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With painted images: The iconography of time in Shakespeare's plays and poems (William Shakespeare).

Heather. Campbell

University of Windsor

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WITH PAINTED IMAGES: THE ICONOGRAPHY
OF TIME IN SHAKESPEARE'S
PLAYS AND POEMS

BY

HEATHER CAMPBELL

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies through the
Department of English in Partial Fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario
1974
ABSTRACT

This thesis examines Shakespeare’s treatment of the theme of Time from a mythological and iconographical point of view. The starting point for the study is the iconographical development of the familiar figure now known as "Father Time", and already a commonplace in Renaissance secular art.

Chapter I considers some of the writings on Time which contributed to the tradition of thought against which Shakespeare was writing, some of which may have influenced him directly. It goes on to summarize the development of the "Father Time" figure from its three sources: Kairos, the Greek concept of the brief, decisive moment which marks a turning point in the lives of individuals or the development of the universe; the Iranian concept of Aion, the divine principle of eternal and inexhaustible creativity; and Kronos, the Roman Saturn figure, here signifying cruel and destructive time.

Chapter II examines Shakespeare’s treatment of the Kairos notion through a study of the opportunists Macbeth and Iago, and the failed opportunist Richard II, taking into account the role of Fortune in these men’s lives.

Chapter III examines his representation of the concept of destructive Time in The Sonnets, Twelfth Night and Troilus and Cressida, involving a consideration of the effects of Time upon human beings and human artefacts, such as cities and states, and human ideas and emotions, such as honour and glory, and gaiety.
Chapter IV considers Shakespeare's resolution of these notions in the optimistic vision of The Winter's Tale and The Tempest, in which the evil and destructive potential of Time is diminished, and the emphasis is placed upon the concept of Aion, the healing, regenerative, creative aspects of Time.

Chapter V, Conclusion, submits that there is sufficient evidence in Shakespeare's writing to show that he was indeed familiar with these mythological figures and the ideas behind them, and that he made an extensive exploration of them and their effects on mankind which continued throughout his career.

Appendix I deals briefly with the rhetorical exercise on Time contained in The Rape of Lucrece, including the nature and purpose of the tapestry of the fall of Troy.
PREFACE

It is now generally accepted that Shakespeare displays throughout his work a most profound interest in the concept of Time. The Sonnets and The Rape of Lucrece could be regarded as sufficient evidence in themselves for this judgment, but in fact most critics would agree that the theme of Time is present, with greater or lesser significance, in almost all of Shakespeare's works. It has not yet been suggested, however, that his interest in and exploration of the subject has been anything other than purely philosophical or aesthetic. I suggest that there was a further source of inspiration behind Shakespeare's writings on Time: an iconographical and mythological one.

The starting point for my study is the iconographical development of the familiar figure now known as "Father Time", already a commonplace in Renaissance secular art. This figure is a fusion of the three separate concepts of Time represented by the mythological human figures Kairos, Kronos and Aion. The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate that Shakespeare was familiar with these mythological figures, and the ideas behind them, and that he explored each of them extensively in the course of his writing.

In treating a subject of this magnitude in a study of this length it has been necessary to limit quite severely the available material. Characters and plays have been chosen for
discussion because they represented the clearest examples of
their kind; this is not to say, however, that they are the only
examples. Macbeth and Iago are far from being the only
opportunist in the Shakespearean canon, nor is Richard II the
only character who misses opportunity. All examples of Shake-
peare's use of mythology in chapters two and three are cited
with the proviso that there may well be — indeed, almost
certainly are — other examples of the same notion to be
found elsewhere in the canon. However, the ideas have been
examined entirely as they apply to the character or play in
question. Hence, Richard II is far from being the only failed
opportunist, but he is the only one who fails in precisely
this manner: Twelfth Night is not the only play in which Shake-
peare demonstrates the effect on human beings of the power of
Time to change and end things, but his treatment of the theme
within the context of the play is unique, and has been treated
as such. Moreover, in the discussion of the theme of honour
in Troilus and Cressida, comments on the nature of honour
refer specifically to the concept as it appears within the
context of this play, and are by no means intended to offer
conclusive judgments on Shakespeare's attitude to this highly
complex notion as demonstrated elsewhere in the canon.

The choice of plays for discussion in Chapter IV, Aion,
is less arbitrary. Shakespeare's attitude towards Time may be
seen to have altered by this point in his career, and The Winter's
Tale and The Tempest have been chosen partially to demonstrate
this development.
The text I have used is G. B. Harrison's edition of the Complete Works, first published in 1948 by Harcourt, Brace and World, New York. All textual references, quotations and line numberings refer, unless otherwise stated, to this edition.

It remains only to thank those without whom this study could not have been completed. To Dr. J.P. Sullivan I am grateful on three counts: for the Teaching Assistantship which enabled me to come to Canada and continue my studies, for generously agreeing to chair my committee and direct the study in a period when his time was at a premium, and for his own infectious enthusiasm for Shakespeare which helped to inspire my work from the beginning. His help and support have been invaluable. My thanks are also due to Dr. J.K. Ditsky and Dr. E.D. LeHire for their encouragement and helpful suggestions, and for agreeing to act as readers at a time when other matters were pressing. And to my husband, Ron Kiverago, for his patient and valuable aid on both a practical and an intellectual level.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Abstract** .................. ii

**Preface** .................. iv

Chapter

I. Introduction .................. 1

II. Kairos .................. 10

III. Horos .................. 25

Twelfth Night

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Sonnets</th>
<th>Troilus and Cressida</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. Action .................. 60

V. Conclusion .................. 70

Appendix I. The Rhet of Lucretius .................. 74

Bibliography .................. 76

Vita Augustus .................. 81
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The concept of Time has been one of the great topics of European literature since Classical antiquity. By the Renaissance it had become a topic on which poets could produce set pieces, or virtuoso displays, involving a whole set of paradoxes and a whole field of figurative language. Spenser, for example, explores the question of Time and change in the seventh (unfinished) book of The Faerie Queene; and Shakespeare, in some forty of his sonnets, in such major plays as Richard II, Hamlet and Troilus and Cressida, and in his narrative poem The Rape of Lucrece, showed himself to be keenly interested in the subject.

The tradition of writings on Time leading up to the Renaissance was an extremely complex one. Very many philosophers and literary men had posed theories on the subject; and even if Shakespeare had not first hand knowledge of all of these, he was almost undoubtedly familiar with the ideas presented. Such diverse philosophers as Plato, Boethius and St. Augustine of Hippo, for example, had all suggested theories concerning the concept of eternity and measurable Time. Plato proposed that Time was created simultaneously with Heaven, with the planets as a measure of it; Boethius

connected the concepts of eternity and measurable time with the question of free will and predestination, suggesting that eternity is as one moment in the eyes of God, and St. Augustine equates the division between measurable time and eternity with that between man and God himself.

Heraclitus, in The Cosmic Fragments, discusses the concept of change, flux and movement in time, offering the metaphor that "Time is a child moving counters in a game; the royal power is a child's." He also suggests the idea of cyclical time, a never-ending circle in which the beginning and the end are common. Montaigne, in his Essay on Repentance also discusses the theory of change as the passage from one moment to another. And Aristotle, in the Physics, suggests a dual notion of time as movement, and the space within which that movement takes place.

Petrarch's Trionfi contains a fascinating and full portrayal of the almost unassailable power of Time. In the Trionfi, Chastity triumphs over Love, Death over Chastity, Fame over Death, Time over Fame, and Eternity over Time.


5 Montaigne, Essays (On Repentance). This is a notion particularly relevant to Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida, in which Time is considered both as the moment and the process created by the passage from moment to moment. See Chapter III, Kronos, p. 39ff.

6 Aristotle, Physics, 217b - 224b, 35. Also relevant to Troilus and Cressida.
Time is depicted as an alarmingly destructive power, conquerable only by Eternity.

We know that both Montaigne and Petrarch exerted a strong influence over Shakespeare's writing, for echoes of them may be found in several passages throughout his work. Some of the other writings I have mentioned were not available in translation in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, but, even if Shakespeare had not actually read them himself, they had all contributed in some measure to the background of ideas on Time against which he was writing.

The Renaissance fascination with Time was by no means confined to the poets of the age. Personified Time appears frequently in Renaissance secular art, suggesting that the notion of Time was not simply a subject for literary exploration, but rather a major area of Elizabethan and Jacobean thought.

Possibly the most common Renaissance and Baroque representation of personified Time is the familiar figure now affectionately known as "Father Time", a version of which appears in the insignia of Temporal, a sixteenth century

7 Petrarch, Lord Horley's "Triumphes of Trauntes Petrarchke," ed. D.D. Carnicelli, (Cambridge, Mass., 1971). This translation, which first appeared in Britain in 1556, was almost certainly known to Shakespeare.

8 See, for example, the speech by Gonzalo in The Tempest, II.i.147 - 156, which is very close to Montaigne's Des Cannibales, an essay which also influenced Shakespeare's portrayal of Caliban in the same play. The chapter concerning the triumph of Time in Lord Horley's translation of Petrarch's Triomphi bears some similarity to Ulysses' speech on Time in Troilus and Cressida, III.iii.145 - 189.
French printer. Here, Time is depicted as an old man, bald, but wearing a long forelock, winged at the shoulders and heels, and bearing the scythe which is invariably associated with Father Time. Two legends accompany him: Et Fugit Interea Fugit Irreparabile Tempus, and Καιρός Kaiρός. Shakespeare himself was familiar with this representation we now from his frequent references to the scythe of Time, swift-footed Time, old Time and so on.

The late Renaissance and Baroque figure Father Time was almost always, in fact, presented as an old man, supported by crutches or a wooden leg, mostly nude, and generally winged at the shoulders and heels. He carried with him a scythe or sickle and an hourglass and was accompanied by a snake or a dragon biting its tail, and frequently a zodiac.

This figure developed out of a highly complex and divers set of representations of Time incorporating three distinct elements.

The first element is the Greek notion of Kairos, which represented the brief, decisive moment which marks a turning

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9 I am indebted for this information to Fritz Saxl's essay "Veritas Filia Temporis" in Philosophy and History, Essays Presented to Ernst Cassirer (Oxford, 1335). Saxl also gives a reproduction of the insignia.

10 And in the meantime, Time flies, flies irrecoverably.

11 Mark (or know) Time.

12 See, for example, Sonnet 126, ll. 1–2.

13 Last of the information concerning the iconographical development of the Father Time figure was gained from Erwin Panofsky's essay "Father Time" in Studies in Iconology (Oxford, 1339), q.v.
point in the lives of men or the development of the Universe. This notion was generally depicted as the figure Opportunity. A youngish man, generally nude, winged at the shoulders and heels and wearing the forelock by which opportunity may be grasped, **Opportunitas** was portrayed in rapid movement, carrying with him a pair of scales, finely balanced on a knife-edge. This idea of Time is clearly present in the device of Temporal, both in the use of the word **Kairos**, rather than **Chronos**, the all-encompassing Greek word for Time, and in the forelock worn by the figure. Opportunity survived in this form up to the eleventh century A.D., when he merged with the female figure **Fortuna**, smiling Fortune, who could also be blind and fickle.

The antithesis to **Kairos**, the fleeting moment of opportunity, would be the Iranian concept of **Aion**, the divine principle of eternal and inexhaustible creativity. **Aion** could be depicted in two ways: either as a grim, winged figure with a lion's head and claws, accompanied by a huge snake and carrying a key in either hand; or as a beautiful winged youth with a snake coiled around his body, carrying the orb and


15 An alternative translation of the legend might be "Recognize Opportunity".

16 For a full and interesting discussion of the concept of **Aion** see Doro Levi's essay "Aion" in *Hesperia*, XIII (1944) 260, which was written following the discovery of a marble mosaic representation of the figure in the previous year.
sceptre of cosmic power, and accompanied by the zodiac. The Renaissance version of Aion may be seen in the sixteenth century commonplace Veritas Filia Temporis, the legend chosen by Mary Tudor for her royal seal and coins, and in the Elizabethan and Jacobean concern with the Christian concept of Eternity, and with the perpetuation of the self, or identity, after death.

The element of extreme age and infirmity in the Father Time figure occurred through a confusion, and then a fusion, of Chronos, the Greek word for Time in all its aspects, with Kronos, the Roman Saturn figure. The confusion is easily comprehensible, and not only because of the similarity between the two words, for Kronos had many characteristics in common with certain aspects of Time. Indeed Plutarch, in De Iside et Osiride, suggested that Kronos meant Time in the same way that Hera meant Air and Hephastos, Fire.

Kronos was the oldest and most formidable of the gods, and also the patron of agriculture. In the classical representations, he appears as a dignified, melancholy figure, with a veil over his face and a sickle in his hand. In the Middle Ages, when the gods were first associated with the

17 Truth is the daughter of Time.

18 A fascinating example of this can be seen in the way that many Renaissance painters were in the habit of including their own faces in paintings involving crowds.

planets, the name of Kronos, or Saturn, was given to the coldest, dryest and slowest of these, which was associated with old age, poverty and death - all of which may be seen as the results of the triumph of Time. It is interesting to note that in allegorical paintings and sculpture, the figure of Death, like Kronos and Father Time, carries a sickle.

In the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., Kronos acquired the addition of a snake or a dragon, and the mythical tale developed that he was a cannibal who devoured his own children. This carries the implication that Time devours what he has created, and is reminiscent of Simonides' "The tooth of Time", echoed by Shakespeare in Measure for Measure (V.1.12), and of Ovid's *Ex armis rerum* of the *Metamorphoses*.

The familiar figure of Father Time, then, is deceptive in its simplicity. It carries suggestions of not one but three distinct and separate views of Time, all of which were explored by Shakespeare in his writing, frequently more than one aspect appearing in one work.

The concept of Kairos, or Opportunity, is summed up by Brutus in *Julius Caesar*:

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyages of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

(IV. iii. 218)

This encompasses not only the notion of Opportunity, whose corelock must be grasped at the right moment, but also the

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20 See Panofsky, . 78 ff.
association of Opportunitas with Fortuna, and the importance of Fortune for the opportunist. Shakespeare's work contains an intensive exploration of the effect on the lives of men of those who do grasp the forelock of opportunity, and also of those, like Richard II, who allow him to pass him by.

The Kronos element, Time as a destructive, devouring force, is considered at length in the Sonnets, particularly the first nineteen of the traditional arrangement, and also in several of the plays, particularly Troilus and Cressida, and, to a slightly lesser degree, Twelfth Night. Associated with the notion of Time as devourer is the idea of change, of mutability, and of attempts to defeat the enemy Time.

The concept of Aion, the optimistic view of Time as the eternal creator, the "Nurse and breeder of all good", is most fully explored in the so-called Romances, or Final Plays, particularly The Winter's Tale and The Tempest. Here, the three notions of Time are drawn together, and the final vision is an optimistic one, in which Time figures as a healing power, a force of regeneration and re-creation, and as the revealer of goodness and truth.
LEAF 9 OMITTED IN PAGE NUMBERING.
CHAPTER II

LAIROS

The Kairos figure is representative of the brief, decisive moment which marks a turning point in the lives of men or the development of the universe. He wears the long forelock by which bald Opportunity may be grasped; the scale he carries is finely balanced on a knife-edge: and he is almost always portrayed as a young man in swift motion, with wings at the shoulders and heels. The suggestion is that when the moment of opportunity occurs, the forelock may be grasped and the scale tipped, re-directing the course of events which make up the lives of individuals, and, hence, the development of mankind. If the moment is allowed to pass, however, it passes swiftly, and never returns. Shakespeare's plays and narrative poems abound in characters who are swift enough to grasp the forelock of Opportunity, and are thus able to alter the course of events in their own lives and in the lives of those around them; and also with characters who fail to stay Opportunity in his swift progress. In several of his works, Shakespeare explores intensely the effects of Opportunity on human beings. What happens when opportunity is grasped and the course of events changed? What happens when opportunity is missed? And what, if any,

21 It is interesting to note that Shakespeare has references to "bald" Time in The Comedy of Errors (II.i.70a, II.ii.106) and in King John (III.4.324)
are the moral implications? It is significant to note here that the Kairos figure was eventually merged with the female figure Fortuna, swelling Lady Fortune, who could also be blind and fickle. Fortune and chance belong to the same semantic field, and are in many cases synonymous; and opportunity has also been commonly equated with chance. A further question arises, therefore, as to the extent to which the opportunist, and he who misses opportunity, is subject to the whim of Fortune.

Macbeth, for example, hearing the weird sisters' prophecy that he will become Thane of Cawdor, and eventually King of Scotland, debates their words, and decides to leave the problem to Fortune: "If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me, / Without my stir." (I.iii.143) And, in a sense, chance does crown him, though not without his stir. The actual murder of Duncan is the result of a calculated and deliberate decision on the part of Macbeth, and it is this which begins the chain of events leading to his own downfall. It is chance, however, that brings Duncan to Macbeth's castle that night, affording him the opportunity to remove the one impediment between himself and the Scottish throne.

In the light of Macbeth's earlier decision, it seems unlikely that he would have gone out of his way to create an opportunity to kill Duncan; but, the opportunity being offered, by chance, he was unable to resist the temptation to take it. He has

22 In Sonnet 126, Shakespeare writes of time as "fickle", an epithet closely associated with Fortune.
been fully aware from the moment in which he recognized the opportunity of the implications involved:

that but this blow
might be the be-all and the end-all here;
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here, that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which being taught return
To plague the inventor.

(I.vii.4)

After this turning point, Macbeth's career remains closely linked with Fortune. Having gained the throne, he finds that he must continue on his path of evil in order to retain his position. Closely aware of the witches' prophecies, not only for himself but also for Banquo, he begins to fear that his line will end with himself: that it will not be his sons but Banquo's who will ascend the throne after his death. It is at this point that Macbeth begins to attempt to manipulate Time; and finds himself helplessly in the grip of Fortune.

Banquo's riding out with his son on the day of the banquet affords Macbeth the opportunity he has been waiting for to remove both, and thereby negate the prophecy of the weird sisters. Opportunity sends Banquo and Fleance riding into the ambush of Macbeth's hired murderers; and chance allows Fleance to escape from them. Banquo is dead, but his son still lives to father a line of eight Scottish kings and

23 An Elizabethan audience would fully understand Macbeth's horror at this idea. See Chapter III, Kronos, on the Elizabethan concern with perpetuating the identity after death, through procreation.
fulfil the witches' prophecy. Chance has again intervened, and Macbeth's plot has failed. He has grasped opportunity to no purpose.

Finally, it is chance, or fortune, which causes Macbeth's destruction. He is comforted by the witches' prophecies in Act IV:

Be bloody, bold, and resolute, laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth.  

(IV. i. 79)

and:

Macbeth shall never vanquished be until
Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill
Shall come against him.  

(IV. i. 92)

But he has again reckoned without the power of fortune. It is chance which brings the rebel army to Birnam Wood, and puts the idea into Malcolm's mind that each soldier should carry a branch of it on the march to Dunsinane; and it is chance which completes the prophecies, as Macbeth finds himself in combat with Macduff, who "was from his mother's womb/Untimely ripped." (V. viii. 15)

Iago, villain of Othello, is just such an opportunist as Macbeth becomes: but his character and motives are subtly different from those of Macbeth. Whereas Macbeth only grasps opportunity when it confronts him, and then after a struggle with his conscience, Iago calmly awaits the opportunity he knows will come of injuring Othello. Unlike Macbeth, Iago has very little motive for his evil acts: the indignity of not receiving the promotion he expected, and a rumour that the Moor has cuckolded him.
Iago establishes himself as an opportunist in the very first scene, in which he explains to Roderigo his reason for remaining in Othello's service: "I follow him to serve my turn upon him." (I.i.41) He is confident that if he remains in Othello's service an opportunity will present itself to injure him, and he intends to be ready and waiting to grasp that opportunity when it does come. This is very far from the impulsive opportunism of Macbeth: it is cold, premeditated malice.

As Iago expects, the opportunity he patiently awaited does present itself, and when it does, he is fully prepared to meet it. Othello's marriage to Desdemona creates an area in which the Moor is extremely vulnerable: Iago is swift to recognize this, and to use the knowledge to his advantage. He carefully calculates his prospects:

Cassio's a proper man. Let me see now, To get his place, and to humour up my will In double knavery -- How, how? -- Let's see. -- After some time, to abuse Othello's ear That he is too familiar with his wife, He hath a person and a smooth dispose, To be suspected, framed to make women false. The Moor is of a free and open nature That thinks men honest that but seem to be so, And will as tenderly be led by the nose As asses are. (I.iii.326)

Iago's machinations are carefully planned from the beginning, and he is fully aware of the necessity of making each move at the precisely appropriate moment. In Act II, Scene iii; he speaks to Roderigo of the danger of acting rashly:

How poor are they that have not patience!
What would ever heal but by degrees?
Thou know'st we work by wit and not by witchcraft,
And wit depends on dilatory Time. (II.i.iii.376)

and, in soliloquy, of the danger of missing opportunity: "Dull
not device by coldness and delay." (II.i.iii.334)

Like Macbeth, Iago cannot remain satisfied with the
opportunities he has: once he has commenced his machinations,
he begins to attempt to manipulate Time by creating situations
which would not otherwise have occurred. It is by his own
device that Cassio is dismissed from Othello's service,
offering Iago the perfect opportunity to poison Othello's
mind. Here, too, he is acutely aware of the importance of
timing: the moment for action is brief, and nothing is to be
gained by acting either too soon or too late. Iago's language
bears this out:

Two things are to be done
My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress,
I'll set her on,
Myself the while to draw the Apror apart
And bring him jump when I may Cassio find
Soliciting his wife. (II.i.iii.388)

The use of "jump" here, glossed by Onions as "at the
precise moment and place", not only shows that Iago was
conscious of the necessity for precision of timing, but also
bears out the clarity and precision of his thinking. It is
typical of the opportunist, and Iago is no exception, never
to waste words. Here, a single word carries the full meaning
of a lengthy, cumbersome phrase: and the whole passage has
a brevity and simplicity typical of the calculating mind of
the opportunist. Iago sees exactly what must be done to further his ends, and expresses his thoughts coldly, precisely and succinctly.

On this level, Iago bears comparison with Ulysses, the Greek political General of Troilus and Cressida. Both have an ability to recognize the precise moment appropriate for action; both attempt in some measure to manipulate Time and create opportunities where they might not normally occur; and both make an attempt to predict the outcome of their actions, in that, in grasping opportunity, they have a definite course of events in mind, which is to result from the tipping of the scale. Ulysses grasps the opportunity of Hector's challenge to the Greeks to attempt to bring Achilles out of retirement; and Iago uses his position as Desdemona's courier and Othello's friend, and his wife's position as Desdemona's maid, to seek his revenge upon the Moor. Like Ulysses, Iago shows remarkable insight into the characters of the people with whom he is dealing. He is able to predict that Desdemona will be sympathetic to Cassio's suit; and that she will be slow indeed to suspect any kind of ulterior motive on his own part. And he knows that once suspicion has taken root in Othello's mind, it will never be removed. In Act III, Scene iii, the central point of the play, he greets Othello in an undertone:

\begin{verbatim}
Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou owdest yesterday. (III.iii.330)
\end{verbatim}
Aiiros' balance has been tipped by this point, and the course of events irrevocably altered. The moment in which suspicion was planted in Othello's mind marked a turning point in his life. Even if Iago were now to cease his machinations, even if Desdemona were to be proved faithful beyond all doubt, their relationship could never be the same as it had been before that moment. Iago is fully aware of this; he has calculated exactly the effect on Othello of jealousy, "the green-eyed monster which doth mock / The meat it feeds on." (III.iii.146)

Both Iago and Ulysses, however, are ultimately unsuccessful in their plans, and for the same reason. They both fail to take into account the place of Fortune in their plans. Despite all Ulysses' careful plotting, the incident which finally draws Achilles from his tent is decreed by Fortune: the death of Patroclus. Ulysses had no possible way of predicting or arranging this. And it is Fortune, or chance, which finally destroys Iago. Fortune is indeed shown to be fickle in her control over Iago. In the early part of the play she is generous to him: it is by chance that Othello is sent to Cyprus on the night of his marriage, and by chance that Iago is appointed Desdemona's courier and Emilia, her maid. Having thus begun the ascent of Fortune's wheel, however, Iago is not content to progress at her pace. He must needs attempt to control his own destiny by manipulating Time and creating opportunity. Moreover, he is not content with the success he achieves. By Act III, he has successfully usurped
Cassio's position and ruined Othello's peace of mind. Yet he continues to create for himself opportunities of harming these two men, seemingly out of pure malice. It is by chance that Desdemona drops her handkerchief, but by Iago's manipulation that Othello sees it in Cassio's possession. It is by chance that Cassio sups with Bianca on the night of Desdemona's murder, but by Iago's design that he is attacked by Roderigo on his way home.

Iago has, by this point, become complacent in his success. He has tried to take his destiny into his own hands; and finally chance, or Fortune, destroys him. At the peak of his success — Desdemona killed, Othello mad with jealousy, Roderigo killed — chance intervenes, and Iago, having ascended to the topmost point of Fortune's wheel, is cast down. The words of Edmund, malicious opportunist of *King Lear*, are equally appropriate to Iago here: "The wheel is come full circle, I am here." (V.iii.174) Chance allows Cassio to escape with his life from the fight with Roderigo, leaving him able to defend himself against Iago's accusations; and chance allows Desdemona sufficient breath to speak while Emilia is present, causing Emilia to reveal the entire scheme. Iago has been to some extent aware of the danger of his position: "This is the night / That either makes me or fordoes me quite." (V.i.126) He has recognized that there is an element of chance involved in his success, but in creating opportunities for himself he has underestimated the controlling power of Fortune. He has tried to manipulate both Time and
Fortune, and it is this which has caused his destruction.

A comparable pattern of the interplay between Fortune and Opportunity emerges from a consideration of the character who fails to grasp the opportunities offered to him: characters such as Richard II, who allow Kairos to pass them by unhindered. G.B. Harrison, in his "Introduction" to Richard II in his edition of Shakespeare's Complete Works, states that:

Two main causes brought about Richard's ruin: the first was his own character, the second was his cousin, Henry Bolingbroke. Shakespeare had now begun to realize that character is fate. (Italics.)

Harrison's phrasing is somewhat ambiguous, and he makes no attempt to explain it. The implications, however, are interesting.

Richard's character is in direct contrast to that of Iago in the same way that he contrasts with Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke and Iago are men of precision of thought and action. We have already seen the care with which Iago plans each move, weighs all possibilities in his mind, and then acts on a decision which is the result of clear and logical thinking. Richard, on the other hand, is characterized by illogical thinking, irrational fantasizing, and rashness of action. Whereas Iago is acutely conscious of the importance of precision of timing and action, Richard seems to be totally oblivious to it. Indeed, he not only misses the opportunities offered to himself, he thoughtlessly creates opportunities for others.

to act against him.

His character as such is established in the first scene of the play, through his handling of the quarrel between Bolingbroke and Nowbray. Firstly, there is a discrepancy in the sentences passed on the combatants. Having sworn to give each an unbiased hearing, he passes a sentence of lifelong banishment upon Nowbray, against a mere ten years for Bolingbroke. He offers no reason for this; indeed it appears to be a completely arbitrary decision with no logical explanation. If both are guilty, they should surely receive equal punishments. If one is innocent, why punish him at all? Moreover, to banish the combatants is to pass a verdict of guilt upon them: Richard is therefore leaving himself open to danger by not putting the (supposed) traitors to death.

Secondly, Richard is guilty of self-contradiction. He refuses to be moved by Nowbray's sorrow, for "After our sentence plaining comes too late." (I.iii.175) Yet having thus pronounced that his decision is final, he retracts, and lightens Bolingbroke's sentence by four years out of compassion for Gaunt.

Having shown his dilatory nature and his failure to act logically, Richard then displays another facet of his character: his rashness. On the death of Gaunt he promptly purloins all Gaunt's effects - Bolingbroke's rightful inheritance - in order to finance his expedition to Ireland. Moreover, having thus given Bolingbroke an excellent motive for rebellion, he leaves for Ireland directly, furnishing his adversary...
with the opportunity as well as the reason for returning from his exile: an opportunity which Bolingbroke characteristically seizes.

In usurping Gaunt's possessions, Richard is in one sense attempting to manipulate Time, as his uncle York points out:

*Take Hereford's rights away, and take from Time His charters and his customary rights, Let not tomorrow then ensue today. Be not thyself, for how art thou a king But by fair sequence and succession?* (II.i.179)

One of the laws of Time, York is saying, is that of succession: the father grows old and dies, and the son grows to maturity, taking the place of the father. In seizing Gaunt's property whilst his son still lives, Richard is breaking this law, and creating a precedent for Bolingbroke to follow by seizing the crown.

It is, in the light of what we already know of Richard's character, inevitable that he should return from Ireland too late to win the aid of the Welsh troops in quelling the rebellion. Salisbury laments the case:

*Oh, call back yesterday, bid time return, And thou shalt have twelve thousand fighting men! Today, today, unhappy day, too late, Overthrews thy joys, friends, fortune, and thy state.* (III.ii.68)

And it is typical of Richard that he sees it, not as his own fault, but as an intervention by Fate: "For time hath set a blot upon my pride." (III.ii.81) Unlike Bolingbroke and Iago, who are prepared to act upon the instant, Richard wastes precious time lamenting the defeat which he now regards
as inevitable, even though it has not yet occurred. The Bishop of Carlisle warns him that he would be better occupied making plans to put down the rebellion while there is still time: "My lord, wise men ne'er sit and wail their woes,/ But presently prevent the ways to wail." (III.i.178) But Richard possesses no such wisdom. He is the precise opposite of the opportunist: he is a fatalist. He is defeated before ever he considers fighting: his earlier confidence had been nothing but a blind over-dependence on the power of Providence to protect him:

The breath of worldly men cannot demose
The deputy elected by the Lord.
For every man that Bolingbroke hath pressed
To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown,
God for His Richard hath in heavenly pay
A glorious angel.  
(III.ii.56)

In a sense, however, Richard's defeatism is fully justified, for it was inevitable from the outset that Bolingbroke should defeat him. Certainly, if Richard had executed Bolingbroke and Lowbray in the first place, instead of banishing them: or if he had left Bolingbroke's inheritance intact; or if he had returned from Ireland in time to quell the rebellion with the help of the Welsh, the course of events would have been different. But it was not in his character to do this. Bolingbroke is the man of action in this play,

25 See p.20 on Richard's handling of the duel.

26 Fargo Garen, in her discussion of Shakespeare's political characters, suggests that Richard's failure as a king is inherent in his character from the beginning. Miss Garen points out the striking contrast between Bolingbroke,
not Richard. And Richard is inherently incapable of logical or decisive action. This is what Harrison means when he suggests that Richard's character is his fate, and the comment is justifiable. It would not matter how many opportunities had been offered to Richard: he would have missed them all.

Harrison's judgement holds equally true for the opportunists, Macbeth and Iago. The fate of Macbeth was decided from the moment of his first encounter with the witches, for it was inherent in his character that he should be persuaded to grasp the opportunity to murder Duncan once the idea of usurping the throne had been planted in his mind, and his course of action thereafter was inevitable. In the same way, it was inherent in Iago's character that he should, having begun his course by grasping opportunity, thereafter attempt to control his own destiny.

The common factor joining the three characters, Macbeth, Iago and Richard, is that all of them are finally destroyed, either by their action, or by their inability to act. All are apparently controlled by a force more powerful than themselves - fortune, or fate. And fate is synonymous, to this extent, with character.

In the final analysis, it is Heraclitos' judgement the realist, extrovert and man of action, and Richard, the introverted idealist. ""Policy sits above Conscience": A Study of Shakespeare's Political Characters" I.A. Thesis, University of Windsor, 1965. Unpublished.

27 A man's character, being the result of a fusion of heredity and environmental factors, is ultimately beyond his personal control. Each man acts in accordance with the drives operating within himself, and the events which follow do so as a result of those actions, whether they are contrived or chance.
which holds true, both for the opportunist and the man who
misses opportunity: "Time is a child moving counters in a
game; the royal power is a child's." Whether one grasps
opportunity or misses it is immaterial, for man cannot, it
seems, control his own destiny. Thus it is entirely
appropriate that Kairos should have merged with Fortuna, for
the notion of opportunity is inextricably bound up with that
of Fortune, who has the power both to offer opportunity and
to withhold it.

CHAPTER III

CRONOS

Of the three component figures which make up Father Time, the Crónos figure is by far the most alarming. By the Renaissance, the dignified, melancholy figure of the Classical representation had been transformed into a decidedly malevolent being. In the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., he acquired the snake, or dragon, biting its tail, suggestive of the endless circle of time, of old age, death and rebirth: of destruction and re-creation. At this time, too, he took on a grim, fearsome aspect, and the myth was born that he devoured his own children. He is frequently depicted as an aged but powerful man, cruelly nursing on the limbs or genitals of a small, screaming infant. This carries the implication that, although Time creates, he also destroys what he has created. Mediaeval astrologers, when they first associated the names of the gods with the newly discovered planets, gave the name of Crónos, or Saturn, to the coldest, driest and slowest of these. In Henryson’s poem, The Testament of Cresseid, Saturn appears as an ill-natured old man with icicles in his hair and beard: the description of him is unpleasant in the extreme, and foreshadows that of Cressida in her lecherous state at the end of the poem:

21 See Anesfary, cr. cit., plate XXV.
His face frounsit, his lyr was lyke the leid,  
His teith chatterit and cheverit with the chin,  
His ene drawpit, hav sonkin in his held,  
Out of his nois the meldon fast can rin,  
With lipis blie and cheikis leine an thin;  
The ice-schoklis that fra his hair doun hang  
Was wonder greit, and as ane speir als lang.

Atoir his belt his lyart lokkis lay  
Felterit unfair....

Saturn here is directly associated with old age, poverty and death. He is a hunter; instead of the usual sickle, he carries a rough bow and "ane flasch of felloun flannis," cruel arrows feathered with ice and tinned with icicles. His cruelty, poverty and age are emphasised throughout the description.

The sickle or scythe which the Classical Cronos carried in his role of patron of agriculture took on an added significance in the Middle Ages, which was carried over into the Renaissance. The suggestion of the cyclical nature of time, implied by the connection between the scythe and the seasons, sowing and reaping, remained: but the figure Death also carried a scythe or sickle, and the connection between the two cannot be ignored. Shakespeare himself has references to the scythes of both Time and Death. In Antony and Cleopatra, Antony vows that: "The next time I do fight / I'll make death love me, for I will contend / Even with his

30 Robert Henryson, The Testament of Cresseid, ed. Denton Fox, (London, 1868), ll. 169-163. This poem was still widely read during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and Shakespeare was almost certainly familiar with it. Some critics feel that it had a direct influence on his treatment of Cressida in Troilus and Cressida, and this might indeed be a tenable argument. For a full discussion of Troilus and Cressida, see pp. 32-78.
nestilent scythe." (III.xiii.102) and Love's Labour's Lost opens with a reference to "cormorant, devouring Time" (I.i.4) and "his scythe's keen edge." (I.i.6) References to the scythe of Time are common in the Sonnets, and all are concerned with Time's role as a destroyer.

The Kronos element, then, may be said to represent time as a destructive force, the destroyer of that which he has created. It also carries implications of human attempts to defeat Time: if Time is to be seen as an enemy, then there follows a natural human impulse to battle against him, even if the battle is ultimately futile, leading to eventual inevitable defeat. Kronos' association with agriculture, and hence with the seasons, and the attribute of the snake biting its tail, are both suggestive of the cyclical nature of Time. Crops are sown, grow, are reaped, and the ground lies apparently dead until the following spring, when it is re-awakened. Summer ends and winter takes over, but winter must give place to spring. Men grow old and die, but their features, characteristics and personalities are perpetuated through their children and grandchildren. Procreation is one of the commonest human weapons against Time, along with fame, which supposedly causes other men to remember one after death. This theme of devouring Time and man's attempts to

31 12.13; 60.12; 100.14; 123.14; 126.2. See also The Lover's Complaint, 1.12. The quotation from Antony and Cleopatra is Shakespeare's only reference to the scythe of Death, but it is sufficient to indicate that he was indeed aware of this allegorical representation. Moreover, the use of the word nestilent recalls Kronos' association with age and sickness.
defeat it is explored by Shakespeare throughout his work.
It is one of the major themes of some of the light-hearted comedies such as Twelfth Night, of the Sonnets, and of certain of the serious plays, in particular Troilus and Cressida.

Twelfth Night

Twelfth Night has generally been placed within that group of plays sometimes called the "happy" or the "joyous" comedies, and, as such, has too often been dismissed as a mere romp, a gay, light-hearted jumble of mistaken identity and practical jokes. It is indeed, in many ways, a light-hearted play, but it has a serious undertone, closely bound up with the theme of Time, which has too often been missed or ignored by critics.

Frederick Turner, in his discussion of the problem of Time in "Twelfth Night," stresses the "holiday" mood of characters. "Two themes of ritual holiday," he says, "are of particular interest in connection with Twelfth Night: the theme of mask and the theme of seasonability....The element of mock, disguise and mask is central to the season rituals." Turner is justified in pointing out these elements which are common to both the play and the Elizabethan ritual holidays, but he fails to notice one of the most significant aspects of the connection: the title of the play, and the date of its

33 Ibid., p. 10.
first performance.

Leslie Hotson, in his study of the original performance, offers sound evidence that the first production took place before Queen Elizabeth and her guests, Don Verginio Orsino, Duca di Bracciano, on Twelfth Night, or 6th January, 1601. During Elizabeth's reign, the Christmas revelries lasted a full twelve days, and ended at midnight on 6th January. The Court Jester, also called the Lord of Misrule, played a major part in the holiday making, and, as his name suggests, during this time the world was "turned upside-down" and gaiety and foolery reigned supreme. The point which Turner misses is that Twelfth Night is important, not so much as a part of the Christmas holiday, but as the last night of it: the last fling, the last hour of revelry before the return to mundane, everyday living and work. The problem may arise in part from the definition of Twelfth Night offered by the Oxford English Dictionary. As Hotson correctly points out, the O.E.D. definition of Twelfth Night as the evening of 5th January is erroneous: Twelfth Night is the night of 6th January, and marks the end of the holiday.

The holiday atmosphere of Twelfth Night, then, both in the Elizabethan Christmas celebrations and in the play, is shadowed by the knowledge that tomorrow the fun

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will all be over, and work must begin again. This leads to a particular kind of revelry, a revelry which verges on madness. It is not simply holiday spirit which abound in Illyria; it is a fiercely determined safety - a desire to have as much fun as possible before it ends. The keynote is excess: excessive high living on the part of Sir Toby and his friends; an abundance of confusion arising out of the presence of the twins; and practical jokes which verge upon cruelty.

The drinking scenes involving Sir Toby, Sir Andrew and the rest are strongly reminiscent of those in the Bear's Head with Falstaff and Hal in the Henry IV plays. The Bear's Head represents a world in direct contrast with the society of the court. Compared with this world, which is ruled by hours, by the clock, and by precision of timing to ensure success in wars and the smooth running of society, the Bear's Head has a timeless quality. It is introduced as such in I Henry IV:

FAL: Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?
PRINCE: Thou art so fat-witted, with drinking of old sac: and unbuttoning thee after supper and sleeping upon benches after noon, that thou hast forgotten to demand that that truly which thou wouldst truly know. What a devil hast thou to do with the time of day?

(1.11.1)

In the Bear's Head, Time is unimportant. Only gay living has any significance. In I Henry IV, however, the Bear's Head is only a part of the world depicted: in Twelfth Night the holiday atmosphere extends to the whole of Illyria. Sir Toby's way of life is easily as excessive as Falstaff's.
His first words: "What a plague means my neice to take the death of her brother thus? I am sure care's an enemy to life," (I.iii.2) set the tone for his behaviour throughout the play. In his view, there is no place for mourning in life—only for drinking and revelry; in reply to Faria's injunction that "you must confine yourself within the limits of order" (I.iii.8), he declares:

Confine! I'll confine myself no finer than I am. These clothes are good enough to drink in, and so be these boots, too: and they be not, let them hang themselves in their own strans. (I.iii.9)

The limits of order are not for such as Sir Toby. He is far from content with gaiety in moderation; for him it is a way of life, leaving no room for other, more mundane considerations. Moreover, he despises moderation in others: "He's a coward and a coxcomb: that will not drink to my neice till his brains turn o' the toe, like a parish top." (I.iii.42)

There is a desperate quality in the merry-making of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew, which is suggestive of a fear that all will come to an end too soon for them. It is as if Sir Toby feels that he must make the best possible use of the time he has left for revelry by concentrating on it at the expense of all other considerations. It is this quality which leads to the cruel practical joke on Malvolio.

Turner blames Malvolio for his attitude; he suggests that he is to be despised for not joining in with the merry-making:

Malvolio lives entirely within a set of rules
LEAF 32 OMITTED IN PAGE NUMBERING.
and is incapable of harmonizing himself with the mood of the holiday moment... He constitutes a considerable threat to the holiday mood, like a small selfish boy who will not join in a game and conform to its spirit and rules... We should not pity Malvolio, but join in the ridicule of him; for he is aiming a blow at the precious and fragile comradeship of humanity.

Turner is correct in stating that Malvolio poses a threat to the holiday mood, but he has misinterpreted the nature of that threat. Malvolio belongs to a world of rules and sched les, and ordered codes of behaviour, a world quite alien to the half-crazed foolery of Sir Toby and the rest. He is an intruder in their world, and as such, a constant reminder that the reign of the Lord of Misrule is brief and transitory. Sir Toby has no wish to be reminded of this. The point is emphasised in the drinking scene in Act II, during the encounter with Malvolio which triggers off the practical joke:

SIR TOBY: (sings) But I will never die —
FESTE: (sings) Sir Toby, there you lie —

(II.iii.115)

Sir Toby's attempt to remove the threatening reminder, caused by Malvolio's presence, by 'keeping him in his place' is closer in tone to the small selfish boy mentioned by Turner than any of Malvolio's own speeches: "Art any more than a steward? Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?" (II.iii.122)

35 Turner, op.cit., p. 54.

36 Malvolio and Sir Toby are, of course, guilty of the same fault: neither is prepared to see the other's point
If Malvolio is a threat to the holiday mood of Illyria, then, in the eyes of the revellers, he must be removed. Malvolio represents a certain, albeit mundane, sanity, in a world where madness is the order of the day: he is the man of moderation in a world of over-indulgence; the man of rules and regulations in a world governed by the Lord of Misrule. The method chosen of removing him is as subtle as it is cruel. To make Malvolio appear mad will, in contrast, make the crazy revellers seem sane.

The practical joke is as excessive as the merrymaking, and becomes, finally, downright cruel. Whether we despise Malvolio for his prudery and puritanism in this holiday world or not is immaterial, for we cannot but sympathise with his position as the victim of Maria's prank. His letter to Olivia is touching in its simplicity of phrasing, and it is interesting to note that, even in his distress he remembers his place as a servant, and apologises for his outspokenness: "I leave my duty a little unthought-of, and speak out of my injury." (V.i.317) Olivia herself nitizes him: "He hath been most notoriously abused." (V.i.317)

The theme of the brevity and the transitory nature of youth and gaiety is by no means confined to the comic and bawdy characters. It affects the lovers, too. Here again, excess and over-indulgence are the order of the day. Olivia vows to shun society for a full seven years in mourning for her view at all. Sir Toby is to some extent justified, therefore, in his comment here, for Malvolio is indeed 'out of tune' with the world around him. This in no way alters his position as a threat, however, or diminishes the cruelty of the prank.
dead brother; and Orsino indulges in excessive melancholy for love of a woman he hardly knows. It is Viola herself who is the intruder in this world of romantic melancholy. Viola's first appearance establishes her as an essentially practical and optimistic character. She is grateful for the hope that her brother escaped the wreck, although the probability is that he drowned. And the questions she asks about the country in which she finds herself are sensible, straightforward ones: what can she do there? who rules the country? Her mention of her father recalls an ordered world in strong contrast with the overly romantic, excessively sentimental world of Orsino. To fit in with this world, Viola cannot remain as she is, for she would be clearly out of place. She is obliged to assume a disguise, to appear to be what she is not, in order to blend in with her environment. She remains, however, constantly aware of the muddle and confusion abundant in Illyria, and serves as a reminder to the audience that this is an unstable world. She despises her deception when she realizes that it has caused Olivia to fall in love with her: "Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness, wherein the wretched enemy does much." (II.ii.27) She realizes, however, that she is powerless to right the situation, and calls upon Time to right it for her: "O Time, thou must untangle this, not I! It is too hard a knot for me to untie!" (II.ii.41) Time will indeed untangle the knot: but when that happens, other things will come with it. Illyria is restored to stability: Viola may re-assume her feminine
clothes, for now she can be a part of Illyrian society in her own person: the holiday is over.

The transitory nature of youth and love is emphasised throughout the play. Orsino warns Viola-Cesario against loving a woman older than himself, for "women are as roses, whose fair flower / being once displayed doth fall that very hour." (II.iv.33) And Viola agrees: "And so they are. Alas that they are so.../To die, even when they to perfection grow." (II.iv.41) It is Feste, however, who sums up the question of Time as it affects the lovers:

What is love? 'Tis not hereafter, present mirth hath present laughter, What's to come is still unsure, In delay there lies no plenty, Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty, Youth's a stuff will not endure. (II.iii.45)

By the end of the play, the holiday is drawing to an end. Viola has found her lost brother, and is ready to abandon her boy's clothing and become herself again. Orsino has recognized his infatuation with Olivia for what it was. Olivia has allowed her love for Sebastian to overcome her excessive melancholy over her brother's death; and the cruel trick played on Malvolio has been exposed.

The ending to the Malvolio plot might, at first glance, appear unsatisfactory and inconclusive. Malvolio departs swearing revenge on "the whole pack" (V.i.386), but whether or not he wreaks that revenge is never made explicit. Or is it? Certainly Malvolio has been adequately punished for his prudery. Perhaps his revenge for the jest has been
left in the hands of a greater power, the power of Time. The youth of the lovers cannot last; they will return to the humdrum, everyday life and grow old. For Sir Toby, the holiday is over, for he has married Maria, and the excessive self-indulgence of his single days must give way to the responsibilities of a married man. It is thus, as the wise Feste points out, that "the whirligig of Time brings in his revenges." (V. i. 384)

The Sonnets

Next to The Rape of Lucrece, the Sonnets are possibly Shakespeare's fullest rhetorical exercise on Time. Almost one third of the total number of sonnets deal directly with the question of Time as it affects human beings, and with attempts made by humans to defeat or escape Time. Throughout the series, Time is seen as an alarmingly destructive power, very similar in nature to the personification of Time in Petrarch's Trionfi, and to the edax rerum of Cicero's Metamorphoses.

It is clearly the I monos element with which Shakespeare is concerned in the Sonnets: the enemy, the cruel devourer of all the he has created. Much of the imagery used to describe Time, or to personify him, bears this out. Several references are made to the scythe, or sickle, that he carries; and he is described in images traditionally associated with cruelty, wars and destruction: "Devouring Time" (10.1); "this bloody tyrant, Time" (16.2). "Wasteful

37 See Appendix I.
Time which debateth with Decay" (1.6). A composite picture emerges of Time personified as an old, cruel tyrant, swift of foot, and a friend to ruin, decay and death.

Time, in the Sonnets, as in Troilus and Cressida, is the common enemy of mankind; and, as in Troilus and Cressida, the poet examines possible ways in which Time may be defeated. One way is through procreation, so that the identity of the individual may be perpetuated after his death. This is advocated in several of the sonnets, sometimes directly, and sometimes indirectly, through the use of images.

In the second sonnet, for example, the poet puts a straightforward case in favour of procreation. The passage of time, which destroys beauty, is discussed in terms of coldness and winter, the cruelest of all the seasons:

"When forty winters shall besiege thy brow
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery, so raw'd on now,
Will be a tattered weed of small worth held."

(2.1-4)

Time, says Shakespeare, will destroy both youth and beauty, reducing a person once admired to nothing. He suggests that to submit meekly to the ravages of Time is wasteful and negligent. One must battle against winter with spring: against decay with re-birth, against death with new life:

"How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use"

This is a theme which recurs constantly throughout Shakespeare's work. R.J. Winones points out in particular its treatment regarding the father/son relationships in the English History cycle, in his essay "Views of Time in Shakespeare, Journal of the History of Ideas, XXVI, 1965, pp. 327-352."
If thou couldst answer: "This fair child of mine shall sum my count and make thine excuse,"
proving his beauty by succession thine!
This were to be new made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

(2.0-14)

The association of the progress of time, leading to old age and death, with the cold winter season is strongly reminiscent of the description of Saturn or Kronos, in Henryson's poem: the crotchety old man with icicles in his hair and beard. It is an image which recurs several times throughout the Sonnets. In the sixth sonnet, he urges the reader to "let not winter's ragged hand deface / In thee thy summer"; in the fifth sonnet, he advocates recreation "for never-resting time leads summer on / To hideous winter and confounds him there"; and in sonnet thirteen, he regards children, the image of the parent, as a weapon "Against the stormy gusts of winter's day / And barren rage of death's eternal cold." Closely linked with the association of time with the seasons, is the notion of the growth, withering and death of plants and flowers. Shakespeare frequently uses the image of the rose to represent the youth to whom he addresses his verses, as in the first sonnet: "From fairest creatures we desire increase / That thereby beauty's rose might never die." The rose blooms throughout the summer, withers in the autumn and dies with the onset of winter. It is possible, however, to keep the essence of the beauty of the rose by distilling its perfume:

...were not summer's distillation left,
A liquid prisoner rent in walls of glass,
Beauty's effect with beauty were bereft,
Nor it, nor no remembrance what it was.
But flowers distilled, though they with winter meet,
Leese but their shoe. THEIR substance still lives sweet.

The essence, or substance, of the youth may be preserved in
two ways, according to the poet: by procreation, or by
immortalization in the lines of the poet himself. It is the
traditional boast of the poet that, although the subject of
his verses is a victim of Time, and must grow old and die,
the verses of the poet will continue to be read, and thus
the virtue and beauty of the subject becomes immortal. Here
again, the image of the distilled perfume of the rose is
used. In sonnet fifty-four, Shakespeare compares the
odourless wild rose with the scented, cultivated flower. The
will rose, he suggests, has only its outward beauty to
recommend it. It is to be compared with those people who
depend upon their looks and have no constancy, or truth, to
support them. Such people have no substance, and their fate,
like that of the wild rose, is to "live unwood'd and unrespected
fade, / Die to themselves." (54,10-11) The subject of his
verse, however, has both beauty and truth. He has a substance
which the poet proposes to capture and immortalize in his
verse. His fate is like that of the scented rose:

    Sweet roses do not so.
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made.
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall fade, by verse distills your truth.

(54,11-14)

The principal weapon against Time which Shakespeare
advocates in the Sonnets, then, are two: children, and
immortalization through the poet's verse, which stands as
a monument to the dead. Neither, however, may be regarded
as very effective weapons. To perpetuate the self through
children is impossible; for children can only be, at best,
an image of the parent, and an image, moreover, which is
inaccurate. Time destroys, but it also changes, and the
mutability is inescapable. The monument is subject to
memory, and memory is a human faculty. The substance of the
poet's subject may be captured in his verse; but the verses
may be lost, or forgotten. A poem is a human artefact, and
therefore subject to, not stronger than, Time. Throughout
the traditional arrangement of the Sonnets, one notices an
increasing pessimism in Shakespeare's attitude to Time. In
the early Sonnets, he was confident that Time could be defeated,
either through procreation, or through his own verses. In
Sonnet sixty-four, however, he contemplates artefacts and
creations, ruined cities and decayed states. He concludes
that man is powerless to combat Time:

Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminate,
That Time will come and take my love away.
This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.
(64.11-14)

He has become aware that not even his love can withstand
Time. In Sonnet seventy-three, he writes of himself as
decayed by time, now in the autumn of his years, and remin's
his lover that they have little time left together: "This
then perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,
To love
that well, which thou must leave ere long." (73.13-14) And sonnet one hundred and twenty six, his last exercise on Time, contains a warning to a beautiful boy whose youth appears to be everlasting. Nature, he says, has kept the boy youthful in her own attempt to defeat Time. But even Nature must answer to Time:

She may 'taint, but not still keep her treasure,
Her audit, though 'delayed,' answered must be,
And her quietus is to render thee.

(126.11-14)

This pessimism remains with Shakespeare throughout his early and middle periods, as seen in such a play as Troilus and Cressida: it is not resolved until the final period, the Late Plays or Romances, in which a far more optimistic vision of Time is presented.

Troilus and Cressida

Representations of Time figure in a sophisticated and vital way throughout Troilus and Cressida, and are fundamental to the coherent structure of the play. The final vision of Time, which is presented in the play, is an essentially pessimistic one, closer, perhaps, to the Breviary of Time of the Sonnets and The Rape of Lucrece than to any of Shakespeare's other writings. This is the last day, the final, ineluctable hour of the fall of Troy. The audience, familiar, as Shakespeare's audience would have been, with the Troy story, are aware of the outcome from the beginning. We know that Cressida will be unfaithful to Troilus; that Hector will die; and that Troy will eventually fall. It is
within this frame of reference that the two plots, and the multiplicity of ideas and conventions contained in the play, must be seen. Troilus' love affair with Cressida, the honour of the Trojans, and the science of the Greeks are all subject to the common enemy, Time.

Aristotle posited a theory of the dual nature of Time, that it is both movement and the space within which that movement takes place. A similar notion is presented in Troilus and Cressida: here, Time is both a process, involving change, dissolution and decay, and a single, self-contained moment. The process may then be regarded as a succession of moments, or the flowing of one moment into the next. The extent to which the moment is experienced as isolated and self-contained, or as forming a part of the process, varies within the play according to the context and the character involved in, or affected by, Time. For Agamemnon, welcoming Hector to his tent, only the moment is real, and outside of it is only oblivion, whereas for Achilles, Time is a process which causes his deeds to be forgotten, his honour tarnished, and his position in the Greek army usurped by an inferior soldier.

Associated with the notion of Time as a destructive power is the natural human impulse to battle against it, to defeat the common enemy. One way of defeating Time is to stress its aspect as a creator, a force which is constantly

bringing to light new births, new creations and new creatures. This is less important for Troilus and Cressida than for, say, the Sonnets or the English History cycle. More important for this play is the idea of the monument and memory as ways of defeating Time. Memory is a human faculty, and has to do with records, with the linking of one moment to the next. Records and memory are, in Troilus and Cressida, specifically linked with the concept of fame: that which causes others to remember one, and which confers a type of immortality, therefore. Although the body is destroyed by Time, the identity is perpetuated in the memory of one's deeds. Fame, then, is, or can be, a weapon against Time. This leads, inevitably, to the question of the nature of fame as it is presented within the context of the play.

The notion of fame belongs to a very ancient and complex semantic field of ideas, or figures, which by the Renaissance had become so well established that the use of one, or of a combination of the words involved, automatically calls up the others in the minds of the audience. When one term is invoked the others automatically follow, either explicitly or obliquely. This specific set of terms includes praise, fame, honour, glory, remunerate, voice; breath and opinion, and is a group which has been explored with such intensity by no other writer except Shakespeare. In I Henry IV, a dramatic presentation of honour and its meaning is
offered through Falstaff, and in *Henry V*, the definition of the honour of a king is discussed at some length. The subject recurs constantly throughout the canon, but it is in *Troilus and Cressida* that it is most intensely explored.

Honour, glory, praise and fame are virtually synonymous, and repute and name could be added, as they are similar in nature to praise and fame. Because honour, glory and praise, *et al.*, are things which are given to a person by others, they indicate a process as well as a result. The giving is the fundamental process - the giving of praise, fame and honour to a person deemed worthy of receiving them. The difficulty arises in an examination of the relationship between the person praised and the people conferring that praise, which is a highly problematical relationship. Certain questions inevitably arise: is a person honourable because he is honoured, or honoured because he is honourable? Is honour individual, intrinsic virtue, or simply something given from outside? Shakespeare is particularly sensitive to this process, and explores it at length, especially in the Trojan council scene, and in the discussion between Achilles and Ulysses after the Greek generals have passed by Achilles' tent in Ulysses' contrived procession.

Achilles, watching the Greek generals "pass strangely the medieaval conventions of courtesy, and the whole concept was revived in great force in the latter part of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. It is connected also with the art/nature/nurture/nobility question which is explored in Book VI of Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, and in Shakespeare's Romances.
by him", is offended by the lack of their usual deference, and meditates upon the problem in words which belong strictly to the name / fame / honour / repute group:

And not a man, for being simply man,
Hath any honour but honour for those honours
That are without him, as place, riches, and favour,
Prizes of accident as oft as merit.

(III.i.80)

Ian is not praised for anything intrinsic to himself, but only insofar as others deem him worthy of praise, which need not necessarily be for any actual virtue. This would suggest that honour is purely extrinsic, something to be given or withheld at the whim of the multitude. Achilles disputes this as it affects himself, however, pointing out that: "I do enjoy/ At ample point all that I did possess,/ Save these men's looks." (III.i.88) He is, in his own view, precisely as meritorious as he had been as the subject of general praise: the only difference being that that praise is now lacking.

Ulysses, accosted by Achilles, elaborates on the problem of whether honour is extrinsic or intrinsic by offering the suggestion, via his 'friend's' letter, that nothing, not merit, not virtue, not anything, can exist within a person except as it is recognized by others:

...no man is the lord of anything,
Though in and of him there be much consisting,
Till he communicate his parts to others.
Nor doth he of himself know them for aught
Till he behold them formed in the applause
Where they're extended.

(III.i.115)

Ulysses applies the formula to Ajax, but Achilles instantly recognizes its relevance to his own situation. The irony here is that the entire episode has been planned by Ulysses himself.
It is true that Ajax, "the lubber Ajax" (III.iii.139), is the subject of excessive praise; but this, far from being spontaneous, has been deliberately contrived by Ulysses, as has the cold, aloof attitude displayed towards Achilles himself. Ulysses' purpose has been to make Achilles fear that his moment of glory is past, so that, in attempting to redeem it, he might prove useful to the Greeks in returning to battle and killing Hector. Here, then, honour is purely extrinsic, to be given or withheld as fits the necessity of the moment. There is, however, a double irony, in that if Achilles had not, in fact, any intrinsic merit, if he were not a fine and powerful soldier, there would be no purpose in Ulysses' plan, for Achilles could be of no use to the Greek army at all.

The fact remains, however, that glory, honour and praise can be, indeed are being, manipulated by Ulysses in a devious and cunning manner. This inevitably debases them, lowering them essentially human, subject to human manipulation, and therefore, like all human attributes, subject also to the common enemy, Time. Moreover, although Achilles does finally rejoin the battle and slaughter Hector, it is not for the reasons suggested by Ulysses, to reclaim his honour, but because his close friend Patroclus has been killed. His motives are purely avenging, and the final view of Achilles is that of a man lacking any kind of intrinsic merit at all: a gang leader and a scoundrel.

The question of extrinsic and intrinsic honour is debated at even more length in the Trojan council scene, where another term, value, may be seen to be added to the praise, fame, honour
group. Here the question is not confined to the relationship between praise and merit as it affects one man, but becomes a discussion of the whole ethical basis for the war itself. It is, moreover, inextricably bound up with the debate between will and judgment. Throughout the play, and here, perhaps, more strikingly than anywhere else, the word honour is associated with Troilus himself. It is significant that, when Hector speaks of the practicalities of keeping Helen in terms of continued warfare and great losses amongst the Trojan ranks, Troilus immediately introduces the question of honour: and not of general honour, but of a highly specific one, that of Priam himself: "Weigh you the worth and honour of a king/ So great as our dread father in a scale/ Of common ounces?" (II.i.126)
This immediately makes the debate moral rather than practical. For Troilus, the Trojan losses are "common ounces", and all that matters is honour. Troilus equates reason with fear, and therefore honour with will, both here and, a few lines later, in a personal attack on his brother Helenus. In his logic, honour takes no count of fear; fear is synonymous with reason; therefore, honour should take no count of reason: "Manhood and honour/ Should have bare hearts, would they but fatten their thoughts/ With this crammed reason." (II.i.147)

Clearly, Troilus' logic fails: but then it is shown

41 His conclusion that "Reason and respect/lakes livers pale and lusthood deject." (I.40) is alarming. Respect is close in nature to praise, and also implies the giving to each person his proper place in the order of society. Once again, Troilus shows a tendency towards self-contradiction and muddled thinking.
throughout the play to be suspect. In the very first scene he has struck the keynote for the war:

Foils on both sides! Helen must needs be fair
When with your blood you daily paint her thus.
I cannot fight upon this argument,
It is too starved a subject for my sword. (I.1.93)

In the debate, however, he reverses his position, and speaks in terms of the honour and dignity involved in the war. Against Hector's practical judgment that "she is not worth what she doth cost/ The holding" (II.ii.51), he poses a moral and philosophical question: "What's aught but as 'tis valued?" (II.ii.52) Troilus now regards the war as a lofty and glorious one, and his climactic recognition of Hector's acceptance of his argument is expressed in words strictly belonging to the name / fame / honour / glory group:

She is a theme of honour and renown,
A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds
Whose present courage may beat down our foes,
And fame in time to come canonize us. (II.ii.129)

Helen is to be the instrument by which the Trojans shall defeat Time: the fame of their deeds in this (for Troilus) glorious war will live on after their deaths, and confer on them a type of immortality. This creates a frame of reference for Helen herself, the cause of the war. Thersites, a few lines later, makes a judgment which is in direct contrast to that of Troilus in his obscene run on "those that war for a placket!" (I.iii.22) and when Helen herself appears, shortly afterwards, she is presented as being far from a "theme of honour and renown". She is coarse and bawdy, and speaks in crudely sexual double entendres:
Pand. ... she'll none of him, they two are twain.
Helen. Falling in, after falling out, may make them three.

(II.i.111)

Her crude and basic prose is in striking contrast to the elevated rhetoric of the verse in which Troilus has described her, and her presence effectively reduces the war to, at best, a worthless quarrel over a worthless hussy. Troilus' "quarrel/ Which hath our several honours all engaged/ To make it gracious" (II.ii.124) has become an entity, petty argument.

Moreover, Troilus' philosophical standpoint, that value is equal to valuing, is what finally destroys him. He worships Cressida: to him she is, like Helen, a worthy and glorious object. Yet Cressida proves herself to be little better than a common prostitute, instantly recognized by the perceptive Ulysses.

There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip -
Nay, her foot speaks, her wanton spirit looks out
At every joint and motive of her body.
Oh, these encounterers, so their tongue,
That give accosting welcome ere it comes;
And wide unclasp the tables of their thoughts
To every ticklish reader! Set them down
For sluttish snails of opportunity
And daughters of the gane.

(JV.v.75)

If Troilus' view of honour as purely extrinsic fails, as it patently does, one might expect the opposite view, that honour is intrinsic merit, to succeed. But in this play, that too fails.

In the Trojan council scene it is Hector who takes the opposite view from Troilus. In answer to Troilus' philosophical question, he replies that:

...value dwells not in particular will.
It holds his-estimate and dignity
As well wherein 'tis precious of itself
As in the prizer: 'Tis mad idolatry
To make the service greater than the god.  (II.i.53)

Hector sees the war as worthless and entirely dishonorable.
His opinion "in way of truth" (II.i.189) is a clear, lucid and
logical explanation that by the laws of nature Helen belongs to
the Greeks in general, and to Menelaus in particular; that the
Trojans have committed a crime in kidnapping her, and, having
done so, to fight to keep what is not rightfully theirs
"extenuates not wrong,\ But makes it much more heavy." (II.i.187)
Hector has a clear insight into the truth of the matter; yet,
despite the obvious logicality of his argument, he finally
decides to side with Troilus and keep Helen. He offers no reason,
other than a brief summation of Troilus' own viewpoint:

    I propend to you
    In resolution to keep Helen still,
    For 'tis a cause that hath no mean dependence
    Upon our joint and several dignities.  (II.i.100)

Having effectively destroyed Troilus' argument, he uses it as
his reason for keeping Helen and perpetuating the war: and it
is this decision which finally brings about his own death and
the fall of Troy. In the light of his pellucid grasp of the
truth, this is no less than a betrayal of his own conscience
and his own honor - and hence the honor of Troy, which he
purports to be trying to save in keeping Helen.

The use of the word appetite, and its placing, are
significant in this speech. Hector points out that the law of
a properly ordered nation is enforced to reinforce the law of
nature, which, in this case, demands that Helen be returned to
her husband. The purpose of such a law is "To curb those raging appetites that are most disobedient and refractory." (II.ii.181.) The earlier mention of the word, by Ulysses in his speech on 'degree' in the Greek council scene is instantly recalled, and thus his description of appetite as 'a universal wolf; So doubly seconded with will and power". (I.i.ii.121.) The decision to keep Helen for reasons of honour and glory, instead of following the laws of nature, renders the war a battle of appetites, to be described in terms of consuming, devouring, and animals of prey - the cormorant, and the "universal wolf". Yet the honour involved is that which, in Troilus' eyes, is to be a weapon with which to defeat the enemy Time, and to confer immortality on the Trojan people through the eternal memory of their great deeds in a glorious war. As such, it is singularly ineffective. In Troilus and Cressida, Shakespeare has presented a decidedly jaundiced view of the concept of honour. Troilus assumes that honour is purely extrinsic: that that which receives honour is honourable on account of the praise it receives; and the assumption destroys him, for those that he deems valuable, Cressida, and the war, prove worthless. Ulysses attempts to persuade Achilles to redeem his apparently lost glory by returning to battle and killing Hector; but he fails, for when Achilles finally does kill Hector, it is in the most sordid and cowardly of ways, and from motives of pure revenge. Hector himself, a symbol of Trojan honour, debases that honour in favour of appetite, "a universal wolf".

Honour, then, is far from being a stable concept,
connected with truth. It may be given to worthless objects, given or withheld at the whim of the multitude, or to suit the purpose of a cunning and devious politician, and discarded in favour of base appetite and will. As such, it is closer in nature to opinion, which, in this play, is the opposite of truth in the same way that falsehood might be. Whereas truth is fixed and constant, opinion fluctuates and changes. In Thersites' words: "A plague of opinion! A man may wear it on both sides, like a leather jerkin." (III.iii.265) Opinion, like honour in this play, is something which people give to a person, either for good or ill, and it is part of the semantic field to which honour belongs—praise, fame, honour, glory, voice, breath and opinion. Like honour, opinion is subject to the manipulation of the politician: Ulysses, plotting to put Ajax in the field against Hector rather than Achilles, says that "If the dull brainless Ajax comes safe off,/ We'll dress him up in voices." (I.iii.381) This as a safeguard against Hector's victory, for "If he fail,/ Yet go we under our opinion still;/ That we have better men." (I.iii.382) It is the constant nature of truth which transcends Time, as suggested by the Elizabethan commonplace Veritas Filia Temporis. Truth is the daughter of Time in that, although she may be concealed, she never alters, and must, eventually, be revealed. Opinion, fluctuating, changeable and essentially human, is seen here as the opposite of truth, and therefore no effective weapon against Time. And if honour is to be equated with opinion, as in this play it is, then honour can be no more effective than opinion is. Both are subject to the
inevitable process of Time.

Hamlet is also associated with attempts to defeat Time on another level in the play. It is inextricably bound up with the love theme. Troilus regards his love for Cressida, like the war over Helen, as a theme of honour: he expresses the wish that love could transcend Time, and become eternal, adding that if this were possible for any woman, it would be possible for Cressida:

"Oh, that I thought it could be in a woman -
As, if it can, I will presume in you -
To feed for aye her lamp and flames of love,
To keep her constancy in slight and youth,
Outliving beauty's outward, with a mind
That doth renew swifter than blood decays!

(III.i.164)

He goes on to speak of his constancy in love in terms strongly reminiscent of those in which he prophesied earlier that the glory of the war would immortalize the name of Troy:

"True swains in love shall in the world to come
Approve their truths by Troilus. When their rhymes,
Full of protest, of oath and big compare,
Sent similes,...
"As true as Troilus" shall crown up the verse
And sanctify the numbers.

(III.i.180)

Although he himself will grow old and die, his name will continue as a symbol for truth and constancy in love, and become immortal, defeating Time. The use of the word sanctify here recalls the use of a similar word, canonize, in his earlier speech, both implying the specifically Christian notion of eternity.

42 It important to remember here, that although the Trojan war belongs to a pre-Christian age, Shakespeare and his audience did not, and a curious dramatic/historical perspective is involved.
Cressida echoes his vow, but in terms which, rather than suggesting a Christian concept, imply a much older notion: that of Time as a destroyer, the central notion of Time as presented throughout the play:

If I be false, or swerve a hair from truth,
When time is old and hath forgot itself,
When waterdrops have worn the stones of Troy,
And blind oblivion swallowed cities up,
And mighty states characterless are grated
To dusty nothing, yet let memory,
From false to false, among false maids in love,
Unbraid my falsehood;  
(III.ii.171)

Cressida commends herself to eternity through memory, rather than through a Christian idea of eternity: but memory is a human faculty, and, as such, subject to Time. Moreover, she commends herself, not as a symbol of truth, but as a symbol of falsehood. Pandarus joins the vows by commending his own name to memory: "let all "itiful goers-between be called to the world's end after my name - call them all Pandars". (III.ii.207) It is interesting to note the choice of words made by the three characters. Troilus commends his name to eternity, a Christian concept implying the total defeat of Time; Cressida hers to memory, a human faculty and therefore imperfect, and to the end of time, after which she sees only oblivion, not eternity; and Pandarus his only to the end of this world. Of these, only eternity is an effective weapon against Time.

The irony, which would instantly be grasped by a Jacobean audience, is that the prophecies do, in a sense come true, but that name does not prove an effective weapon against Time in the way that the characters foresee it. Troilus is
remembered as a symbol of the true lover, but as the true lover who is betrayed because he chose to give his love to a worthless woman. There is no sanctity here, only pity and pathos. "As false as Cressid" does become a commonplace for the treacherous woman; and the term Pandar is still in common usage to suggest a go-between - but more specifically a procurer of customers for a prostitute. But these commonplaces are not eternal: they are subject to men's memories, and men's memories are governed by, not stronger than, Time.

The scene of the vows is echoed later, as the lovers part at dawn, and Cressida is taken away to the Greek camp. Cressida again invokes Time:

Time, force and death
Do to this body what extremes you can,
But the strong base and building of my love
Is as the very centre of the earth,
Drawing all things to it.

(IV.11.107)

Shakespeare's audience, knowing of Cressida's approaching betrayal of her lover, would be instantly aware of the emptiness of her last words, and of the inappropriateness of her image of the magnet, which is powerful and constant. Moreover, the story of Cressida would have been known to this audience, not only in Chaucer's form, but in Henryson's completion of it. In Henryson's poem, *The Testament of Cresseid*, Cressida is cast aside by Diomedes and left to wander the earth as a leper; Time causes her, as she suggests in these lines, to lose her love and her beauty, and has her cast out of society. The final blow is made when the Prince Troilus rides by and, failing to recognize her leprous face, gives her alms. Cressida is finally
punished and destroyed by Time.

But if Time is cruel to Cressida, who has deserved her destruction, it is equally cruel to Troilus. His love affair with Cressida, through which he had such high hopes of transcending Time, proves to be brief and transitory, a single moment in the process of Time. Troilus accuses Time of being a thief, a common cut-purse which, as G. Wilson Knight has pointed out, steals and destroys love moments.

Injurious time now with a robber's haste
Crams his rich thiev'ry up, he knows not how.
As many farewells as be stars in heaven;
With distinct breath and consign'd kisses to them,
He fumbles up into a loose adieu,
And scants us with a single famished kiss
Distasted with the salt of broken tears.

(IV.iv.44)

It is interesting to note that Cressida, in her vow to Troilus calls upon oblivion, rather than eternity, as the end of Time: "When Time is old and hath forgot itself,/ When waterdrops have worn the stones of Troy,/ And blind Oblivion swallowed cities up." (III.ii.192) Oblivion and eternity both imply the ending of Time. In Petrarch's Triumphs, eternity is the only power capable of defeating Time. This is so for Shakespeare, also. Oblivion, on the other hand, implies simply nothingness, loss of memory, the end of all things. For Cressida, oblivion is "blind". For Agamemnon, welcoming Hector to the Greek camp, it is a "formless ruin":

What's past and what's to come is strewed with husks
And formless ruin of oblivion.
But in this extant moment, faith and truth,
Strained purely from all hollow bias-drawing,
Bids thee, with most divine integrity,
From heart of very heart, great Hector, welcome.

(IV.v.166)
Agamemnon experiences. Time only as the moment, at this point. Greece and Troy have been, and will be, at war; but in the present moment, a truce has been called, and Hector can be welcomed as a friend, a person whom Agamemnon loves and admires. There is nothing outside the moment: the time that is past and the time that is to come do not exist: the time when he and Hector were and will be enemies has no existence within the present moment. They belong to oblivion, and are irrelevant to the present moment when he and Hector are friends.

The images which Agamemnon uses to describe oblivion are negative, empty ones: husks, empty shells, and a formless ruin. For Ulysses, speaking of the nature of Time to Achilles, oblivion is a much more alarming notion, it is "a great-sized monster of ingratiations". (III.iii.147) In this speech we are faced, within a compelling set of figures about Time, with a representation that is unfamiliar — that of Time as a beggar collecting alms. This is strongly reminiscent of the Kronos figure, who was associated, not only with age and death, but with abject poverty.

Ulysses speech may be seen as a summation of the whole theme of Time as it is presented in this play. Through a conflation of metaphors, Ulysses proposes the theory of Time as both a destructive process, against which all human weapons are ineffectual, and as a single, isolated moment; and he draws the two threads together so that they may be seen in a single perspective.

The beggar, Time, makes a collection of man's deeds and
creations, which are given to oblivion to devour. Thus, the end of all things is only oblivion, forgetfulness, nothingness. An honourable deed, once over, is instantly forgotten. This is directly relevant to both Achilles and Troilus. Achilles was, in the past, a fine soldier, immensely powerful, and as such, of tremendous value to the Greek army. But he has withdrawn his services, and therefore, Ulysses suggests, can no longer be the subject of praise and honour. His past deeds earn no praise simply because they are in the past, and "To have done is to hang/ Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail/ In monumental mockery." (III.iii.151) Troilus believes that to perpetuate a war which he regards as glorious will immortalize the Trojan, through the memory of their great deeds in battle; but fame of this nature is subject to the memories of men, and men's memories are short. Time erases deeds from men's minds, and they sink into oblivion. Ulysses likens the process to a military charge or an equestrian parade, in which those at the front are in a position of honour, but, should they fall, drop back, they are instantly trampled into the ground by those coming behind. Nothing can escape the process:

    ...let not virtue seek
    Remuneration for the thing it was;
    For beauty, wit,
    High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,
    Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
    To envious and calumniating Time.

    (III.iii.169)

The use of the word envious here, suggestive of a jealously destructive power, recalls Petrarch's "Tryumpe of Tyme":

    I must than last myselfe with a grete zele
Agaynst these men for the wrong that I fele
In doublyng my course to there double harme
For I do envy there fame that is so farme
That after a thousand and a thousand yeares
Theyr high renownme and theyr glory cleues. 43

Here also, Time is bitterly jealous of fame, and deliberately destroys it. Indeed the final vision of Time in Troilus and Cressida is very close to the presentation of personified Time in Petrarch's poem — an alarmingly cruel, deliberately destructive power, and virtually unassailable.

Ulysses goes on to explain the part played by the moment in the process of Time. Because men's memories are short, he says, they can experience only what is actually contained in each single moment of existence — as when Agamemnon disregards the time when Hector was and will be his enemy and is able to greet him as the friend of the moment. The relevance to the question of honour is that men praise only what they see before them. Good deeds which are over pass into memory and thence into oblivion, despite the fact that the present objects of praise may be both the result of, and intrinsically inferior to, those past.

...all with one consent praise newborn gawds,
Though they are made and moulded of things past,
And give to dust that is a littl gilt
More laud than gilt o'erdusted.
The present eye praises the present object.  (III.iii.176)

And the present object soon becomes one of the beggar's alms for oblivion.

Finally, then, it seems that everything the Greeks and

43 Petrarch, op.cit. p.  See also nn.7 & 8, p.3.
Trojans value is subject to, and finally destroyed by, Time. Troilus' view of honour as equivalent to praise bestowed is proved empty and false, for those he praises are shown to be worthless. His love for Cressida, which, he hoped, would transcend Time, is destroyed by it. Hector's honour is deliberately discarded at the expense of his own life and, eventually, of Troy itself. Ulysses' manipulation of honour fails, for Achilles finally rejoins the battle, not for honour, but for revenge. Both fame and love have fallen prey to the common enemy. At the end of the play, there is nothing left for Troilus but constant repetition; on and on, through and through. Nothing is ended; everything simply continues, and will do so until, eventually, Troy falls. Troilus dismisses Pandarus to history: "Hence, broker lackey! Ignominy and shame! Pursue thy life and live aye with thy name!" (V.x.33) and Shakespeare dismisses Troilus to history. The ending would possibly be more final, more conclusive, if we were left only with Thersites' comment on the destruction: "Lechery, lechery! Still wars and lechery! Nothing else holds fashion." (V.ii.156) But we are not, for, in the final analysis, it is also Time which destroys the glory and the honour and the love. Wars and lechery are human, and can be conquered and erased; but the final and ultimate destroyer, Time, is in this play, unassailable.
CHAPTER IV

AION

The Iranian concept of Aion is the most optimistic of the three components of Father Time. Aion is the divine principal of eternal and inexhaustible creativity, suggestive of Time as a force of regeneration and re-creation: spring following winter: the father re-created in the son. It also incorporates the implications of the sixteenth-century commonplace Veritas Filia Temporis. This phrase was used in a variety of contexts and its origin has been the subject of much conjecture. Fritz Saxl suggests that it might have been an adaptation of Psalm 85 vv. 10-11:

10: Vercie and truth shall meet:
righteousness and peace shall kiss one another.

11: Truth shall bud out of the earth,
and righteousness shall loke downe from heaven.

44 It was first used by Johannes Knoblauch of Strassbourg, one of the early Protestants, to signify the emergence of Christian truth from Roman tyranny. Luther adopted it as the legend for his coins, crest and royal seal, implying the release of the "true faith" - Catholicism - from the grip of the Protestant Heresy. And Elizabeth, seeing the legend on a banner during a pageant in honour of her coronation, cried out: "And Time hath brought me hither!" I am indebted for this information to Fritz Saxl, "Veritas Filia Temporis" in Philosophy and Religion, Essays Presented to Ernst Cassirer.

45 Ibid.

This implies the promise of a golden age of eternal peace, when truth will finally come into her own. Amongst all the temporal values, such as love, honour, glory and opinion, which are subject to change and destruction, only truth is constant and unchanging; and will eventually be revealed as such by Time. The most common representation of this idea shows winged Time rescuing Truth a young, naked woman, from her adversary, variously called hypocrisy, calumny and falsehood, who sports a stream of evil venom at her.

The last plays, or Romances, show an interesting development in Shakespeare’s attitude towards Time. All three of the aspects of Time contributing to the development of the Father Time figure are present: the opportunist, who misses opportunity; Time as destroyer. But it is the concept of Aion which predominates. In the last plays, Time is essentially a healing power, a regenerative power, and the revealer of goodness and truth.

In The Winter’s Tale the concept of Kairos is embodied, in differing ways, in the characters of Autolycus and Paulina. Autolycus is indeed the opportunist par excellence: he makes his living by tricks which demand the grasping of every opportunity, and exquisite precision of timing. Autolycus’ character, however, is vastly different from those of the opportunists discussed in Chapter II. He is essentially a "bad" character - a thief and a confidence trickster - but he is by no means malicious. He entirely lacks Iago’s sadistic pleasure in causing the suffering of others. He is, in fact, rather likeable: a rogue,
but not a villain.

It is significant to note that the victims of Autolycus' tricks suffer no ill-effects. His duping of the Clown in Act IV is presented as a comical incident, with the Clown as a figure of fun rather than the victim of evil. Moreover, no further mention is made of the incident; we never hear that the Clown has suffered through the loss of his nurse, and he is certainly in high spirits by his next appearance. The incident at the sheep-shearing celebration is treated in a similar manner. The emphasis is laid, not on the fact that the rustics are being robbed, but on their enjoyment of Autolycus' visit and his ballads. Autolycus has a blithe acceptance of the grace of Fortune in his life. He is neither overly dependent on her, nor dismissive:

If I had a mind to be honest, I see Fortune would not suffer me. She drops booties in my mouth. I am courted now with a double occasion, gold and a means to do the Prince my master good, which who knows how that may turn back to my advancement? (IV.iv.561)

And he succeeds, for his contrivance in taking the old Shepherd and his son aboard the boat is actually instrumental in bringing about the final reconciliation.

Paulina's opportunism is different again, both from Autolycus' and, say, Iago's or Macbeth's. Like Iago, she is characterized by clarity of thought and precision of timing and action; her motives, however, are entirely pure. Paulina is the opportunist for good. The birth of Hermione's child shows her a possible chance of reconciling Hermione and Leontes, and when this attempt fails, she calmly awaits further opportunities.
She acts swiftly and decisively on Hermione's collapse at her trial to bring Leontes to true penance for his jealousy and cruelty. And, of course, it is Paulina who is principally instrumental in reconciling Hermione with her penitent husband.

In this play, then, the opportunist takes on an entirely new aspect. His potential for evil is diminished. The so-called "evil" or self-seeking opportunist has neither the power nor the desire to harm. His actions are mere mischief, and his character that of an attractive rogue. And we are presented for the first time with a totally unfamiliar version of the opportunist: the one who works for and achieves laudable results.

There is a predominance of imagery concerned with disease and sickness in the first three acts of the play which recalls Kronos' association with age, infirmity and decay. For example, Camillo warns Polixenes of his plight in metaphors of infection and contagion:

There is a sickness
Which puts some of us in distemper, but
I cannot name the disease. And it is caught
Of you that yet are well.
(I.ii.384)

And we are indeed witnessing here the decay of something which was fine and beautiful, in the same way that in Troilus and Cressida we are called upon to witness the decline and fall of a mighty state. We are faced with the destruction of Leontes' marriage with Hermione and his friendship with Polixenes. Both are emphasised in the earliest part of the play as having been, in the past, pure and holy. Polixenes speaks of his boyhood
with Leontes:

We were as twinned lambs that did frisk i' the sun,
And bleat the one at the other. What we changed
Was innocence for innocence, we knew not
The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dreamed
That any did.  

(I.ii.67)

And Leontes asserts that the only occasion on which Hermione spoke to better purpose than in persuading Polixenes to stay was:

...when

Three crabbed months had soured themselves to death
Ere I could make thee open thy white hand
And clap thyself my love. Then didst thou utter
"I am yours forever."  

(I.ii.101)

Here Leontes describes his marriage as a remedy for the disease of loneliness. When he is convinced of Hermione's adultery, however, he regards it as itself cankered and poisoned:

There may be in the sun
A spider steeped and one may drink, depart,
And yet partake no venom, for his knowledge
Is not infected. But if one present
The abhorred ingredient to his eye, make known
How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,  

With violent hefts. I have drunk, and seen the spider.  

(JI.i.39)

Time, then, has taken its toll on Leontes marriage and his friendship. Both were fine and beautiful, and both have become cankered, diseased and decayed.

In the speech of Time the Chorus at the beginning of Act IV, a transition is made between the sorrowful, decayed world of Sicilia at the time of Hermione's imprisonment and the fresh

47 Spiders were considered to emit a deadly venom. Leontes is suggesting that the cuckold who does not know of his betrayal does not suffer that agonies of a heart poisoned by jealousy. One might compare Leontes language at this point in the play with Othello's as he reacts to the "knowledge" of Desdemona's infidelity. See Othello III.iii.338, et.al.
green, pastoral world of Bohemia sixteen years later. It also marks a transition between two views of Time: the pessimistic view of Time as destroyer, and the optimistic view of Time as a benificent force — a regenerative power, and the revealer of righteousness and truth. A composite view of Time is presented here. He boasts of his power both to create and to destroy: "To o'erthrow law and in one self-born hour/ To plant and o'erwhelm custom." (IV.1.8) He himself, he points out, is constant, ever present and unchanging; it is his effect upon worldly things which gives him his unassailable power:

The same I am, ere ancient'st order was,
Or what is now received. I witness to
The times that brought them in. So shall I do
To the freshest things now reigning, and make stale
The glistering of this present.

(IV.1.10)

Finally, he introduces the latter half of the play by speaking of himself as the revealer of events to come:

...but let Time's news
Be known when 'tis brought forth. A shepherd's daughter
And what to her adheres, which follows after,
Is the argument of Time.

(IV.1.26)

The pastoral world of Bohemia provides a refreshing change after the decayed, diseased world of the Sicilian court. The sheep-shearing scene is set against a background of flowers and sunshine: there is a sense of richness and plenty here, as well as a sense of purity and innocence. Even the bawdiness of Eopha and Dorcas is quaint rather than crude, and the antics

48. This is reminiscent of Iago's comment to Roderigo: "There are many events in the womb of time, which will be delivered." Othello, I.iii.376.
of the Clown and the old Shepherd are engaging in their simplicity. This is a world rejoicing in the bounty of spring and summer after the hardships of winter.

The passage of sixteen years has allowed Perdita to grow from a baby into a delicate and beautiful young woman, outstanding amongst the rustics for her beauty and inherent grace. Perdita is the physical embodiment of the admiring descriptions we have already heard of Hermione in her youth. She is, one might say, almost a reincarnation of Hermione herself. Florizel, according to Leontes, is the image of Polixenes as a young man. And the purity and innocence of their love for each other both suggests the devotion of Leontes and Hermione in the early years of their marriage and contrasts sharply with their relationship as depicted in the first half of the play - cankered and polluted by Leontes' unfounded jealousy.

Paulina's words on hearing Perdita praised are, in a sense, prophetic:

O Hermione,
As every present time doth boast itself Above a better gone, so must thy grave Give way to what's seen now! (V.i.95)

In the purity and nobility of Perdita and Florizel lies the hope of the future. The Oracle shall be fulfilled. Leontes will have an heir, for his lost child is found; and the division between the kingdoms of Sicilia and Bohemia will be healed in the joining of the two young lovers.

Finally, Time completes his act of healing and regeneration by restoring Hermione herself to life and to Leontes. In certain Renaissance representations of Time as revealer, a
winged figure is depicted lifting a veil from a naked woman - "truth. Hermione has throughout the play stood alone as a symbol of chastity and truth: unswervingly loyal to Leontes; patiently patient in the face of his accusations; and proclaimed as chaste by the sacred oracle of Apollo. The final unveiling of her "statue", then, is highly symbolic. It represents the regeneration of goodness and chastity in Sicilia, with the hope of the future embodied in the daughter of Hermione and her young lover. The scene might almost be a tableau, entitled "Veritas Silla Temporis". Time is indeed, at the end of the play, shown to be a power of healing and regeneration, and the revealer of "truth."

The final vision of the "tempest" is equally optimistic. Here again, all three aspects of "time" are present, but it is the concept of "iron" which predominates.

As in the "Winter's Tale", we are presented with a dual representation of the "karios" element: the opportunist for evil, embodied in the malicious Antonio and Sebastian, and also, though to a lesser extent, Alonso, and the opportunist for good. An interesting development has occurred in the treatment of the evil opportunists. The wicked deeds which they have successfully accomplished are now twelve years in the past. We learn of them through Prospero's explanation to Miranda of their arrival on the island and the events which led up to it; but we do not see them take place. They are finished, over, and the time has now come for retribution. On the magic island, moreover, these characters are entirely Otherworldly. The attempt on Alonso's life made by Antonio and Sebastian is stayed by Ariel, who wakes
Gonzalo in time to intercept the villains. Whatever crimes they have committed in the past, then, Antonio and Sebastian are entirely unable to work any kind of mischief on the island.

They are, in fact, subjected to another opportunist, one far more powerful than they themselves are. It is Prospero himself who is the opportunist for good, and it is his power which rules the island. Like the other opportunists discussed, he is characterized by clarity of thought and an awareness of the importance of precision of timing. This is his hour, the hour he has awaited to undo the evil wrought by his brother, and he is swift to recognize it:

By accident most strange, bountiful Fortune,
Now my dear lady, hath mine enemies
Brought to this shore. And by my prescience
I find my zenith doth depend upon
A most auspicious star, whose influence
If now I court not, but omit, my fortunes
Will ever after droop. 49

(I.ii.178)

Like Autolycus, Prospero regards Fortune as his friend and helper. He accepts the role she plays in his life. Like Paulina, he acts only from the purest motives, but he has far more power than Paulina has. She is instrumental in bringing about the reconciliation; Prospero is in full control of the whole operation. There is no thought of revenge in Prospero's mind in his manipulation of the Italian nobles. They have sinned, and should not go unpunished. It is, moreover, time for him to resume his rightful position as Duke of Milan. His punishment is far from cruel. The nobles suffer no harm in the tempest nor on the island, only a temporary confusion and distress. And

49 Cf. Julius Caesar, IV.iii.218-221
once the punishment is done, Prospero is ready with his forgiveness of those who have wronged him; nor does he expose Antonio and Sebastian as traitors to the King.

Like the evil deeds of the self-seeking opportunists, the Kronos element, the element of decay, is also in the past. We hear of the corruption in the courts of Milan and Naples, and we see the characters who embody that corruption, but we do not see the evil itself. This play is not concerned with the decay and destruction of society. The emphasis is upon the reconstruction of a society which is fine and worthwhile. The corruption is purged.

The final vision is entirely optimistic. Prospero's opportunism has succeeded. The malicious characters have either been stripped of their power, like Antonio and Sebastian, or brought to repentance, like Alonso. Prospero, having himself learned much in the way of wisdom and judgment from his time on the island, is ready to return to his dukedom. And there is hope for the future, for the kingdom of Naples and the dukedom of Milan are to be joined by the marriage of Florizel and Miranda. The future is in their hands—in the strength and nobility of Florizel, rigidly tested by Prospero, and in the purity and total innocence of Miranda.

Time, then, has been generous. Twelve years on the enchanted isle have given Prospero new insights, and allowed Miranda to grow up away from the corruption of the court. And the time has now come for that corruption to be erased, and for a new society to grow out of the ruins of the old. Time has destroyed in order to create something better, finer and more noble.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The pattern which emerges, then, leaves little room for doubt that Shakespeare was indeed familiar with these mythological figures and the ideas behind them, and that his exploration of them was both extensive and wholly deliberate. Our conception of Shakespeare the playwright and the man must be extended, enlarged. He was not simply an actor turned playwright, a theatrical man, however brilliant. He was a man of culture, conversant with ancient mythologies, and knowledgeable not only of the ideas behind the myths but also of their representation through the visual arts, their iconography.

There is abundant evidence in the content of his plays and poems to suggest that Shakespeare was indeed interested in the visual arts. Lucrece, for example, in The Rape of Lucrece, needing comfort and sympathy in her distress, finds it in a painting depicting disaster and human suffering as great as her own. The subject of the picture, the sack of Troy, was a popular one with Elizabethan artists, and the detail with which Shakespeare describes it suggests most strongly that his inspiration came from an actual painting rather than pure imagination.

We also know Shakespeare to have had an extremely visual imagination. His imagery has been the subject of much literary analysis: no one would now deny his ability to convey ideas
through pictures drawn with words, pictures which form themselves with startling clarity in the minds of his audience. In his writing on the theme of Time, he first of all creates a vivid image of the Father Time figure and of his three component parts, Kairos, Kronos and Aion. In The Comedy of Errors he actually refers to "the plain bald pate of Father Time himself." (II.i.70) The picture is a composite one, built up of brief, subtle references to the scythe of Time, swift-footed Time, old Time, et al., but the result is easily recognizable as a picture of Father Time himself as he appeared so often in Renaissance art: like Kairos, winged and fleet of foot, and very often accompanied by a finely balanced scale: like Kronos, old and bent, and carrying a scythe: and like Aion, beautiful of expression and accompanied by the zodiac.

It is within this framework that Shakespeare conducts his exploration of the problem of Time as it affects human beings and human artefacts. The limits of the framework, thus clearly defined, lend a purpose and a form to his study which a less structured analysis of such an amorphous topic would have lacked. Each aspect of the Father Time notion is examined in intense detail: Kairos, the brief, decisive moment which marks a turning point in the affairs of men or the development of the universe; Kronos, the theory of Time as cruel destroyer; and Aion, the divine principle of eternal and inexhaustible creativity. Thus an extra dimension is added to the characters and situations in connection with which the theme of Time is explored. Iago is not simply an apparently motiveless villain, but an opportunist.

— See Chapter I, Introduction, p. 4. 
who conforms to a very ancient pattern. Richard II is not
simply a weak and indecisive king: he is the victim of a power
infinitely greater than himself – the power of Kairos in
conjunction with Fortuna.

The question of Time fascinated Shakespeare throughout
his career as a writer, and is present with greater or lesser
significance in all of his works. Inevitably, his attitude
towards Time varies according to his mood, and this is clearly
reflected in his writing. Hence, in Troilus and Cressida, a
nemtistic play written, most probably, at the same time as
the dark Tragedies, it is the cruel and destructive aspect of
Time which is stressed – the Kronos element. Time destroys
honour and glory, as well as love. In the last plays, or
Romances, however, in which Shakespeare is regarded as having
to some extent come to terms with the human condition, it is
the positive power of Time which is emphasised – the Aion
element. Time destroys only to create something finer: it is
the force of healing and regeneration, and of eternal creativity.

Many poets have speculated about the nature and
significance of Time, both before Shakespeare's age and since.
It is a topic which has always been, and will continue to be,
examined and re-examined. It is not surprising that Shakespear
could have displayed an interest in it, just as he has examined
and explored other great and complex ideas which affect human

51 There is a good deal of doubt as to the precise
date of Troilus and Cressida, and no definite conclusions have
yet been reached, the evidence being sufficient only to place it
somewhere between 1603 and 1609. To my mind, the dark nesimistic
mood of the play, and the particular nature of its language would
suggest an approximate date of c. 1604, concurrent with Measure
for Measure (1604) and a little earlier than King Lear (1606).
lives, such as the nature of love and the nature of honour. What is interesting is the way in which he has approached his study, and the insight this gives us into the man himself.

Clearly Shakespeare must be regarded as something more than Greene's "upstart crowe"; something more than an actor turned playwright, a player whose life revolved around the theatre. Despite Ben Jonson's sneering comments about his lack of scholarship, he emerges as a man of culture; whose involvement with the arts embraced a much wider horizon than the theatre. He may have had "smal Latin and lesse Greek", but it becomes increasingly clear that he did have an extensive knowledge of Classical mythology, and of the iconographical representations of the mythical characters and the ideas behind them.
APPENDIX I

THE RAPE OF LUCRECE

The Rape of Lucrece may be regarded as Shakespeare's fullest and most elaborate rhetorical exercise on Time. I have chosen to exclude a consideration of from the main body of this thesis, principally for reasons of space: in treating a subject of this magnitude in a study of this length it has been necessary to limit quite severely the available material. The exclusion of this poem has not, however, been entirely arbitrary.

The Rape of Lucrece is an early poem: it was first entered in the Stationer's Register in May 1594. It is perhaps for this reason that it appears somewhat stereotyped in structure and style and lacks the depth of thought and the intensity with which Shakespeare explores and examines his ideas in the plays — particularly the later plays — and the sonnets.

This is not to say that the thoughts on Time expressed in this poem fail to conform to the pattern created by the iconography of the Father Time figure. Within the poem Shakespeare presents both the notions of Kairos and Kronos. Tarquin, the opportunist who takes advantage of Collatinus' absence from home to rape his wife, the lovely Lucrece, is clearly a figure ruled by Kairos and Fortuna. Indeed, for some moments before entering Lucrece's bedchamber he debates the moral virtue of his action and ends by commending himself to Fortune: "Then Love
and Fortune be my god, my guide!" (1.351) Lucrece, in her
distress, rails against Time and Opportunity who allowed
Tarquin the chance to treat her thus. She describes Opportunity
as Time's servant, in league with Fortune, whose sole purpose
is to cause the innocent to suffer:

O Opportunity, thy guilt is great!
'Tis thou that execut'st the traitor's treason.
Thou set'st the wolf where he the lamb may get-
Whoever plots the sin, thou point'st the season.

She describes Time itself in terms which instantly suggest the
notion of Kronos, though the notion of Aion is also present.
Lucrece says that the purpose of Time should be to end hatred
and falsehood, and to reveal truth:

..... to fine the hate of foes,
To eat up errors by opinion bred,
..... to calm contending kings,
To unmask falsehood and bring truth to light.

but instead he uses his powers:

To fill with wormholes stately monuments,
To feed oblivion with decay of things,
To blot old books and alter their contents,
To pluck the quills from ancient ravens' wings,
To dry the old oak's sap and cherish springs,
To spoil antiquities of hammered steel
And turn the giddy round of Fortune's wheel.

All three aspects of the Father Time figure are present
in The Rape of Lucrece, then: Tarquin, the opportunist, taking
advantage of Collatinus' temporary absence, and both destructive
and creative Time described at some considerable length in
Lucrece's monologue. Lucrece's monologue is long and elaborate,
but that is all. It is a set of rhetorical figures rather than
a thoughtful analysis of the nature and the effects of Time.
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VITA AUCTORIS


1971 B.A. (Hons.) English Language and Literature, University of Reading, Berkshire, England.

1972 Postgraduate Certificate in Education, Oxford University Department of Educational Studies.


1973 - 1974 Graduate Student and Candidate for the degree of Master of Arts, Department of English, University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

1974 Married to Ron A. Riverago I.A., University Chapel of Assumption Church, May 24th.