, just as there is no evidence that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was written for an aristocratic wedding. And the fact that the play was performed at court does not in any way mean that it was written for the court or about the court.

The external evidence for a reading of *The Tempest* as imperial drama is therefore flimsy. Two kinds of internal evidence have been adduced: first, the play's allusions to the establishment of empire, what may be described as its New World context; and, secondly, its apparent relationship with the exemplary poem about the establishment of empire, Virgil's *Aeneid*. Donna B. Hamilton has recently devoted an entire book to an imperial reading along Virgilian lines; she is of the view that *The Tempest* is 'a formal imitation of the first six books of the *Aeneid*, both in its larger patterns of theme and structure and in its smaller details of vocabulary and syntax'.<sup>27</sup>

The Virginia Company was established by royal charter in 1606, the Jamestown Colony set up in 1607. In 1609 several hundred potential new colonists ran into a storm near the Virginia coast; the ship of Sir Thomas Gates, the governor, was driven to Bermuda, where it landed safely and the voyagers were able to winter. It has long been recognized that William Strachey's eyewitness account of these events is a likely source for various details in the play, though Shakespeare would have had to see the 'Strachey letter' in

<sup>27</sup> Hamilton, *Virgil and 'The Tempest': The Politics of Imitation* (Columbus, Ohio, 1990), 4.

manuscript, since it was not published until 1625. Several allusions give the play a New World aura. Few audience members could have missed the resonance of Miranda's 'O brave new world', ironic as her wonder is in context. Ariel links the tempest to the New World with his reference to the 'still-veged Bermudas'. Caliban's god Setebos is a Patagonian deity, mentioned in Magellan's voyages; the name Caliban itself inevitably suggests 'cannibal' and thus a certain image of New World savages. Prospero's enslavement of Caliban seems to be a stage-image of colonial oppression—in particular, his use of language as a method of control is, according to Stephen Greenblatt in his influential essay 'Learning to Curse', a classic strategy of colonialism.<sup>28</sup> Trinculo apprehends Caliban as a bizarre creature who may be exploited for financial gain: 'Were I in England now, as once I was, and had but this fish painted, not a holiday-fool there but would give a piece of silver. There would this monster make a man—any strange beast there makes a man. When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian.' The idea is explained by Frank Kermode in a laconic footnote: 'Such exhibitions were a regular feature of colonial policy under James I. The exhibits rarely survived the experience.'<sup>29</sup>

The text also draws on more positive images of the New World: the island is rich in natural produce and may thus be read as a virgin land—a Virginia—ripe with Utopian possibilities. So it is that Gonzalo lifts from Montaigne's essay 'Of the Caniballes' a Utopian vision of what he would do if he had the 'plantation' (the word denotes the right to colonize) of the isle. Montaigne inverted the normative view of the relationship between 'civilized' and 'savage', arguing that the inhabitants of the 'new world' of the Americas were the truly civilized ones since they were closer to 'their originall naturalitie' and 'the lawes of nature' than are the Europeans. 'It is a nation', he wrote in a sentence closely imitated by Shakespeare,

that hath no kinde of traffike, no knowledge of Letters, no intelligence of numbers, no name of magistrate, nor of politike superioritie; no use of service, of riches or of povertie; no contracts, no successions, no partitions, no

<sup>28</sup> Greenblatt, 'Learning to Curse: Aspects of Linguistic Colonialism in the Sixteenth Century', in *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, ed. Fredi Chiappelli, 2 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976), ii. 561–80, repr. as the title-essay of Greenblatt's *Learning to Curse* (London, 1990).

<sup>29</sup> Note to Trinculo's speech at ii. ii. 27–32, in Arden edn. (London, 1954).

occupation but idle; no respect of kinred, but common, no apparrell but naturall, no manuring of lands, no use of wine, corne, or mettle.<sup>30</sup>

That Shakespeare read Montaigne's wide-ranging critique of European assumptions about the inferiority of 'barbarians' prior to writing *The Tempest* is the most compelling piece of evidence in support of the view that the play is a troubled exploration of imperial and colonial strategies. Montaigne and Shakespeare have thus come to the assistance of post-colonial critics who for good reasons need to work through their own guilt about these matters.

But there are problems with a New World reading. Caliban's god may be of the New World, but his mother, a much more important figure, is from the old world: apparently Prospero considers it necessary to remind Ariel once a month that she was born in Algiers. Caliban himself is not a native inhabitant of the island: he is the child of the Algerian Sycorax who was herself an earlier exile to the island. Prospero is not establishing an empire, he is exiled to a place that is thought to be barren. The play is not at all interested in the things that colonization is primarily interested in: gold, spices, tobacco. And the location of the island is not the New World, but what was for the Elizabethans the centre of the old world, the Mediterranean; Shakespeare is careful to inform his audience that the shipwreck occurs *en route* from Tunis to Naples.

This is where the second imperial strand, Virgil's *Aeneid*, enters. In the first scene in which the victims of the storm appear on the island, there is a lengthy exchange about 'widow Dido', 'widower Aeneas', and the identity of Carthage with Tunis. One gets the impression of Shakespeare vigorously waving a flag marked *Aeneid*. 'This Tunis, sir, was Carthage' (ii. i. 88). As in the Dido section of *The Aeneid*, there is a broad pattern of storm, shipwreck, and new love. Then again, Naples is close to Cumae, where Aeneas made landfall in Italy. Cumae was the entrance to the underworld: critics have therefore compared the adventures in the enchanted island of *The Tempest* to those of Aeneas in the underworld; in each strange place, both past and future are conjured up, a process of sacrifice and initiation is undergone, and the initiates emerge in some sense redeemed, ready for a fresh start.<sup>31</sup> A

<sup>30</sup> 'Of the Caniballes', *The Essayes of Montaigne*, bk. I, ch. 30, Florio trans., quoted from 1933 edn., p. 164.

<sup>31</sup> This argument seems to have been first articulated by Colin Still in his mystically minded *The Timeless Theme* (London, 1936); more recent treatments include two essays by Jan Kott reprinted in his *The Bottom Translation* (Chicago, 1987), Robert Miola, 'Virgil in Shakespeare: From Allusion to Imitation', in *Virgil at 2000: Commemorative*

number of local borrowings have also been traced: for instance, the appearance of Ariel 'like a harpy' during the banquet (III. iii. 52sd) echoes an incident in the third book of *The Aeneid* when harpies befoul the Trojans' food on the Strophades; and Ferdinand's reaction to the sight of Miranda, 'most sure, the goddess | On whom these airs attend' (I. ii. 424-5), is also that of Aeneas to the sight of Venus after the Trojan shipwreck ('O dea certe'—*Aen.* i. 328).

But it is extremely difficult to make the pattern fit. An alternative source for the harpy has been found in Sabinus' commentary on Ovid, where it is connected to King Alfonso of Naples.<sup>32</sup> And as for the broader parallel, is it with Dido's Carthage or the Sibyl's underworld? Claribel in Tunis is not a distraction from empire-building, as Dido Queen of Carthage was for Aeneas (or indeed as Cleopatra is for Antony). The dynastic marriage linking Milan with Naples at the end of the play is something very different from Aeneas' founding of a new empire in Rome. Nor is there a generic match: *epic* is the form of imperial narrative, not romance or comedy, the genres of *The Tempest*.

Shakespeare's play could, however, be described as a romance-style reworking of epic material. His precedent for such a reworking was Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the later books of which cover some of the same ground as *The Aeneid*, but in a revisionary way. Robert Wiltenburg concludes his essay on 'The Aeneid in *The Tempest*' with the following claim:

Just as Virgil subsumed the Homeric stories of men who fight primarily for themselves to the story of a man who fights primarily for his culture, his concept of civilization, so Shakespeare has subsumed the search for law, for justice, the story told so well by Virgil, into his own larger story of the search for 'kindness'.<sup>33</sup>

I do not find the comparison with Virgil's treatment of Homer at all illuminating. I would say rather that Shakespeare revises—which is

*Essays on the Poet and his Influence*, ed. J. D. Bernard (New York, 1986), 241-58, John Pitcher, 'A Theatre of the Future: *The Aeneid* and *The Tempest*', *Essays in Criticism*, xxxiv (1984), 193-215, Robert Wiltenburg, 'The Aeneid in *The Tempest*', *ShS* xxxix (1987), 159-68, and the book by Donna B. Hamilton cited above. Among the countless misrepresentations in Ted Hughes, *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being* (London, 1992), is the claim that 'The smouldering presence of that previous life, in which Miranda was Dido, seems to become more and more the secret, poignant, smothered tragedy of this play' (p. 423).

<sup>32</sup> See Anthony DiMattio, "'The Figure of this Harpy': Shakespeare and the Moralized Ovid", *N&Q* NS xxxviii (1991), 70-2.

<sup>33</sup> Wiltenburg, 'The Aeneid in *The Tempest*', 168.

to say incorporates but also in important ways sidesteps—Virgil's imperial theme in the same way that Ovid does.<sup>34</sup> In Ovid, Aeneas' journey is a *frame*: the real interest is in the metamorphic encounters along the way. So too in *The Tempest*, the voyage is a frame; the redemption of the three men of sin, Alonso, Antonio, and Sebastian, is not the absolute focal point, indeed it is questionable whether it fully occurs, given Antonio's apparent refusal to acknowledge Prospero at the moment of forgiveness. What the imperial theme is subsumed into is a demonstration of the pervasiveness of change, and in this sense *The Tempest* is Shakespeare's last revision of the *Metamorphoses*.

The earlier Shakespearean play which *The Tempest* comes closest to resembling is that other most Ovidian comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Like Puck, the vernacular equivalent of Ovid's Cupid, Ariel both changes form himself and is an agent who brings about change in the mortals on whom he works. We see him as water-nymph, as Harpy, as actor playing Ceres. We hear of him dividing himself like fire aboard the king's ship and of him leading the conspirators a dance so that they prick their ears like unbacked colts and low like calves. Above all, we hear him sing the great song of metamorphosis:

Full fathom five thy father lies.  
Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes;  
Nothing of him that doth fade  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.  
(I. ii. 309-404)

The father is not literally changed into part of the sea, as would happen in Ovid or in Spenser's protean world; instead, the bodily changes are metaphors for the inner changes that Prospero seeks to work. When Alonso is brought to see his wickedness, he inwardly undergoes the voyage to the bottom of the sea that Ariel has evoked in the song to Ferdinand:

It did bass my trespass.  
Therefore my son i'th' ooze is bedded, and  
I'll seek him deeper than e'er plummet sounded,  
And with him there lie mudded.  
(III. iii. 99-102)

<sup>34</sup> Ariosto provides a parallel 'romance' reworking: as Daniel Javitch shows, Astolfo's adventures in hell and ascent to the moon in canto 34 of *Orlando Furioso* are a parodic rewriting of Dante's *Commedia*, inspired by Ovid's version of *The Aeneid* in



'Sea-change' is, as Reuben Brower pointed out in an analysis of the play's imagery,<sup>35</sup> this drama's principal motif. To see this is to apprehend Shakespeare's drift away from the stability of *The Aeneid* into the shifting world of the *Metamorphoses*, where nothing fades but everyone suffers water-change, land-change, or god-change into things rich and strange.

The comparison between Prospero's island and Virgil's underworld seems to me hard to sustain. Tonally, there is much more of a resemblance to the islands visited by Ovid's Aeneas and to the pastoral landscapes and language of the narratives framed by the voyage. A favourite Ovidian device was the representation of a landscape *in bono* or *in male* according to the state of mind of the describer. Shakespeare has a very formal imitation of the device in *Titus Andronicus*: when Tamora is making love to Aaron, the wood is a *locus amoenus*, but when she feigns that Bassianus and Lavinia mean to do her mischief the place suddenly becomes 'A barren detested vale'—in her first description 'The snakes lie rollèd in the cheerful sun', in the second the sun never shines and the snakes are hissing.<sup>36</sup> When Caliban is helping Trinculo and Stephano, the island is fertile and abundant with food:

I prithee, let me bring thee where crabs grow,  
And I with my long nails will dig thee pig-nuts,  
Show thee a jay's nest, and instruct thee how  
To snare the nimble marmoset. I'll bring thee  
To clust'ring filberts, and sometimes I'll get thee  
Young scamels from the rock.

(II. ii. 166–71)

But when he is cursing Prospero and Miranda, it is a barren and unhealthy place:

As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed  
With raven's feather from unwholesome fen  
Drop on you both! A south-west blow on ye  
And blister you all o'er!

(I. ii. 323–6)

bks. 13 and 14 of the *Metamorphoses*—'The *Orlando Furioso* and Ovid's Revision of the *Aeneid*', *MLN* xcix (1984), 1023–36.

<sup>35</sup> Brower, 'The Mirror of Añalogy: *The Tempest*', in his *The Fields of Light: An Experiment in Critical Reading* (London, 1951), 95–122.

<sup>36</sup> *Titus Andronicus*, II. iii. 12–29, 92–108.

and, again, 'All the infections that the sun sucks up | From bogs, fens, flats, on Prosper fall' (II. ii. 1–2).

Embedded within the Aeneas narrative in Book Thirteen of the *Metamorphoses* is the tale of Polyphemus the Cyclops. Like Caliban, the Cyclops is perceived as deformed, yet endowed with a vivid poetry of nature. In his courtship of Galatea, he holds out the promise of lush fruits:

Gay Apples weying downe the boughes have I, and Grapes like gold,  
And purple Grapes on spreaded Vynes as many as can hold,  
Bothe which I doo reserve for thee. Thyself shalt with thy hand  
The soft sweete strawbryes gather, which in woody shadowe stand.  
The Cornell berryes also from the tree thy self shalt pull,  
And pleasant plommes, sum yellow lyke new wax, sum blew, sum full  
Of ruddy jewce. Of Chestnutts eeke (if my wyfe thou wilt bee)  
Thou shalt have store: and frutes all sortes.

(Golding, xiii. 956–63)

This speech is heavy with wonder and sensuousness in its feel for the textures of the fruits of the earth; it adumbrates the rich natural language that is given first to Caliban and then to Ceres/Ariel as (s)he sings of 'Vines with clust'ring bunches growing, | Plants with goodly burden bowing'. But when Galatea refuses to yield to Polyphemus' love, nature is turned around and used as a way of describing her cruelty: she is said to be harder than aged oak, tougher than willow twigs, sharper than thorns, more pitiless than a trodden snake, and so on.<sup>37</sup>

Caliban is a deeply un-Virgilian creation. If we are to think in the characteristically Renaissance way and find a classical precedent for this figure created from more contemporary sources, such as travel literature, it is to Ovid that we must go. In the 'Names of the Actors' at the end of the folio text Caliban is described as a 'salvage and deformed slave': the *Metamorphoses* constitute classical literature's major depository of deformities; George Sandys, who actually began his translation whilst crossing the Atlantic to take up the post of treasurer of the Virginia Company, described the Cyclops in his commentary as a 'salvage people . . . more salvage than are the *West-Indians* at this day', treating them as exemplars of lawlessness and lack of civility.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Met.* xiii. 789–97 and 798–807 represent a formally paired set of apostrophes, the first *in bono*, the second *in male*: they could well be the model for Tamora's pair of speeches in *Titus*.

<sup>38</sup> Sandys, *Ovid's Metamorphosis Englished* (1632), 477–8.

A second precedent for Caliban might be the semi-human Cercopes, who are encountered early in Ovid's version of Aeneas' travels. They are 'an evillfavoured kynd of beast: that beeing none, | They myght yit still resemble men', their bodies clad all over with 'fallow coulour'd hair (Golding, xiv. 110-14). They swear and perjure themselves until in punishment they lose their speech and are turned into screeching monkeys; in Golding's translation, Jupiter 'did bereeve them of the use of speeche and toong, | Which they too cursed perjurye did use bothe old and yoong' (xiv. 116-17). Language raises man above the beasts; when it is debased, man returns to bestiality. Sandys's commentary on the 'Circopians' draws a parallel which is illuminating in the light of Coleridge's comparison of Caliban to the man of base language in *Troilus and Cressida*: 'From which consideration it was devised by Plato that the soule of *Thersites* (of all that came to *Ilium* the basest and most shamelesse) entred into an Ape; still intimating the actions of men, but retaining his old manners agreeable to that creature'.<sup>39</sup> By teaching Caliban language, Prospero tries to civilize him, but since the salvage and deformed creature is naturally bestial, since he has a devilish nature on whom nurture can never stick, all he learns is how to curse. Caliban expresses his own affinity with the Cercopes when he recognizes the risk that he and his fellow-conspirators may be turned by Prospero 'to apes | With foreheads villainous low' (iv. i. 247-8).

But the complexity of the play is such that this is not the whole truth about Caliban. He does not only curse, he also has his language of nature's fertility and his capacity to hear music. As the Cyclops aspires to become a lover and a poet, in a sequence of the *Metamorphoses* that holds the beautiful together with the grotesque, so the play demands that we see pathos, even beauty, in the deformed creature. Both Ovid and Shakespeare have some cruel comedy at the expense of their creations—Polyphemus sees himself reflected in a pool and, not realizing what a fool he is making of himself, tries to convince Galatea that hairy is beautiful—but their writing also expresses extraordinary pity for these articulate beings trapped in ugly bodies.

It is Jove who metamorphoses the Cercopes into apes, Prospero who has the power to do the same to Caliban. This is a crucial difference between *The Tempest* and the *Metamorphoses*. As the play's sea-

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. 476. For Coleridge on Thersites as 'the Caliban of demagogic life', see *The Romantics on Shakespeare*, 548.

changes herald inner transformations, so the poem intimates in its first line that it will be characterized by change and strangeness: 'In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas | corpora' (*Met.* i. 1-2, translated by Golding as 'Of shapes transformde to bodies straunge, I purpose to entreate'). But the second line of the poem ascribes those changes to the gods: 'di . . . nam vos mutastis et illas' ('Ye gods . . . for you are they that wrought this wondrous feate'). It is a mark of Prospero's power that he can perform the transformations traditionally enacted by the gods: he can release Ariel from a tree and imprison him there again (there could be no more Ovidian idea than that of birth from and metamorphosis to a tree); he can restrict Caliban ('you sty me | In this hard rock'—i. ii. 344-5) and can freeze a group of mortals, imprisoning them in the lime-grove from which they cannot budge till he releases them. But might such actions also be indications that Prospero is usurping powers which should properly belong only to a god?

Mortals may perform transformations by means of magic; in the Renaissance, the changes wrought by witchcraft and alchemy would have been thought of as prime examples. Like language, magic is a mark of man's superiority over the beasts. In his *Magnalia Naturae*, Bacon proposed that the new philosophy would give man the power to raise storms, control the seasons, and hasten the harvest; by studying nature, one could come to understand it and take control of its forces. Sir Walter Raleigh, in his *History of the World*, associated magic with the wise man who connected different natural agents to bring about effects which seem wonderful to those who do not understand them.<sup>40</sup> But there is always the risk of going too far, transgressing upon divine prerogatives, and sliding from white magic to black. The classic case is that of Dr Faustus. Occasionally in Ovid, metamorphosis is carried out by someone other than the gods. But the characters responsible are viewed as transgressive and not to be admired, for they interfere with the natural order. The most notable of them is the witch Medea.

I do not think it can be mere chance that Prospero's lengthiest description of his magical powers constitutes Shakespeare's most sustained Ovidian borrowing and identifies the arts of the mage with those of Medea. The passages in question were discussed briefly in my

<sup>40</sup> The examples from Bacon and Raleigh are both cited by Stephen Orgel in the fine introduction to his edn. of *The Tempest* (Oxford, 1987), 20.

opening chapter, in order to demonstrate that Shakespeare knew both Ovid's original Latin and Golding's translation. The dramatic significance of the correspondence must now be addressed.

Medea concentrates especially on her power to overturn the normal processes of nature:

Ye Charmes and Witchcrafts, and thou Earth which both with herbe  
and weed  
Of mightie working furnishest the Wizardes at their neede:  
Ye Ayres and windes: ye Elves of Hilles, of Brookes, of Woods alone,  
Of standing Lakes, and of the Night approche ye everychone.  
Through helpe of whom (the crooked bankes much wondring at  
the thing)  
I have compelled streames to run cleane backward to their spring.  
By charmes I make the calme Seas rough, and make the rough  
Seas plaine  
And cover all the Skie with Cloudes, and chase them thence againe.  
By charmes I rayse and lay the windes, and burst the Vipers jaw,  
And from the bowels of the Earth both stones and trees doe drawe.  
Whole woods and Forestes I remove: I make the Mountaines shake,  
And even the Earth it selfe to grone and fearfully to quake.  
I call up dead men from their graves: and thee O lightsome Moone  
I darken oft, though beaten brasse abate thy perill soone  
Our Sorcerie dimmes the Morning faire, and darkes the Sun at Noone.  
(Golding, vii. 263-77)

When she makes this appeal to Hecate and other spirits of the night, Medea is out gathering herbs by the light of the moon. She emphasizes inversion—streams running backward to their sources, darkness at noon—because what she is preparing herself for is a reversal of the ageing process: her herbs will be placed in a cauldron in which Aeson, her father-in-law, will be rejuvenated. But, as I pointed out in my discussion of *The Merchant of Venice*, a little later Medea uses her reputation as a restorer of youth to trick the daughters of old King Pelias into killing him (she pretends he's going to be rejuvenated too, but the magic herbs are left out of the pot). In the larger context of Book Seven of the *Metamorphoses*, the association between Medea and the powers of darkness serves to highlight her wickedness and unnaturalness. And yet when she is first introduced at the beginning of Book Seven, before we hear of her magical powers, Medea is portrayed as a victim of love: Ovid gives her one of the embattled soliloquies in which his characters struggle against the passion that is

overcoming them. 'Aliudque cupido, | mens aliud suadet': 'desire draws me one way, reason another' (vii. 19-20). Hers is a divided self, as may be seen from her way of addressing herself, 'Medea', in the vocative. Like his master Euripides and his pupil Shakespeare, Ovid recognizes that people who torment others are usually suffering from inner torment themselves. By the end of her soliloquy, Medea seems to have staved off desire by summoning up rectitude, filial duty, and modesty ('rectum pietasque pudorque'—vii. 72). Whatever dark deeds she subsequently performs, the reader cannot forget her potential for *pietas* and *pudor*; like Shakespeare, Ovid finds some soul of goodness in things evil.

The question with regard to Prospero's magic is whether the opposite applies: is there some soul of darkness in his white magic? From a technical point of view, his speech is a typical, if extremely skilfully managed, piece of Renaissance imitation. That is to say, a number of details are selected from the original passage and improvised upon. Thus the opening invocation of spirits is full of additional colour:

Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes and groves,  
And ye that on the sands with printless foot  
Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him  
When he comes back; you demi-puppets that  
By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make  
Whereof the ewe not bites; and you whose pastime  
Is to make midnight mushrooms,<sup>41</sup> that rejoice  
To hear the solemn curfew; by whose aid . . .  
(v. i. 33-40)

After this seven-line improvisation, Shakespeare reverts to the source-text and freely translates a sequence of elements from it—darkening the sun and raising storms, uprooting trees and shaking the earth, waking the dead and releasing them from their graves. It is the last image that is most alarming. The earlier part of the speech seems to be a lightening of the original: the playful spirits chasing the tide as it ebbs and running from it as it comes back are like children on the beach, they are by no means sinister. But for Prospero, imagined as a virtuous ruler, to bring a pagan image of raising the dead into the

<sup>41</sup> The mushrooms may be picked from Medea's subsequent flight to Corinth, where men 'Did breede of deawie Mushroomes' (Golding, vii. 500).

Christian era, in which that power should belong uniquely to Christ and his Father, is deeply disturbing.

The capacity to raise the dead, mentioned here for the first time in the play, is the final mark of the potency of Prospero's art. It is also a sign of its roughness and a reason for its abjuration. Like Medea, Prospero has achieved renewals through his magic—the spiritual rejuvenation of Alonso substitutes for the physical rejuvenation of Aeson—but, also like Medea, he has used his magic to exercise power, to control other people. Prompted by Ariel's pity for the penitent mortals, and in particular Gonzalo, Prospero recognizes that 'The rarer action is | In virtue than in vengeance' (v. i. 27–8). Whereas Medea goes on using her magic to act out revenge plots, Prospero renounces his and in so doing marks a movement away from the pagan world towards Christian 'kindness'. Medea's powers are summoned up not so that they can be exercised, but so that they can be rejected.

This is what makes the allusion so purposeful. The logical place to have put it would have been at the very beginning of the play, before the storm; in the manner of Book Seven of the *Metamorphoses*, and indeed of *Dr Faustus*, we would then have first heard the magical incantation, then seen its effect. Instead, the audience is given its incantatory fix only when the necessity of withdrawal is apparent. Recognition of the source is absolutely crucial, for it puts the audience into the same position as Prospero: as he sees that his magic must be rejected because it may so readily be abused when driven by vengeance rather than virtue, so at exactly the same moment we see that it must be rejected because it is, for all its apparent whiteness, the selfsame black magic as that of Medea.

The speech in Ovid was viewed in the Renaissance as witchcraft's great set-piece: it was cited by Bodin in *De Magorum Demonomania*, by Cornelius Agrippa in *De Occulta Philosophia*, and by Reginald Scot in his debunking *Discoverie of Witchcraft*.<sup>42</sup> Jonson imitates it in the principal witch's invocation in *The Masque of Queens*.<sup>43</sup> Middleton, in

<sup>42</sup> See William Carroll, *The Metamorphoses of Shakespearean Comedy* (Princeton, NJ, 1985), 237–8, 284.

<sup>43</sup> This masque was performed at court in 1609. In a marginal note to the invocation, which includes the familiar catalogue of raising storms and darkening the noonday sun (ll. 218–47), Jonson indicates that he is combining the Medeas of Ovid and Seneca with the Erichtho of Lucan's *Pharsalia* (vi. 695 ff.): 'These Invocations are solemne with them; whereof we may see the formes in Ovid. *Meta. lib. vii. in Sen. Trag. Med. in Luc. lib. vi.* which of all is the boldest, and most horrid' (*Ben Jonson*, vii. 295).

his play *The Witch*, has Hecate quoting Ovid's lines in Latin, and then translating them for the benefit of the Latinless:

Can you doubt me then, daughter?  
That can make mountains tremble, miles of woods walk,  
Whole earth's foundation bellow, and the spirits  
Of the entombed to burst out from their marbles,  
Nay, draw yond moon to my involved designs?<sup>44</sup>

Playgoers who frequented the Red Bull as well as the theatres for which Shakespeare wrote would have found it especially easy to make the connection. Thomas Heywood's *The Brazen Age* had been performed by 1611, the probable year of *The Tempest*.<sup>45</sup> The third act of that play contains 'The Tragedy of Jason and Medea': it is in all essentials a dramatization of Book Seven of the *Metamorphoses*. On her first appearance Medea says:

I can by Art make rivers retrograde,  
Alter their channels, run backe to their heads,  
And hide them in the springs from whence they grew.  
The curled Ocean with a word Il'e smooth,  
(Or being calme) raise waves as high as hills,  
Threatning to swallow the vast continent.  
With powerfull charmes Il'e make the Sunne stand still,  
Or call the Moone downe from her arched spheare.  
What cannot I by power of Hecate?

(*Dramatic Works*, iii. 209)

A little later she gathers enchanted herbs, and begins her nocturnal soliloquy:

The night growes on, and now to my black Arts,  
Goddesse of witchcraft and darke ceremony,  
To whom the elves of Hills, of Brookes, of Groves,  
Of standing lakes, and cavernes vaulted deepe  
Are ministers.

(*Dramatic Works*, iii. 215)

Heywood, then, is imitating Ovid even more closely than Shakespeare

<sup>44</sup> Middleton, *The Witch*, v. ii. 25–9, in *Three Jacobean Witchcraft Plays*, ed. Peter Corbin and Douglas Sedge (Manchester, 1986).

<sup>45</sup> *The Brazen Age* was not printed until 1613, but, as noted earlier, the address to the reader prefixed to *The Golden Age*, printed in Oct. 1611, refers to that play as 'the eldest brother of three Ages, that hath adventured the Stage' (Heywood, *Dramatic Works*, iii. 3).

does. His particular emphasis is on the association between Medea and Hecate, 'Goddess of witchcraft'. Given that *The Brazen Age* was in the London theatrical repertory in 1611, it is almost certain that some theatregoers would have recognized Heywood's and Shakespeare's shared allusion to Ovid (via Golding);<sup>46</sup> in the wider context of the association between the speech and witchcraft, it would have been impossible for Shakespeare to empty it of its darker tones, as some critics have supposed he did.<sup>47</sup>

There is internal evidence as compelling as the external. Medea has a proxy in the play in the form of Sycorax, the witch on whom Prospero harps so persistently in his rehearsals of the past; Stephen Orgel has even suggested that her strange name may be derived from one of the epithets for Medea, 'Scythian raven' ('Sy-', as prefix, 'korax' meaning raven, a bird with which Sycorax is associated in Caliban's first speech, quoted above).<sup>48</sup> Sycorax, as modern criticism has recognized,<sup>49</sup> is a disturbing double of Prospero himself. She is his dark Other. Each of them is banished and finds new life on the island; each makes Ariel a servant and controls the spirits of the isle; Sycorax confined Ariel in a cloven pine, Prospero threatens to peg him in an oak. When Prospero confronts Caliban at the end of the play he remembers Sycorax one more time: 'His mother was a witch, and one so strong | That could control the moon, make flows and ebbs' (v. i. 272-3). The tidal image links her powers with Prospero's control of the spirits of the sand who go backwards and forwards with 'the ebbing Neptune'. Now that he has been unburdened of his magic, Prospero, who previously set himself up as the opposite of Sycorax, recognizes that his arts were as one with hers. And so it is that he can recognize that her progeny is also his: 'This thing of darkness I | Acknowledge mine' (v. i. 278-9). The subject hangs at the line-ending, split from its verb as a token of the split between darkness and light, the division within Prospero himself, a division that he shares

<sup>46</sup> The presence in both plays of Golding's phrases 'elves of hills' and 'standing lakes' must mean that both Heywood and Shakespeare used the English translation as a crib (there are other marks of Golding's vocabulary elsewhere in each play). It is intriguing, though it may be coincidental, that for Golding's 'woods' both Heywood and Shakespeare have 'groves': might there then be a direct influence between the two plays? If so, whichever way round it is (the chronology cannot be known for certain), the link between Prospero and Medea is reinforced.

<sup>47</sup> Most influentially, Frank Kermode: 'Only those elements . . . consistent with "white" magic are taken over for Prospero' (Arden edn., p. 149).

<sup>48</sup> Orgel's edn., p. 19 and n.

<sup>49</sup> See e.g. Carroll, *Metamorphoses*, 238 ff., Orgel's edn., p. 20.

with the Medea whose own self was racked across a line-ending early in Ovid's seventh book ('aliudque cupido, | mens aliud suadet').

Why is it that the darkness of Caliban is an inescapable part of Prospero? Why does the island have to contain this creature who must be subdued and controlled, who tries to rape Miranda and lead a rebellion against Prospero, who must eventually be humiliated so that he is led to seek for grace?

In answering this, we need to return to Gonzalo's Utopian vision. Though Shakespeare imitated it from Montaigne, his audience would have been more likely to identify it with Montaigne's source. As so often in the play, the 'discourse of colonialism' is summoned up only to be displaced into the discourse of myth. A signal in the text alerts the listener to the original source: 'I would with such perfection govern, sir, | T' excel the Golden Age' (II. i. 173-4). Montaigne's vision of peace and of the absence of law, labour, and agriculture aligns the New World with the oldest world; he says that life in the 'barbarian' nations exceeds 'all the pictures wherewith licentious Poesie hath proudly imbellished the golden age' (*Essayes*, p. 164). He is thinking in particular of the Golden Age as it is described in Book One of the *Metamorphoses*:

There was no feare of punishment, there was no threatning lawe  
In brazen tables nayled up, to keepe the folke in awe.  
There was no man would crouch or creepe to Judge with cap in hand,  
They lived safe without a Judge in every Realme and lande.

There was no towne enclosed yet, with walles and ditches deepe.  
No horne nor trumpet was in use, no sword nor helmet worne.  
The worlde was suche, that souldiers helpe might easily be forborne.  
The fertile earth as yet was free, untoucht of spade or plough,  
And yet it yeilded of it selfe of every things inough.

The Springtime lasted all the yeare, and *Zephyr* with his milde  
And gentle blast did cherish things that grew of owne accorde.  
The ground untilde, all kinde of fruits did plenteously avorde.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Golding, i. 105-24. The phrase 'to keepe the folke in awe' is an insertion by Golding which suggests a distinctively 16th cent., quasi-machiavellian, view of the law; the image of creeping to the judge, cap in hand, is also a sharpening of Ovid's original text. Shakespeare has a similarly charged sense of the relationship between the Golden Age and justice, of the absence of justice in the Iron Age of the present, when he quotes the line 'terras Astraera reliquit' in the context of Titus Andronicus' discovery that there is no justice at Saturninus' court—the same idea is dramatized in the figure of the Clown in *Titus* who goes cap in hand for justice and is rewarded with hanging.

The Latin original of this passage would have been encountered early in a boy's grammar-school education; for many playgoers it would therefore have been Ovid, not Montaigne, who would have been evoked by Gonzalo's 'no name of magistrate', 'Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none', and

All things in common nature should produce  
Without sweat or endeavour. Treason, felony,  
Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine,  
Would I not have; but nature should bring forth  
Of its own kind all foison, all abundance,  
To feed my innocent people.

(II. i. 165-70)

But man is fallen and the Golden Age is irrecoverable. The very presence of the characters on the island is a sign of this, for Ovid had pointed out that one feature of the Golden Age was the absence of travel. People remained contentedly in their own fertile land, 'The loftie Pynetree was not hewen from mountaines where it stood, | In seeking straunge and forren landes to rove upon the flood' (Golding, i. 109-10). It was in the Iron Age, according to Ovid, that the first sea-voyages took place. The first sea-voyagers were Jason and his Argonauts, so the encounter with Prospero's forebear Medea was a direct consequence of the decline of Ages.<sup>51</sup> The Iron Age also brought craft, treason, violence, envy, pride, lust, the parcelling out of land (Gonzalo's 'plantation') which was previously held in common, and family quarrels ('yea seldome time doth rest | Betweene borne brothers such accord and love as ought to bee'—Golding, i. 164-5). All the dark elements in *The Tempest* are of the Iron Age. Gonzalo gets into a tangle in his speech, and can be mocked by Sebastian and Antonio, precisely because of the incompatibility between the Golden Age ideal of no law, no property, no need to till the land, and his own Iron Age mentality which thinks in terms of the right to plant, of sovereignty and rule.

Shakespeare has therefore reversed Montaigne. The Frenchman idealized the New World and its inhabitants, seeing in them the Golden Age restored (or rather a realization of what poets feigned in

<sup>51</sup> For Jason as the first ship-builder, see e.g. *Met.* viii. 302 ('primaque ratis molitor Jason') and *Amores*, II. xi. 1-6. I would like to thank A. D. Nuttall for reminding me of this connection when I presented a version of this reading of *The Tempest* to the Oxford Renaissance Seminar.

their licentious fictions of the Golden Age). The island in *The Tempest*, on the other hand, is shot through with Iron Age characteristics, many of them embodied in Caliban, but some of them brought by Prospero—Caliban is only provoked into a claim that he owns the land, 'this island's mine, by Sycorax my mother' (I. ii. 333), by Prospero's appropriation of it. The play leaves open the question as to whether Caliban's fallenness is innate, as Prospero's abuses imply ('a born devil'—IV. i. 188), or in some sense created by Prospero himself, as may be admitted in his acknowledgement of the darkness as his own. Either way, Shakespeare denies the myth of the Golden Age restored in a New World peopled by noble cannibals.

What positive myth is available, then? The answer comes in Prospero's masque, though the fact that its performance is interrupted by Caliban's conspiracy shows that it offers a precarious and vulnerable stasis. When the Golden Age ended, says Ovid, the Silver Age brought the seasons—as was noted in *As You Like It*, in the Golden Age it was always spring—and agriculture: 'Then first of all were furrowes drawne, and corne was cast in ground' (Golding, i. 139). The loss of the Golden Age, the fall of man, means that human society cannot escape the seasonal cycle and its dependence on agriculture. It becomes necessary to hope and pray for fertile land and a good harvest. Prospero's masque fuses this hope with a prayer for fertility in the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand.

The land described in the masque is husbanded, not in a state of nature. It is under Ceres, patroness of agriculture: her 'rich leas' are sown with 'wheat, rye, barley, vetches, oats, and peas', her vineyards are 'pole-clipped' and her flat meads 'thatched with stover' (IV. i. 60 ff.). The language here is that of Ovid's Ceres: 'Dame Ceres first to breake the Earth with plough the maner found, | She first made corne and stover soft to grow upon the ground' (Golding, v. 434-5, 'stover' is winter forage for cattle). Where Caliban spoke of the island yielding up its own fruits in the ready abundance of the Golden Age, Prospero's actors acknowledge the need to work the land.

Agriculture is, as I have said, a Silver Age phenomenon; it was in his *Silver Age* play that Heywood placed Ceres and the story of the rape of her daughter Proserpina. It is because she presides over the period immediately after the Golden Age that Ceres also 'first made lawes' (Golding, v. 436, translating Ovid's 'prima dedit leges'). In the Golden Age, when there was no law and all things were held in common, there could be free love (Montaigne's cannibals share their women

without jealousy); in the Silver Age, love must be bounded within the laws of marriage. So it is that the masque is part of Prospero's project to ensure that Ferdinand's motives are chaste and that he is not over-hasty in seeking sexual union; for fertility to be achieved, sexual desire must be controlled. The plot of the masque allegorizes this idea: Ceres is summoned to Juno, goddess of marriage, in order to ensure that Venus and Cupid, forces of sexual desire, are banished. There is an allusion to an Ovidian innovation in the Proserpine myth, namely a twist whereby Venus and Cupid are the agents who inspire in Dis the desire that prompts him to abduct Proserpina—the ambition of Venus and Cupid in this was to extend their domain from the sky, the sea, and the earth (where they already rule over the desires of Jupiter, Neptune, and all mortals) to the underworld (*Met.* v. 363–79). In the masque, Iris reassures Ceres that Venus has flown off to Paphos and Cupid's arrows are broken, so the 'wanton charm' they were to cast on Miranda and Ferdinand has been avoided, and accordingly 'no bed-right shall be paid | Till Hymen's torch be lighted' (iv. i. 91–101).

The commonplace Renaissance theme of the dangers of lust is a key motif in both *The Tempest* and the age's reading of Ovid. In the interstices of the Aenean section of the *Metamorphoses* is the tale which Lodge retold in the first Elizabethan 'minor epic', that of Scylla, the nymph who is metamorphosed so that dogs and wolves encircle her loins; Prospero, who is capable of unleashing dogs himself, would have interpreted her fate as George Sandys did, as an allegory of the dual nature of human beings:

That the upper part of her body, is feigned to retaine a humane figure, and the lower to be bestiall, intimates how man, a divine creature, endued with wisdom and intelligence, in whose superiour parts, as in a high tower, that immortall spirit resideth, who only of all that hath life erects his lookes unto heaven, can never so degenerate into a beast, as when he giveth himselfe over to the lowe delights of those baser parts of the body, Dogs and Wolves, the blind and salvage fury of concupiscence. (Sandys, p. 475)

Scylla's metamorphosis is performed by Circe, whom Frank Kermode sees as a model for Sycorax (Arden edn., p. 26). This is a suggestive link, since Prospero's obsession with Ferdinand's possible concupiscence seems to be provoked by the attempt of Sycorax's son to rape Miranda. Prospero thus unfairly associates Ferdinand with the bestial as opposed to the heaven-looking aspect of man: 'To th' most of men this is a Caliban | And they to him are angels' (i. ii. 483–4).

To ideologically minded critics, the theme of the need for desire to be tamed within the formal structure of marriage is political, and in this instance dynastic; to psychologically minded ones, it is connected with Prospero's possessiveness towards his daughter, his hang-ups about the idea of her having sex with another man. These readings may well be valid, but it seems to me that the play itself makes the point in terms of the decline of the Ages. Furthermore, the Ages are not politicized, as they easily could have been. As so often, Shakespeare eschews topical reference. One may see this by contrasting *The Tempest* with 'De Guiana', a poem by George Chapman, published in 1596 among the prefatory material of Lawrence Keymis's *A Relation of the Second Voyage to Guiana*. The poem is a plea to Queen Elizabeth to accept Guiana as a colony; because gold is to be found there, it can become a new golden world:

Then most admired Sovereigne, let your breath  
Goe foorth upon the waters, and create  
A golden worlde in this our yron age.  
(lines 30–2)

The pursuit of gold also leads Chapman to Jason's quest for the golden fleece: Sir Walter Raleigh thus sails to Guiana with 'his *Argolian Fleet*'.<sup>52</sup> No such connections are made in Prospero's masque. It makes moral rather than imperial use of the Ages. Free love was all very well in the Golden Age, but with the Silver Age comes the law of marriage, and if that law is broken, one is on a slippery path to the lust that deforms the Iron Age. That sex must take place within marriage is standard Christian theology; here, in characteristically Renaissance fashion, it is smuggled into a pagan nature myth.

The masque is a manifestation of the art which Prospero renounces. Even before he puts it on, he refers to it dismissively as 'Some vanity of mine art' (iv. i. 41). By the time he speaks his epilogue he has ceased to use pagan myth as a vehicle, and he speaks instead the unalloyed language of Christianity (despair, prayer, mercy, faults, pardoned, indulgence). This is an implicit recognition on Shakespeare's part of the distance between Ovidian art and

<sup>52</sup> Line 159, quoted from Chapman's *Poems*, ed. Phyllis Brooks Bartlett (New York, 1941). The association between the Iron Age, shipping, trade, and the pursuit of gold is also apparent from the language of Barabas in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* (see e.g. his image of 'Ripping the bowels of the earth', i. i. 107, which comes from Ovid's 'sed itum est in viscera terrae', i. 138, in the description of the Iron Age).

orthodox Christianity; to use Thomas Greene's term, cited in my first chapter, it renders his imitation of Ovid 'dialectical'. It could be described as his equivalent to the two stanzas of the 'unperfit' eighth canto of Spenser's 'Mutabilitie', which come to rest on 'the pillours of Eternity' that are 'contrayr to [Ovidian] Mutabilitie' (*Faerie Queene*, VII. viii. 2). In this sense, Leonard Barkan is both elegant and just when he describes Prospero's burial of his book as Shakespeare's magisterial closing of the book that Lavinia so clumsily opened in *Titus Andronicus*.<sup>53</sup> But although the masque belongs to Prospero's rejected art, for a Jacobean theatre audience it would have been the high point of the play, in terms of both spectacle and allegorical sophistication. And in this sense Shakespeare's art remains co-ordinate with, dependent upon, Ovid's.

For a theatre audience the most memorable thing about the masque is not the plot—it is only in a reading that we stop to think through the business about the threat of Venus and Cupid—but the sense of fruition, the harmony and the harvest. With our eyes, we wonder at certain nymphs and certain reapers, properly habited, joining together in a graceful dance. With our ears, we absorb the language of fruitfulness, the sense that the harshness of Proserpina's winter confinement in the underworld can be overstepped as spring returns in the very moment of autumn's harvest:

Earth's increase, foison plenty,  
Barns and garners never empty,  
Vines with clust'ring bunches growing,  
Plants with goodly burden bowing;  
Spring come to you at the farthest,  
In the very end of harvest.  
Scarcity and want shall shun you,  
Ceres' blessing so is on you.

(IV. I. 110–17)

As Prospero's incantation intersects with the Medea of Heywood's *Brazen Age*, so this celebration of agricultural plenty resonates with Heywood's *Silver Age*. In that play, which is contemporaneous with *The Tempest*, Mercury flames amazement like Ariel, Juno and Iris work in tandem, descending from the heavens on several occasions; there is also a *Cymbeline*-like moment in which to thunder and lightning

<sup>53</sup> Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh*, 288.

'Jupiter descends in his majesty, his Thunderbolt burning'.<sup>54</sup> And at the centre of the play is a 'harvest home' which represents the closest analogue in all Jacobean drama to the agricultural benison of Prospero's masque of Ceres. Heywood's play remains little known, so I make no apology for quoting at length:

*Enter Ceres and Proserpine attired like the Moone,  
with a company of Swaines, and country Wenches:*

*They sing.*

*With faire Ceres Queene of graine  
The reaped fields we rome, rome, rome,  
Each Countrey Peasant, Nymph and Swaine  
Sing their harvest home, home, home:  
Whilst the Queene of plenty hallowes  
Growing fields as well as fallowes.*

*Eccho double all our Layes,  
Make the Champains sound, sound, sound  
To the Queene of harvest praise,  
That sowes and reapes our ground, ground, ground.  
Ceres Queene of plenty hallowes  
Growing fields as well as fallowes.*

CERES. As we are *Ceres*, Queene of all fertility,  
The earthes sister, Aunt to highest *Jupiter*,  
And mother to this beauteous childe the Moone,  
So will we blesse your harvests, crowne your fields  
With plenty and increase: your bearded eares  
Shall make their golden stalkes of wheat to bend  
Below their laden riches: with full sickles  
You shall receive the usury of their seeds.  
Your fallowes and your gleabes our selfe will till  
From every furrow that your plow-shares raze  
Upon the plenteous earth, our sisters breast,  
You shall cast up abundance for your gratitude  
To *Ceres* and the chaste *Proserpina*.

Now that the heavens and earth are both appeas'd  
And the huge Giants that assaulted *Jove*,  
Are slaughtered by the hand of *Jupiter*;  
We have leasure to attend our harmelesse swaines:  
Set on then to our Rurall ceremonies.

*Exeunt singing.*

<sup>54</sup> Heywood, *Dramatic Works*, iii. 154.



Tempests hence, hence winds and hailes,  
 Tares, cockle, rotten showers, showers, showers,  
 Our song shall keep time with our flailles,  
 When Ceres sings, none lowers, lowers, lowers.  
 She it is whose God-hood hallowes  
 Growing fields as well as fallowes.

(*Dramatic Works*, iii. 133-4)

'Tempests hence'; 'plenty and increase' come hither. The fruits of labour in the fields bend with 'their laden riches': the tonality and the rhythm are Shakespeare's. I am not proposing a 'source' here, since it is impossible to establish which play was written first.<sup>55</sup> The point of my collocation is that the two plays were in the repertory at the same time. Indeed, they were performed at court within a few weeks of each other in the winter of 1611-12; *The Silver Age* was played by the King's Men and Queen's Men together, so Shakespeare's company had direct contact with Heywood's song to Ceres. Both the court audience and any playgoers who kept up with the repertory of the two leading companies would have been presented with a striking parallel between Prospero's masque and the Silver Age, just as they would have been presented with a striking parallel between Prospero and the Medea of *The Brazen Age*. While one parallel darkens the character of Prospero, the other lightens him and warms the audience. When watching the masque at the Globe or Blackfriars, as when watching *The Silver Age* at the Red Bull, the city-dwellers in their leisure engage with an image of country-dwellers singing or dancing in their moment of leisure once the harvest is safely gathered in.

According to Sir Philip Sidney in his *Apology for Poetry*, the poet ranges freely within the zodiac of his own wit, bringing forth the wonderful forms of myth: the heroes, demigods, and Cyclops. Thus it is that where nature's world is brazen, 'the Poets only deliver a golden'.<sup>56</sup> Heywood and Shakespeare were not so idealistic: in *The Silver Age*, shortly after the passage quoted above, Proserpina is abducted by Pluto, 'his Chariot drawne in by Divels'; in *The Tempest*, the nymphs and reapers 'heavily vanish' as 'a strange, hollow, and confused noise' heralds the entrance of Caliban and his fellow-conspirators, the intrusion of the Iron Age of treason, violence, and

<sup>55</sup> Though the scene in Heywood must come first if, as has sometimes been supposed, the masque was an interpolation in *The Tempest* for the performance at court as part of the royal betrothal celebrations during the winter of 1612-13.

<sup>56</sup> Sidney, *Apology*, in *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, i. 156.

envy. Shakespeare was too much of a sceptic to suppose that he could deliver up the Golden World, but for a moment, through Prospero's theatrical arts, which are of course also his own, he provides some consolation by conjuring the Silver Age back to life. The drama itself becomes a harvest home.

#### IV

The temptation to end there is almost irresistible. By transforming Shakespeare into Prospero, we make him into a kind of magician and we end in wonder, awe-inspired by his art. A new myth is created, that of Shakespeare's transcendent, history-defying genius. The book is closed with a flourish, *The Tempest's* privileged status being licensed by its prime position in the First Folio or by a romantic construction of Prospero's epilogue as Shakespeare's farewell to the stage. Many a reading concludes in some such manner.

But Shakespeare's career didn't end with *The Tempest*. He went on to write his three collaborations with John Fletcher, *Henry VIII*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and the lost *Cardenio*. That Shakespeare had bequeathed some of his Ovidianism to Fletcher is apparent from the younger dramatist's earlier performances, in which characters are seen to rewrite Ovid as a way of dramatizing their own fates. *The Maid's Tragedy* (?1610) provides the finest example. Aspatia, having been forsaken by her lover, finds her maid working with a needle upon a picture of Ariadne. As in *Lucrece*, the picture becomes a means for the woman to express her emotion. The handling of the encounter is as boldly revisionary as anything in Shakespeare. Instead of the picture of the deserted Ariadne being a 'lively image' of Aspatia, the character makes herself into 'a miserable life' of the picture:

ASPATIA. . . . but where's the Lady?  
 ANTIPHILA. There Madame.  
 ASPATIA. Fie, you have mist it here *Antiphila*,  
 You are much mistaken wench:  
 These colours are not dull and pale enough,  
 To show a soule so full of miserie  
 As this sad Ladies was, doe it by me,  
 Doe it againe, by me the lost *Aspatia*,  
 And you shall find all true but the wild Iland;  
 I stand upon the Sea-beach now, and thinke

Mine armes thus, and mine haire blowne with the wind,  
Wilde as that desart . . .

—looke, looke wenches,

A miserable life of this poore picture.<sup>57</sup>

The normative relationship between observer and observed is reversed, the maid required to refigure her design. Aspatia outpaces the passioning Ariadne. Even more poignant is her revision of the other character in the story. She asks what happened to Theseus, who is for her a representation of the philandering Amintor: 'Does not the story say', she asks, that he was shipwrecked on leaving Naxos, in punishment for his cruelty? 'Not as I remember', Antiphila the maid answers, to which Aspatia responds by rewriting the narrative: 'It should ha been so . . . in this place worke a quick-sand, | And over it a shallow smiling water, | And his ship plowing it'. Antiphila claims that such a revision would 'wrong the story', but for Aspatia 'Twill make the story, wrong'd by wanton Poets, | Live long and be beleev'd' (II. ii. 46–58). Antiphila has the literal-mindedness of Peter Quince: she sees herself as a remembrancer of the story. Aspatia, on the other hand, takes it upon herself to remake the story. She introduces a poetic justice that is not there in the original; indeed, she charges previous poets—Ovid is naturally the chief culprit—with Theseus' own wantonness. Aspatia alters the Ariadne story in ways that Julia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* does not: a rewriting which involves the imposition of poetic justice is not Shakespeare's usual kind of revision, but my point is that Shakespeare taught Fletcher an art of dramatic engagement with Ovid which he then developed in his own style.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> *The Maid's Tragedy*, II. ii. 58–76, in *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, vol. II (1970), 61–2. The scene is generally reckoned to be one of only four which Fletcher contributed to the play.

<sup>58</sup> *Philaster* provides another example when the character of Arathusa willfully writes herself into Ovidian myth: instead of being overheard as Actaeon, like Falstaff or Malvolio, she asks to become a female Actaeon:

Diana if thou canst rage with a maid,  
As with a man, let me discover thee  
Bathing, and turne me to a fearefull Hynde,  
That I may dye persued by cruell hounds,  
And have my story written in my wounds.

(III. ii. 169–74, in *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, vol. I (1966), 447; the attribution of this scene is uncertain.)

Collaboration with Ovid is one of the marks of Fletcher and Shakespeare's collaboration with each other. Among the many respects in which *The Two Noble Kinsmen* re-traverses the ground of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is its use of 'low' figures who plan an entertainment for Duke Theseus. Gerald the Schoolmaster stands in for Peter Quince and with him Fletcher replicates the early Shakespearian technique of parodying a pedant's superficial knowledge of the classics. Gerald has all the tags, but cannot apply them to high civic matter in the manner of a true humanist. Bathetically, he intends the morris-dancers to break out of the thicket in front of the Duke 'As once did Meleager and the boar'; preposterously, '*Quousque tandem?*' ('How long then?'), Cicero's celebrated question at the beginning of his first oration against Catiline, is applied to the troupe's deficiency of female dancers; and, most ludicrously, the great climax in which Ovid proclaims the completion of the *Metamorphoses* is applied anti-climactically to the making up of the numbers for the dance by the arrival of the mad gaoler's daughter: '*Et opus exegi, quod nec Iovis, nec ignis—* | Strike up, and lead her in.'<sup>59</sup>

In Shakespeare's contribution to the play the *Metamorphoses* are once again metamorphosed in the arena of desire and identity. When Emilia remembers Flavina, whom she loved as a girl, she remakes Venus' plucking of Adonis' flower:

The flower that I would pluck  
And put between my breasts—O then but beginning  
To swell about the blossom—she would long  
Till she had such another, and commit it  
To the like innocent cradle, where, phoenix-like,  
They died in perfume.

(I. iii. 66–71)

The dying flower in *Venus and Adonis* is an emblem of unrequited love. The phoenix and the turtle in Shakespeare's marriage-poem published with Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr* are emblems of reciprocal love between male and female. In Emilia's image, the paired flowers become two phoenixes—a wonderful contradiction of the bird's defining uniqueness—and thus proclaim the perfection of same-sex love. The speech can therefore end with the claim that 'the true love

<sup>59</sup> *Two Noble Kinsmen*, III. v. 18, 38, 89–90.

'tween maid and maid may be | More than in sex dividual' (1. iii. 81-2). *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is a tragedy because same-sex love is disrupted by heterosexual desire and the conflicting demands of different gods, demands enacted in the sacrifices before the altars of Mars, Venus, and Diana in Act V. The momentary fusion of the two pubescent girls remembered by Emilia cannot be replicated between Palamon and Arcite. 'Were they metamorphosed | Both into one!', exclaims Emilia as the two men fight over her (v. v. 84-5). But they cannot be: Mars can only be joined with Venus by being stripped of his armour, his martial identity.

Shakespeare's final representation of sexual relations is unpromising. There is no idealized image of marriage conveyed through a celebratory reading of the fusion of Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, as at the end of the 1590 *Faerie Queene*. Where *A Midsummer Night's Dream* moves towards a celebration of the nuptials of Theseus and Hippolyta, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, from the first disruptive entry of the three widowed queens, moves rapidly away from that union. Nor are the two men united: the play is centrally concerned with their splitting apart as they grow into adulthood and one submits to Venus, the other to Mars. The only achieved union is the remembered one between Emilia and the Flavina who died when she was 11 years old. That union is valued because it is 'innocent'—it is under Diana, not the disruptive Venus. To view the budding breasts with Ovidian prurience would be to misread the tone. Flavina is a version of the dead votaress whom Titania loved, but one who dies before the fall into sexuality which brings so much confusion even to Shakespeare's comedies. She is the mark of a yearning in Shakespeare for a kind of pre-sexual love, free from the quest for mastery. Ovid would have been of the view that there can be no such thing: no encounter in his world is innocent. In exile he writes less of sexual desire, but there is still a far from innocent fascination with power as he tries to insinuate his way back into the Emperor's favour. Shakespeare half-knows that Ovid is probably right, but he refuses to relinquish the half-belief that he might be wrong.

Where *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is Shakespeare's last word on Ovidian desire, two key sequences in *Henry VIII* offer alternative versions of the relationship between broadly Ovidian matter and history. Either or both of the two scenes in question are likely to have been written by Fletcher, but that is no reason to exclude them from a study of Shakespeare: *Henry VIII* is a finely constructed play in which

the original audience would not have seen the joins,<sup>60</sup> so it may be considered as the product of a unified if double dramatic consciousness.

In the first of the scenes, metamorphic music represents a consolation for a victim of history. Art is something you turn to when all else is lost. The victim is Queen Katharine, rejected and arraigned because the king wishes to marry Anne Bullen. In private after her trial she asks her woman to sing in order to disperse her cares. In earlier work, most notably *Titus Andronicus* and *Lucrece*, the music of Orpheus had been alluded to in speech. Now it is heard in the form of a song:

Orpheus with his lute made trees,  
And the mountain tops that freeze,  
Bow themselves when he did sing.  
To his music plants and flowers  
Ever sprung, as sun and showers  
There had made a lasting spring.

Every thing that heard him play,  
Even the billows of the sea,  
Hung their heads, and then lay by.  
In sweet music is such art,  
Killing care and grief of heart  
Fall asleep, or hearing, die.

(III. i. 3-14)

If there were a lute accompaniment, it would be as if Orpheus himself were singing, as he does in Book Ten of the *Metamorphoses*. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Lorenzo said with regard to 'the sweet power of music' that 'the poet | Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods'. In this song, the poet—Ovid—and Orpheus have become one. The music does not only charm trees, stones, and floods, it also evokes other benign Ovidian metamorphoses as it precipitates the return of the spring in the manner of Proserpina (or Perdita) and the calming of stormy seas in the manner of Arion (or Ariel acting for Prospero). Above all, the very sound of it kills care, just as metamorphosis brings freedom from care to Ovid's suffering characters and as Paulina's

<sup>60</sup> As in many Elizabethan plays, history is built on a pattern of rises and falls: Buckingham falls, Anne Bullen rises, Wolsey rises, Katharine falls, Wolsey falls, Cranmer rises.

music puts grief of heart to sleep by awakening Hermione. For Katharine, the resolution is suspended as a gentleman comes on to break off the song by announcing a delegation of power in the form of the Cardinals Wolsey and Campeius. But in the following act the Queen, now sick and in another chamber, orders more solemn music and sees a vision of blessed spirits. They bring her spirit to rest: doing the work of Orpheus, they kill her grief before granting her a release into eternal peace.

But the play as a whole ends with a vision of blessedness that is firmly rooted in this world, not the next. Where Katharine is taken via Orphic music to the Christian heaven in a move redolent of the allegorized Ovidianism of the Catholic Middle Ages, Archbishop Cranmer prophesies that England will be taken via Queen Elizabeth to a new Silver Age of agricultural plenty. Protestant nationalism reawakens Ovidian myth in modern history:

This royal infant—heaven still move about her—  
Though in her cradle, yet now promises  
Upon this land a thousand thousand blessings,  
Which time shall bring to ripeness . . .

. . . . .  
Good grows with her.  
In her days every man shall eat in safety  
Under his own vine what he plants, and sing  
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours.

(v. iv. 17–20, 32–5)

Here linguistic art is an instrument of secular power. Ovidianism is part of the fabric of history, not an escape from it. Cranmer's language is the same as that of Prospero's masque, save that the source of a good harvest and a peaceful commonwealth is located differently: it comes not from Ceres, not from Ariel-as-Ceres, which is to say from Prospero's magical arts, but from an idealized earthly queen. Astraea, who fled the earth in the time of Iron, has returned in the form of Elizabeth.

This vision of community and fruitfulness is a piece of Elizabethan nostalgia typical of the period around 1610–13. The poor harvests of the 1590s have been quietly forgotten. Like all nostalgia, the speech carries with it an implicit critique of the turn history has taken. Cranmer goes on to prophesy that a successor as blessed as Elizabeth will rise, phoenix-like, from her ashes, but by invoking the language

of the Silver Age which Prospero's spirits had used, he inevitably introduces a model of historical decline. Ovid's Ages become a reading of recent history. *Henry VIII* dramatizes the issue over which England broke from Rome; the crux of the play is the fall of Wolsey, mediator between the King and the Pope. Cranmer speaks from the early Reformation, rather as Gonzalo, with his vision of a new Golden Age, speaks the language of early humanism (of More's *Utopia*). But Cranmer, more of a politician than Gonzalo, recognizes that the modern body politic, with its need for legal structures and agricultural production, can at best replicate the Silver Age, not the Golden. It is in Silver terms that he prophesies the Elizabethan settlement and the defeat of Catholic Spain: 'She shall be loved and feared: her own shall bless her; | Her foes shake like a field of beaten corn' (v. iv. 30–1—note the Ceres-influenced simile). For the play's audience the Elizabethan Age is now gone, so the moment at which the prophecy is heard is dangerously liable to be post-Silver. James's England could easily become a Brazen world. The praise of the King is also an implicit warning: without a revival of Elizabethan values, the country will go on a downward spiral towards the Age of Iron. It is significant that the play was written in close proximity to the death of Prince Henry, whose radical protestantism and chivalric aspirations made him a far better candidate than James himself for the role of Elizabeth's phoenix.<sup>61</sup>

All this is stated very subtly. Shakespeare,<sup>62</sup> elusive even when allusive, never took the political risks that Ovid, Marston, and Jonson did. He would never have got himself exiled for insulting his imperial ruler or imprisoned for writing a seditious play. But the nostalgia and the quiet critique which mark the late plays perhaps suggest that the death of Prince Henry was his cue to retire from the theatre. The last plays keep reaching back to the Elizabethan works, *Pericles* to *The Comedy of Errors*, *Cymbeline* to *Lucrece*, *The Winter's Tale* to *As You Like It*, *The Tempest* to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen* to both *Dream* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Their mythologizing is a leading strand of their nostalgic weave. It may be recalled that Thomas Carew praised John Donne as a 'modern' poet because he was supposed to have banished the train of heathen mythology which

<sup>61</sup> For the Prince's Elizabethan associations, see Roy Strong, *Henry, Prince of Wales and England's Lost Renaissance* (London, 1986), esp. 47 ff.

<sup>62</sup> Here more probably 'Fletcher in Shakespearean mode'.

had been so visible in the age of Spenser.<sup>63</sup> The triumphant renaissance of Ovidianism in Shakespeare's last plays contributes enormously to their art but also helps to keep them at a distance from Jacobean England—they constantly conjure up new worlds in order to dissolve them into the old ones of myth.

Shakespeare established his reputation with the Ovidian show-pieces *Venus and Adonis* and *Titus Andronicus*, a play which Jonson in Jacobean times mocked for its outdatedness.<sup>64</sup> Throughout his career he experimented with a vast repertory of metamorphic Ovidian manoeuvres. The nimbleness of the intertextual play was decisive proof of his mobility as a dramatist. 'Ovids Metamorphoses, nothing else, but Mercuries pageants, where Jupiter, and Apollo do everywhere Mercurize for lyfe; and sumtymes Martialize upon occasion': thus Gabriel Harvey in some marginalia to Joannis Foorth's *Synopsis Politica*.<sup>65</sup> Harvey's word 'Mercurize' is not recorded in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, but the third sense of 'Mercurial', 'Of persons: Born under the planet Mercury; having the qualities supposed to proceed from such a nativity, as eloquence, ingenuity, aptitude for commerce', is first attributed to him.<sup>66</sup> For Harvey, the value of the *Metamorphoses* was that they could teach a politic art of social mobility; follow the metamorphic example of Jupiter and Apollo, and you will be able to 'Mercurize, or strategize at every occasion: may manage any exployte, or practise any fortune'. This is what Ovid enabled Shakespeare to do: not in the world of high politics to which Harvey aspired with such singular lack of success, but in his chosen sphere of the theatre. From impressive début to strategic withdrawal, the grammar-school boy managed every dramatic exploit and was able to retire having made his fortune. He left behind a body of work which everywhere Mercurizes for life.

<sup>63</sup> In his 'Elegie upon the Death of the Deane of Pauls', Carew wrote of how Donne had 'silenc'd' the 'tales o' th' Metamorphoses' (l. 66).

<sup>64</sup> Induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, *Ben Jonson*, vi. 16.

<sup>65</sup> *Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia*, ed. G. C. Moore Smith (Stratford-upon-Avon, 1913), 193. Subsequent quotation from the same page.

<sup>66</sup> Citation of *Pierces Supererogation*.

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