

THE THEME OF BLOOD-CONSCIOUSNESS IN SHAKESPEARE'S  
PLAYS: THE CLASS-ORIENTED MODIFICATIONS  
OF HIS SOURCES

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In his thirty-seven plays Shakespeare divides all human beings into two genetic groups, the gentry and the base-born. The gentry are technically those who own coats of arms<sup>1</sup>; more significantly, to be gentle is to possess good blood that is in Shakespearean or Elizabethan context the essence and transmitter of human excellence. Hence, the plays' gentle-born characters (excepting degenerate ones) are all endowed with excellent virtues, while the base-born are usually full of vices and shortcomings: the dramatist distinguishes between the two groups in almost all human qualities--such as beauty, intelligence, conscience, sensitivities, and so forth. Accordingly, Shakespeare exhibits a strong aversion to instant gentling, and in no play does he present a cross-class marriage. None of his characters cross the boundary between the two classes, with the single exception of Henry V's plebeian soldiers whom the King gentled on the eve of Agincourt.<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare's class-bias is also obvious in his ways of rewarding and punishing his characters: his gentle-born characters are, unless they are degenerate, almost always rewarded for their blood-derived merits, while their social inferiors are humiliated

if aspiring and unrewarded even if competent within their spheres.

The majority of Shakespeare's critics, especially since the birth of Romanticism, have neglected to study his class-consciousness because of their hostility to (or lack of interest in) hereditary aristocracy. Modern democratic readers, in their exaltation of the common man, resent any attempt to assert class distinctions. Such class words as "gentleman," "madam," and "sir" are now robbed of their original meanings and merely used as public conventions. It is indeed hard for modern admirers of Shakespeare to conceive how the dramatist, one of the world's greatest geniuses, could divide mankind into two fundamentally different kinds of people on the basis of heredity. To be sure, Hamlet appears to generalize on the human condition wholly apart from the gentle-base division when he utters, "What a piece of work is a man!" (Hamlet II.ii.303)

X However, one assumes that in his idealization of mankind Hamlet probably excludes the base-born, for the Prince remarks in disgust that "the toe of the peasant comes so near to the heel of the courtier" (V.i.140-41). It is also wrong to interpret the most eminent heroes in Shakespeare's plays as representative of the human race at large: they are "gentlemen of blood" representing only the superior class in the playwright's gentle-base division of human beings. A X glance at the lists of dramatis personae in his plays shows that Shakespeare allows no plebeian characters of his to

perform any dignified roles showing human grandeur.<sup>3</sup> His heroes are always those who have aristocratic ancestry: in his tragedies, for example, Lear is a king; Hamlet, a prince; Macbeth, a royal kinsman; Antony, one of the three rulers of the Roman Empire; Cleopatra, a queen; and even Othello, in spite of his black skin, declares early in the play that "I fetch my life and being / From men of royal siege" (I.ii.21-2).

Some may attempt to explain away Shakespeare's class-bias by saying that he was merely following the custom of his preceding or contemporary authors. To be sure, many medieval and Elizabethan authors acknowledged the gentle-  
 base division of human society. The Christian treatise Ancren Riwe (ca. 1200) was written for three sisters of noble birth. King Horn (ca. 1250) and Havelok the Dane (ca. 1285) present stories of kings' sons who in spite of sordid environment distinguish themselves from the common people so as eventually to regain their royal positions. Peter Idle in Instructions to His Son (ca. 1445-1450) deplors the blurring of class lines after many noble families became extinct during the Wars of the Roses. Malory's principal characters in Morte Darthur are knights, ladies, and hermits of noble origin. In The Book of the Courtier, Count Baldassare Castiglione restricts the office of courtier to the gentry, for gentlemen were believed not only to derive virtues from heredity but also to regard the reputations of their own families: "it is a great deale less dispraise for

him that is not borne a gentleman to faile in the actes of vertue, then for a gentleman. If he swerve from the steps of his ancestors, hee staineth the name of his familie" (31-2). Count Annibale Romei in The Courtiers Academie similarly suggests, "the noble seemeth borne with a better inclination, and disposition unto vertue, then a plebeian, or one extracted from the common sorte" (185). He also strongly recommends educating the gentry in the liberal arts—which were proper for a liber, a "free man"—and training the base-born in the mechanical arts: "The practice of mechanically and vile trade, is proper to him ignoble, . . . that the life of mechanically artificers is base, degenerating from vertue, and unworthy a civill man" (195). Richard Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity eloquently vindicates the theory and practice of the Church of England, in which the king is not only the civil leader but also legal head of the Church.<sup>4</sup> In The French Academie, a typical Renaissance moral treatise, Pierre de la Primaudaye also states that "Nobilitie (as Aristotle saith) is a glittering excellencie proceeding from ancestours, and an honour that commeth from an ancient linage and stocke" (694). On the other hand, Lodowick Bryskett in A Discourse of Civill Life refers to the multitude as those "whose judgement is so corrupt and crooked, that they cannot discerne what true honor and dignity is" (191). James Cleland in The Institution of a Nobleman sums up the basic aristocratic assumptions of the Elizabethan society:

I grant that not only in respect of our beginning, but of our ending too, we are all equals without difference or superioritie of degrees, all tending alike to the same earth from whence we sprong . . . but in the middle course . . . we are over-runne by our betters and . . . must needes confesse that some excell and are more noble than others. (2)

Nevertheless, the opposed belief in human egalitarianism or a radically different social order also found expression in many works and incidents of both the Middle and Elizabethan Ages. In the popular romance Guy of Warwick (ca. 1300-1350), the plebeian hero, son of a steward, wins the hand of a noble lady (Felice), daughter of the Earl of Warwick. Chaucer in the Clerk's Tale presents a peasant girl (Grisilde) who derives her extraordinary virtues from divine grace. Jack Cade's rebellion of 1450 was a manifestation of the common people's ardent belief in human equality. Anabaptists, another powerful group with levelling ideas, refused bowing to their social superiors, insisting that such a courtesy is due to God only. In the Church the base-born Hugh Latimer could rise to a bishopric, and Thomas Wolsey, the son of a butcher, became a cardinal-archbishop.<sup>5</sup> Thomas More's Utopia is full of egalitarian speculations. Robert Kett's short-lived regime in East Anglia (1549) sought to free all bondmen. The Institucion of a Gentleman discusses the meaning of the word "gentleman" in ethical terms only in spite of its original class

meaning. Marlowe in his Tamburlaine the Great, I & II and Doctor Faustus employs plebeian heroes--one a Scythian Shepherd, the other "born of parents base of stock"--who exemplify human grandeur in spite of their common sin, pride. Moreover, Marlowe in the first Chorus of Doctor Faustus indiscriminately addresses his audience, no doubt including the common people, as "Gentles." William Cornwallis in his Essays speaks of nobility purely in terms of virtue: "nobility and honesty meane al one; and thus may a painefull Artisan be noble, if he follows his vocation painefullly and constantly, he is honest, and so noble" (198). Robert Greene's George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield presents a plebeian hero, a mere pound-keeper, who strikes an earl for the nobleman's misbehavior; more surprisingly, the base-born hero refuses knighthood from the hands of his king, preferring simply to live and die as a yeoman. Moreover, the Puritans were growing in number and power, displaying an ever increasing spirit of resistance to the demands of the crown. Oliver Cromwell was already seventeen years old and John Hampden twenty-two in 1616, when Shakespeare died. In 1649 Charles I was executed, and England launched itself as a commonwealth. Milton in Samson Agonistes presents a plebeian hero whom God raises as an agent to perform His will. Shakespeare, however, was a most obdurate conservative, his plays showing no sympathy for any egalitarian sentiments or movements. In seeking plots for his plays, he avoided as well as he could whatever materials

may advocate human equality; when he sometimes included in his plays any event of such kind--e.g., Cade's rebellion in 2 Henry VI--he often modified the source to make its egalitarian message weakened or disgraced.

Only a small number of readers have noticed Shakespeare's class-bias, although most of them have failed to consider the subject by Elizabethan standards. Walt Whitman points out the anti-democratic spirit of Shakespeare's plays: "there is much in him ever offensive to democracy. . . . I should say Shakespeare is incarnated, uncompromising feudalism in literature" (277). In his controversial and strongly prejudiced treatise Tolstoy on Shakespeare (1906), Count Leo Tolstoy states that Shakespeare's dramas "corresponded to the irreligious and immoral frame of mind of the upper classes of his time" (114). Ernest Crosby in his "Shakespeare's Attitude toward the Working Classes" (1906) enumerates, also disapprovingly, instances of the playwright's class prejudice. M. W. MacCallum in Shakespeare's Roman Plays (1910) argues for the playwright's indifference to "questions of constitutional theory, and his inability to understand the ideals of an antique self-governing commonwealth controlled by all its free members as a body" (518). Albert H. Tolman in "Is Shakespeare Aristocratic?" (1914) takes the neutral position that, although Shakespeare believed that "birth is of small importance in comparison with worth," his "natural affinities were with the court and the nobility" (298).

Leonard Darwin in "Nature and Nurture in Shakespeare's Plays and Elsewhere" (1927) takes the view that "Shakespeare fully realized the importance of inborn qualities; he knew that like tended to produce like" (189). John W. Draper in "Bastardy in Shakespeare's Plays" (1938) finds Shakespeare's plays representing the Elizabethan theory of hereditary virtue that associates base conduct with base birth. E. M. W. Tillyard in The Elizabethan World Picture (1944) sets forth Shakespeare's conservative, hierarchical attitudes toward the world, although in the book he focuses more on the cosmic order than on the ranks of society; in his later work Shakespeare's History Plays (1946), however, Tillyard narrows down his focus to Shakespeare's hierarchical view of human society, identifying the main theme of Shakespeare's history plays as that of "order and chaos, of proper political degree and civil war" (200). In The Crown of Life (1948), G. Wilson Knight brings out in Cymbeline "the prevailing conception of royalty, of royal blood" (161). Curtis B. Watson in Shakespeare and the Renaissance Concept of Honor (1960) observes that Shakespeare "reflects the hierarchical and aristocratic ordering of Elizabethan society in his presentation of character" (182): Shakespeare, for instance, places so much emphasis on pedigree that he "either presents a hero who comes from a noble family or else takes pains to document the fact that the hero has aristocratic ancestry" (176). Herbert Howarth in The Tiger's Heart (1970) argues that Shakespeare's

ambition to rise in social status by securing a gentleman's coat-of-arms led him to develop a "gentle" style that catered to the taste of his aristocratic patrons.<sup>6</sup> Elliot Krieger (1979) in A Marxist Study of Shakespeare's Comedies rejects the "aristocratic" claims to hereditary superiority and accompanying privileges as "fantasy," thus failing to judge Shakespeare's aristocratic characters from an Elizabethan point of view.

The theme of class-consciousness and social hierarchy in Shakespeare's plays finds its fullest expressions so far in David S. Berkeley's Blood Will Tell in Shakespeare's Plays. Unlike other critics, Berkeley provides a unified theory that relates Shakespeare's class-bias to Renaissance physiology so as to indicate that the playwright's gentle-base division of mankind is "rational rather than magical, superstitious, or idiosyncratic" (13). Berkeley is also the first critic who has expounded Shakespeare's treatment of human blood as determinant of human individuals. On the basis of his extensive research on Renaissance physiology, Berkeley states that "The quality, amount, and degree of warmth of the blood make Shakespeare's characters what they are" (14), which he verifies with evidences drawn from various plays of the dramatist. In the same book Berkeley remarks in passing that "Shakespeare's plays always intensify whatever class-consciousness may exist in their primary sources" (7), although he leaves undone a full-length comparison between Shakespeare's plays and their

sources.

The present study, therefore, focuses on Shakespeare's class-oriented modifications of his sources in order to reinforce the rich theme of blood-consciousness and social hierarchy pervading his plays. It analyzes in detail how Shakespeare modified--omitted from, altered, and added to--his primary sources by his preoccupation with the merits of the gentry and the demerits of the base-born. The five plays to be discussed have been carefully selected so as to represent Shakespeare's entire range of plays as well as possible. They include four different periods of Shakespeare's theatrical career and four different kinds of drama that he tried: i. e., Two Gentlemen of Verona, an early comedy; 1 & 2 Henry IV, two early-middle history plays; King Lear, a late-middle tragedy; and The Winter's Tale, a late romance. In addition, most of the other thirty-two plays frequently provide reinforcement. It is hoped that this study will provide a new light on the controversy over whether Shakespeare was a stalwart supporter of aristocracy or a champion of egalitarian liberalism.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare recognizes this custom in The Taming of the Shrew: "And if no gentleman, why then no arms" (II.i.223).

<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare allows this exception probably because of the intractable source-stuff that was too widely known to be deviated from.

<sup>3</sup> Cornwall's First Servant in King Lear, who rises up against his master's evil behavior, is the solitary exception, although even he is merely an incidental character who appears briefly and is forgotten soon.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury under Henry VIII, advocated the divine rights of kings: "All Christian princes have committed unto them immediately of God the whole care of all their subjects, as well concerning the ministration of things political, civil and governance" (Morison 47-8).

<sup>5</sup> Although clergymen, as well as teachers and physicians, had qualifications of being honored with the title of gentleman "by right of university degree" (Berkeley 13), they were considered inferior to "gentlemen by blood." Francis Markham, for instance, observes in The Booke of Honour (1625) that producing a well-qualified gentleman takes many generations. Therefore, the Duke of Buckingham

in Henry VIII understandably hates the upstart Wolsey, calling him "butcher's cur" (I.i.120) and complaining that "A beggar's book [learning] / Outworths a noble's blood" (I.i.123).

<sup>6</sup> According to Howarth, securing a gentleman's coat of arms in Shakespeare's time involved a considerable payment of money and patronage of powerful noblemen, and the dramatist strove very hard to meet both requirements so that he could renew his father's long-pending application for the title (1-23). In 1596 the College of Arms finally made the grant of coat and crest to his father, and Shakespeare became "the son of a gentleman." A. L. Rowse remarks that Shakespeare's applying for the title in his father's name suggests the dramatist's desire to ensure the gentility of his birth (277). If so, one can understand better why Shakespeare, himself gentleman by purchase, should humiliate or ridicule his base-born characters who dream of being gentlemen: e. g., Malvolio in The Twelfth Night and the Shepherd and the Clown in The Winter's Tale.

## CHAPTER II

### TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA and DIANA ENAMORADA: SHAKESPEARE'S CLASS-ORIENTED MODIFICATIONS OF HIS SOURCE

In his pioneering work Blood Will Tell in Shakespeare's Plays, David S. Berkeley observes that "Shakespeare is the arch-conservative, the most obdurate insister . . . on the merits of the gentry and the demerits of the base-born" (7). Two Gentlemen of Verona, although Berkeley does not discuss the play in as much detail as he does others, strongly expresses Shakespeare's class bias, his belief that the gentry are born with better human qualities than the base-born. However, most critics of the play have paid little attention to its theme of class-consciousness; even some who have noticed class matters in the play do not go further than mentioning that it is about how to educate gentlemen.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, no critic seems to have realized that comparing the play with its primary source, Jorge de Montemayor's Diana Enamorada,<sup>2</sup> would help illuminate Shakespeare's persistent theme of the merits of blood in the social hierarchy.

Source study of Two Gentlemen of Verona has been sparse, perhaps because of the play's unpopularity with many critics. Geoffrey Bullough identifies a list of changes

Shakespeare made as he reworked Diana Enamorada into the play--but without finding any rationale for the modifications (1: 206). Kenneth Muir believes that Shakespeare's variations from his source reveal the playwright's intention of "satirizing romantic ideals of love and friendship" (18).<sup>3</sup> Contrary to Muir, Jack A. Vaughn aptly observes that Shakespeare, in adapting Diana to the demands of the stage, "created a comedy that conforms to the literary traditions of courtly love, honor, and male friendship" (34)<sup>4</sup>; however, Vaughn fails to notice or lacks interest in class implications of those traditions. I should like to argue that Shakespeare's blood-consciousness had a great impact on his modifications of Montemayor's pastoral romance. In Two Gentlemen Shakespeare assigns only to his highborn characters the aristocratic ideal of courtly love that is commonly practiced by both aristocrats and plebeians in Diana. Shakespeare also highlights the aristocratic cult of male friendship that is of little significance in his source. Furthermore, Shakespeare makes much use of his lower-class characters, who either are absent or appear very briefly in Diana, in order to distance the gentry and the base-born in various human qualities or indeed to provide foils in love, friendship, appearance, speech, chastity, and so forth.

Courtly love (amour courtois) was an ideal observed mostly by aristocratic lovers as the tradition took its root in courts. C. S. Lewis observes that the "ritual" of

courtly love is "felt to be part and parcel of the courtly life . . . flower and seed of all those noble usages which distinguish the gentle from the villein" (The Allegory of Love 2). Chrétien de Troyes's Lancelot and Yvain, flowers of the courtly-love tradition, do not resist their passion because, as Lewis aptly notes, "It is only the noblest hearts which Love deigns to enslave" (32). Both Chrétien de Troyes and Andreas Capellanus were influenced by noble ladies in composing their famous works on courtly love. Chrétien himself tells that in writing The Knight of the Cart (sometimes called Lancelot) the Countess of Champagne furnished him with both the subject matter and the manner of treatment so that he mainly carried out her desire and intention (Parry's introduction to Capellanus' The Art of Courtly Love, 14). Andreas Capellanus, in dealing with various love cases in his curious treatise The Art of Courtly Love bases his judgments on the decisions given by several noble ladies who actively propagandized the code of courtly love throughout Europe--to name some of them, the Countess of Champagne, Queen Eleanor, Lady Ermengarde of Narbonne, and the Countess of Flanders (167-77). Andreas's class-bias is obvious when he disapprovingly comments on the love of peasants:

. . . it is not expedient that they [peasants] should be instructed in the theory of love, lest while they are devoting themselves to conduct which is not natural to them the kindly farms

which are usually made fruitful by their efforts may through lack of cultivation prove useless to us. (149-50)

Andreas further comments that it is unfortunate to fall in love with peasant women because it is hard to "soften their outward inflexibility" (150), and Lewis tersely concludes that "Courtesy demands that the lover should serve all ladies, not all women" (The Allegory of Love 35).

Although courtly love was thus a predominantly aristocratic ideal, Montemayor's Diana, a pastoral romance full of love affairs, exemplifies an egalitarian attitude in assigning many features of courtly love to plebeian lovers; indeed, the majority of lovers in the story are shepherds and shepherdesses whose daily occupation is to feed their sheep.<sup>5</sup> Its main plot relates the loves of the shepherd Sireno--who, according to Ernest Mérimée, seems to be Montemayor himself (200)--and the shepherdess Diana, after whose name the book is entitled (Shakespeare's entitling the play as Two Gentlemen is another sign of his class-consciousness). Montemayor interweaves the main plot with various episodes involving many other lovers who are also shepherds and shepherdesses except for the couple of Don Felix and Felismena. All these lovers, gentle or base in birth, more or less reveal symptoms and manners of courtly love.<sup>6</sup> For instance, Sireno's love for Diana is accompanied by great emotional disturbances, a typical symptom of courtly love: he is "incapable of Content, his Visage



"heart sick with thought" (I.i.69). Although Julia is unmarried,<sup>8</sup> all such symptoms as Proteus shows earlier in the play are unmistakably those of a languishing courtly lover. Shakespeare in Two Gentlemen creates another gentleman lover, Valentine, who does not exist in his source. Valentine, as his name suggests, is an epitome of courtly love (except that he does not court a married woman). Although Valentine at first disregards love, his later experience--his falling in love with Silvia at the court of Milan--transforms him into a suffering courtly lover:<sup>9</sup>

I have done penance for contemning Love,  
Whose high imperious thoughts have punish'd me  
With bitter fasts, with penitential groans,  
With nightly tears, and daily heart-sore sighs

(II.iv.129-32)

Moreover, Valentine's attitudes to his lady are all courtesy. He greets Silvia in a most courteous manner: "Madam and mistress, a thousand good morrows" (II.i.96). Calling Silvia "a heavenly saint" (II.iv.145), he almost worships her as if she were a goddess when he wishes Julia to bear Silvia's train "lest the base earth / Should from her vesture chance to steal a kiss" (II.iv.161-62). On her part, Silvia addresses her suitor as "servant" (cavalier servente), requiring painful tasks from him. Valentine, as a dutiful vassal obeys his lord, faithfully performs the heartbreaking task of writing for Silvia a love letter to a

man she, supposedly, loves. Perhaps the strongest sign of Valentine's perfection as a courtly lover is his constancy, for which he is amply rewarded at the end: he remains faithful to Silvia in spite of all obstacles and finally wins her.

Besides the code of courtly love, Shakespeare introduces into Two Gentlemen another aristocratic tradition, the "cult" of male friendship that is of little significance in his source. The ideal of male friendship had been highly valued as a gentlemanly pursuit since antiquity. Lewis observes that "to the Ancients, Friendship seemed the happiest and most fully human of all loves; the crown of life and the school of virtue" (Four Loves 87). Lewis goes further to say that friendship, being "eminently spiritual," is "the sort of love one can imagine between angels" (111). The tradition of male friendship can be traced back to the story of David and Jonathan, which, being biblical, must have had special authority in Shakespeare's time. Socrates also glorified friendship speaking of its offspring as "fairer and more immortal" than ordinary human children begotten of erotic love (Plato's Symposium, 169). Cicero valued friendship as "our best source of goodness and of happiness" among "all the gifts the gods have given us" (On Friendship 67). This tradition had a special vogue when Shakespeare was writing, probably because of revived knowledge of classical authors. Many prominent Elizabethan writers, whose works might have influenced Shakespeare in

Two Gentlemen, claimed the supremacy of male friendship over romantic love. Sir Thomas Elyot's The Governour (1531) presents the story of Titus and Gisippus whose friendship triumphs over love, Gissipus yielding his lady (Sophronia) up to his friend. Lyly's Endimion also features the priority of friendship over love as Eumenides forgoes the love of his lady in order to save his friend; Lyly then contrasts the ephemerality of heterosexual love with permanence of friendship: "Love is but an eye-worme . . . . friendshippe is the image of eternitie" (III.iv.123-25). Castiglione in The Book of the Courtier enjoined the courtier to have a sincere and intimate friend whom he would love until death (104). In brief, the sentiment of male friendship was considered the noblest of all gentlemanly ideals, surpassing even courtly love.

In Diana we notice a trace of friendship in a conversation between Sireno and Sylvanus, both suitors of Diana. Sylvanus once tells his rival that "the Tenderness she [Diana] has expressed for you, creates in me an inviolable Friendship"; admiring Sylvanus's generosity, Sireno replies, "I am so sensible of thy Merit, that I almost blame Diana for not having treated thee better" (143). However, except for this conversation, we hardly find in Diana any incident that has a slightest hint of friendship, whereas in Two Gentlemen Shakespeare employs it as a major theme. Moreover, Shakespeare assigns this ideal of friendship, as he does with that of courtly love, to his

gentle characters only. Valentine, Shakespeare's invention, is not only a model of courtly love, but also an exemplar of friendship. When the Duke announces his friend Proteus's arrival at the court of Milan, Valentine exclaims, "Should I have wish'd a thing; it had been he" (II.iv.82). Valentine even forgives Proteus's betrayal of friendship as soon as the latter repents. Furthermore, most surprisingly to many readers, Valentine offers his lady Silvia to his friend who has attempted to rape her a moment ago: "that my love may appear plain and free, / All that was mine in Silvia I give thee" (V.iv.82-83). Many critics have condemned this scene as absurd and improbable, some of them even claiming that this passage was written as burlesque.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, however clumsy Shakespeare's treatment of this scene may be from a dramatic point of view, Valentine's offer of Silvia to Proteus expresses the playwright's great regard for the aristocratic ideal of male friendship, for the sake of which he sacrifices for once courtly love--which he otherwise values as another aristocratic ideal throughout the play--as well as other dramatic requirements such as plausible plots and consistent characterization; John Vyvyan aptly notes that in Two Gentlemen "he [Shakespeare] was prepared, when necessary, to sacrifice theatrical effect to his philosophic purpose" (98). Furthermore, Valentine's act of friendship, overgenerous in modern understanding, finds its parallels not only in such contemporary Elizabethan works as mentioned above, but also in other Shakesperean plays in which the

priority of friendship over other ideals is emphasized: Bassanio in The Merchant of Venice, in order to save Antonio's life, is willing to give up not only his own life, but also "a wife / Which is as dear to me as life itself" (IV.i.282-4); in Twelfth Night Antonio loves Sebastian so devotedly that he runs the risk of being taken prisoner by accompanying the latter in Illyria; furthermore, in his Sonnet 40, Shakespeare invites his friend, who is also his rival in love, to "take all my loves," rather than endanger their friendship (The Riverside Shakespeare 1756).

Importantly, in Shakespeare such incidents are always restricted to the gentry only; in the entire canon of Shakespeare, we find no single base-born character who sacrifices himself for his friend. Although some critics view Launce, Proteus's servant, as sacrificing himself for his dog Crab,<sup>11</sup> his sufferings for the sake of the dog should not be taken seriously; they are primarily comic in nature, and Launce's decision to give Crab to Silvia as a substitute for the lost dog makes us doubt the sincerity of his feeling for Crab.

A question may arise. If Shakespeare in Two Gentlemen assigns those aristocratic ideals of courtly love and male friendship to his upper-class characters only, why does he make Proteus, a principal character of gentle birth, a betrayer of love and friendship? First of all, Don Felix in Diana (Proteus's prototype) betrays his first lady, and Shakespeare could not change this fact that provides the

play with "obstacles" without which, as Gareth L. Evans points out, Shakespeare's romance "cannot achieve its fullness" (53). Still, Shakespeare, in order to mitigate this ungentlemanly behaviour of the gentleman, names him Proteus, after the Greek god who could change his shape at will, because any person of that name, gentle or base, would be more readily excused for his or her inconstancy than others. Moreover, his inconstancy in love and friendship is a temporary lapse of his otherwise admirable personality. Except for the period of his infatuation with Silvia, he is a faithful lover and constant friend as in both the beginning and the end of the play. For instance, Proteus's farewell speech to Valentine early in the play is a moving expression of friendship:

Wilt thou be gone? Sweet Valentine, adieu,  
 Think on thy Proteus, when thou, happ'ly, seest  
 Some rare noteworthy object in thy travel.  
 Wish me partaker in thy happiness  
 When thou dost meet good hap; and in thy danger  
 (If ever danger do environ thee)  
 Commend thy grievance to my holy prayers,  
 For I will be thy beadsman, Valentine.

(I.i.11-18)

His love of Silvia at first sight is, indeed, comparable to Romeo's sudden infatuation with Juliet, which causes him to renounce Rosaline. And falling in love at first sight, as Berkeley shows in detail in his Blood Will Tell, is "an

experience reserved in the Shakespearean plays for persons of gentle birth" (25): Proteus's using such images as "heat" and "fire" (II.iv. 191,202) in describing his love of Silvia well accords with Berkeley's proposition, thus suggesting the excellent quality of Proteus's blood in spite of his temporary degeneracy.<sup>12</sup> Finally, as shown in his repenting of his faults, he is capable of acting on his own moral judgments, which no base-born characters in Shakespeare are capable of with the single exception of Cornwall's First Servant in King Lear<sup>13</sup>: after receiving Valentine's forgiveness, Proteus makes a sound moral comment that "were man / But constant, he were perfect; that one error / Fills him with faults; makes him run through all th' sins" (V.iv.110-12). To sum up, Proteus, though a temporarily debased gentleman, possesses better human qualities than the base-born, for which he is amply rewarded by regaining both his love and friendship in the end.

In contrast to Two Gentlemen, servants' roles in Diana are of little significance. To begin with, its shepherded-shepherdess lovers, being plebeians themselves, have no servants at all; the only noble couple of Don Felix and Felismena, whose story Shakespeare adopted as the main plot of his play, have servants--Rosina and Fabius, respectively. Shakespeare does not change the character of the heroine's maidservant: Lucetta is the same wily, comical woman as Rosina. However, Launce is a remarkable growth from Fabius, who does little more than recommend Felismena, disguised as

Valerio, as Don Felix's page. Launce and Speed (Valentine's servant invented by Shakespeare) provide important foils to their masters' attitudes to love and friendship; through the two servants, one developed from the source and the other invented, Shakespeare presents a remarkable contrast between the gentry and the base-born in practicing love and friendship. The two servants, along with the milkmaid, another invented character, also provide a sharp contrast between the two classes in other human qualities such as appearance, speech, and behaviour.

First of all, in the play the two servants have practical attitudes toward love in contrast to their masters' romantic code of courtly love. Whereas Valentine idealizes and worships Silvia, Launce's interest in the milkmaid is determined by his practical concerns: Launce plans to marry her because of her homely skills such as milking, brewing, sewing, knitting, washing, scouring, and spinning (III.i.263-384). Launce also considers money the most important criterion in marriage. As long as he can control the milkmaid's money, Launce does not mind whatever faults she has: when she is described as having "more wealth than faults," Launce replies, "Why, that word makes the faults gracious" (III.i.367-68). Speed, like Launce, is too much concerned with his practical (or physical) needs to regard his master's romantic attitude to love: when Valentine says, "I have din'd," meaning that he has feasted on Silvia's beauty, Speed replies, "Ay, but hearken, sir;

though the chameleon Love can feed on the air, I am one that am nourish'd by my victuals, and would fain have meat" (II.i.171-74). Thus, Shakespeare assigns practical ways of love to his base-born characters who are usually too busy about survival to indulge any idealism.

Another contrast between classes in the play involves friendship. Whereas Valentine and Proteus, except for the period of the latter's temporary villainy, exemplify the aristocratic cult of male friendship, Launce and Speed hardly share such noble sentiments with each other. When Speed welcomes Launce to Milan, Launce seems to be more interested in quenching his thirst with ale than exchanging any friendly talks with Speed (II.v.).<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, contrary to Valentine's generous forgiveness of Proteus's great offense, Launce in a return for a small offense deliberately causes Speed to be punished. After detaining Speed, who should have joined his master immediately, Launce rejoices at the prospect of Speed's punishment: "Now will he be swing'd for reading my letter--an unmannerly slave, that will thrust himself into secrets. I'll after, to rejoice in the boy's correction" (III.i.382-84). It is hard to imagine that any classical or Elizabethan exemplars of friendship would rejoice over their friends' sufferings.

Physical appearance is another sign of class distinction in Shakespeare's plays<sup>15</sup>; Shakespeare in Two Gentlemen, unlike Montemayor in Diana, assigns physical beauty to his upper-class characters only. In Diana there

is only one incident in which one's physiognomy is associated with his or her social class. In Book VII, Montemayor contrasts the gentle-born Felismena, whose beauty strikes others (266), with two shepherdesses (Zelinda and Eglea) "who might justly be stil'd pretty, tho' they were no Beauties; their Complexions were very brown, and tho' their Features were somewhat irregular; yet they were altogether very agreeable" (264). However, the paragon of beauty in Diana is not the noble-born Felismena, but the shepherdess Diana, whose presence "enriches all the world with beauty" (138). However, in Two Gentlemen, we find no handsome plebeians, male or female, whereas its gentlemen and ladies are invariably handsome. Silvia's beauty is so excellent as to cause Proteus to desert his first love and betray his friend. Julia, even when disguised as a man, cannot hide her beauty and inborn qualities: Proteus employs her as his page "chiefly for thy face and thy behaviour, / Which (if my augury deceive me not) / Witness good bringing up, fortune, and truth" (IV.iv.67-69). Proteus, Valentine tells us, "is complete in feature and in mind / With all good grace to grace a gentleman" (II.iv.73-74). And the outlaws ask Valentine to become their chief because he is "beautified / With goodly shape . . . and a man of such perfection" (IV.i.53-55).<sup>16</sup> On the contrary, the three base-born characters of the play are either ugly or plain. Because of Launce's unhandsome features and clownish behavior, Julia, disguised as Sebastian, replaces him as Proteus's messenger

to Silvia. The milkmaid must be ugly with no teeth and with her "sour breath" (III.i.328).<sup>17</sup> The outlaws, in their first encounter with Valentine and Speed, immediately recognize Valentine as a "proper man" (IV.i.10) with handsome features; however, they completely ignore Speed, probably because his appearance does not recommend him as a person worthy to be addressed. It is thus obvious that Shakespeare in this play, as is usual in his entire canon, distinguishes the gentry from the base-born by their physical appearances.

In Diana we find no differences between aristocrats and plebeians in their manners of speech; both classes, including Don Felix's servant Fabius, use the same level of vocabulary and tone. In Two Gentlemen, however, the quality of a person's speech definitely marks his or her class, probably because fine speech was an important criterion of the Elizabethan gentleman. Slight notices that the verbal wit exchanged by Valentine and Proteus in the opening scene exemplifies what Castiglione in The Courtier requires of a gentleman--that is, "merry conceits and jestes" gracing "the conversation of the perfect courtier" (15). In the opening scene the two gentlemen debate the merits of love:

Pro. Yet writers say: as in the sweetest bud  
 The eating canker dwells, so eating love  
 Inhabits in the finest wits of all.

Val. And writers say: as the most forward bud  
 Is eaten by the canker ere it blow,  
 Even so by love the young and tender wit

Is turn'd to folly, blasting in the bud,

(I.i.42-48)

Here Valentine uses the same words as Proteus uses ("bud" and "canker") to attack his friend with his own weapon, a skill highly recommended for courtly conversation by Castiglione (Slight's 16). Moreover, Valentine is able to speak foreign languages, which would grace his speech even more, and thus called by the outlaws "A linguist, and a man of such perfection" (IV.i.55). Valentine once himself emphasizes the importance of courtly speech to the Duke of Milan: "That man that hath a tongue, I say is no man, / If with his tongue he cannot win a woman" (III.i.104-5). More importantly, Valentine and Proteus speak in verse, though their servants speak in prose. Milton Crane comments on the class implication of Shakespeare's use of prose in the play: "The romantic plot of the two gentlemen and their mistresses is in verse; the comic byplay of the masters with their servants, and particularly that between the servants, is in prose" (70); prose in the play, Crane adds, is thus "restricted to clowns, and to nobles when they disport themselves with clowns" (72). Furthermore, Shakespeare fills the servants' prose with numerous bawdy lines. E. A. M. Colman notices how high a portion of bawdy lines Shakespeare gives to the two servants: "Of the twenty-six or twenty-seven lines that can be reasonably considered either bawdy or quasi-bawdy, twenty are shared between the two clowns, Speed and Launce" (31). Shakespeare thus juxtaposes

the servants' bawdy language in prose with the masters' courtly speech in verse. In addition, Launce is a bungler whose tongue goes against his heart, as he says that he will not say something but actually says it: "He lives not now that knows me to be in love, yet I am in love . . . but what woman, I will not tell myself; and yet 'tis a milkmaid" (III.i.265-69). Finally, Launce's malapropism, such as "the prodigious son" (II.ii.3), also reveals his base origin.

Another criterion of class distinction in the play involves the female virtues of chastity or constancy. ✓  
 Throughout Shakespeare's canon, chastity and faithfulness to one lover are predominant virtues of his gentle-born heroines (e.g., Imogen in Cymbeline and Isabella in Measure for Measure); on the other hand, his lower-class female characters are often loose in their sexual behaviour (e.g., the nurse in Romeo and Juliet and Audrey in As You Like It). This association of classes with female virtues, according to Berkeley and Karimipour, explains why Polixenes objects so much to his son's marriage to the supposedly lowly shepherdess Perdita: "the King would suppose her to be rolling round her body another man's blood or bloods of several origins, a situation that would in some sense illegitimize the prince that she and Florizel would produce" (92). In Two Gentlemen the two heroines, Julia and Silvia, equally epitomize the virtues of chastity and constancy. They are faithful to their first lovers: both leave their homes to join their lovers at the risk of all possible

dangers, and Julia even persists in loving her unfaithful lover. On the other hand, the lowly milkmaid, Shakespeare's addition to his source, appears to be loose in her sexual behaviour as she is reported to have such vices as "sweet mouth" and being "too liberal," both of which imply her wantonness (III.i.327,348). However, Launce does not seem to mind her wanton behaviour as long as he controls her money (III.i.350-52). In Shakespeare's time, for a servant like Launce, contrary to his social betters, chastity was apparently a less important consideration than such practical matters as money in choosing a wife.

Some questions may arise over two other gentlemen of the play, Eglamour and Thurio, because they behave basely in spite of their apparent gentle birth. Many critics have viewed Eglamour's sudden change in character as a serious blunder of Shakespeare's characterization, for he appears to be two quite different persons. Eglamour has had a good reputation for his gentlemanlike behaviour--he is known to be a courageous knight (IV.ii.13) and an exemplary lover (IV.ii.18-21)--until he suddenly reveals cowardice by fleeing from the outlaws instead of protecting Silvia from them. Perhaps Shakespeare had to dismiss Eglamour as soon as the knight brings the heroine to the forest, for the plot requires that Silvia be left alone at the mercy of Proteus whose following villainy then would be discovered by Valentine; Eglamour's presence would have complicated such movements of the plot. Therefore, it is possible to assume

that Shakespeare, for the convenience of his plotting, disposed of this functionary at the expense of consistent characterization. Besides, Shakespeare may have neglected Eglamour's character because he is merely a minor character who appears very briefly in the play. The other "ungentlemanly" gentleman in the play is Thurio, who resembles base-borns in so many aspects that one comes to strongly suspect the truth of his family origin. He shows no single gentlemanly trait, but is full of base qualities: he is a coward (IV.ii.21, V.iv.132-34); he lacks skills in speech (IV.ii.18); his skin is dark(IV.ii.10), another sign of base origin in Shakespeare<sup>18</sup>; he is often called a "fool" (II.iv.174, IV.ii.24) or "ass"(IV.ii.28), again often a code word for base-borns in Shakespearean plays.<sup>19</sup> His only merit is his wealth which, we strongly suspect, may have purchased his knighthood. Like Sir Andrew in Twelfth Night, Sir Thurio is one whose title cannot hide his nature that appears to have derived from his originally base blood.

In sum, in Two Gentlemen Shakespeare's class bias determines his modifications of Diana. In this play, Shakespeare assigns the aristocratic ideal of courtly love only to his upper-class characters, although all lowly shepherds and shepherdesses in Diana are more or less courtly lovers. Shakespeare introduces into the play another aristocratic ideal--male friendship--that is hardly emphasized in Diana, and again reserves it for his gentle characters. Shakespeare also creates new characters to

highlight class distinction: Valentine is an epitome of aristocratic virtues, and Speed and the milkmaid are representative of base qualities. For the same purpose, Shakespeare transforms Fabian, who appears very briefly in Diana, into the much-developed Launce, who exemplifies plebeianism in so many ways.

In the play Shakespeare thus divides men on a genetic basis of the gentry and the base-born and then endows both groups with different human qualities according to their different blood qualities. He does not allow such base-born characters as Launce, Speed, and the milkmaid to have any admirable qualities, which their social betters-- Valentine, Proteus, Julia, and Silvia--possess: namely, romantic love, ideal friendship, physical beauty, fine speech, chastity, and so on. Shakespeare also rewards all his gentle-born characters for their fine qualities by restoring their love and friendship in harmony. However, he does not do the same for his non-armigerous characters, supposing that their base qualities do not deserve any reward. This play then is neither a burlesque of romantic ideals of love and friendship, nor an expression of egalitarianism, which in the fashion of Molière admires witty servants for criticizing their social betters. Shakespeare, firm in the medieval and Renaissance tradition of viewing blood quality in terms of social hierarchy, always sees that blood quality determines what his characters are and how they behave.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Thomas A. Perry observes that the play posits courtly sophistication as its educational ideal (40); Camille W. Slight interprets Two Gentlemen as an "exploration of the nature and function of a gentleman" (15).

<sup>2</sup> Most critics (such as Geoffrey Bullough 205-6; Kenneth Muir 17; Jack A. Vaughn 34; Issac Asimov 465) view Diana as the ultimate source of Two Gentlemen, although no one is certain as to which version of the Spanish romance Shakespeare may have used. According to Bullough, Shakespeare may have read the original in Spanish or Nicolas Collin's French translation or Bartholomew Yonge's English version, or he may have seen a lost play entitled The History of Felix and Feliomena (206).

<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Harold C. Goddard views Two Gentlemen as "excellent burlesque of gentlemanly manners and morals" (1: 46), and William Rosky claims that "The major pattern of Two Gentlemen remains . . . burlesque" (218).

<sup>4</sup> Vaughn's is the most prevalent position among critics: John Vyvyan, for instance, finds in the play a harmonious resolution of the conflict between friendship and love (98); Philip Edwards also finds in the play's conclusion the harmony between friendship and love (96); Paul R. Thomas focuses more on friendship as he views the

play as presenting "the Renaissance notion of the 'amitie' or ideal friendship between two men" (187).

<sup>5</sup> Diana, as is usual in the tradition of pastoral romance, may deal with some real personages--aristocrats--disguised as shepherds and shepherdesses. Shakespeare, however, does not seem to have followed that tradition, for his shepherds and shepherdesses are usually realistically drawn: the Shepherd in The Winter's Tale is a lowly peasant full of base qualities, although Perdita appears as a model of gentility because her real identity is not a shepherdess but a princess; Phoebe in As You Like It, a shepherdess who is scornful of her suitor, is harshly reproached by Rosalind who speaks for the author in this case ("'Tis such fools as you / That makes the world full of ill-favor'd children" [III.v.52-53]), although any proud shepherdess in Diana is never so disgracefully treated.

<sup>6</sup> Lewis divides numerous characteristics of courtly love into "Humility, Courtesy, Adultery, and the Religion of Love," each of which he describes as follows: the lover should obey his lady's "lightest wish, however whimsical"--"a service of love closely modelled on the service which a feudal vassal owes to his lord"; "only the courteous can love, but it is love that makes them courteous"; it is adulterous love because the lover normally addresses a married woman; finally, it is a pseudo-religion in which the lover worships the God of Love (2-3). One might add to Lewis's list some more characteristics of courtly love (as

derived from various sources such as Ovid, Troubadour poetry, and Andreas) such as the lover's emotional disturbances, his constancy, and his idolization of his lady.

<sup>7</sup> All quotations from Shakespeare come from The Riverside Shakespeare.

<sup>8</sup> In Two Gentlemen Shakespeare eliminates the adulterous element of courtly love, probably because the play presents love as "an honorable undertaking the end of which is holy matrimony" (Vaughn 38).

<sup>9</sup> Courtly love had a considerable influence on the Petrarchan convention (The Allegory of Love 3) that expressed in extravagant terms the charm of the beloved and the suffering and despair of the lover.

<sup>10</sup> Michel Grivelet mentions that George Eliot, in a spirit of feminism, "was disgusted with a work [Two Gentlemen] in which two girls could be treated so shamefully by their lovers" (31); David Daniell condemns the play, "above all the absurdity of the last 118 lines, containing a succession of emotional nonsenses from the two heroes" (104-5); Anne Barton observes that the play's last scene is so disastrous--so brusque in the movement of plot and "so destructive of the relationships of the characters as they have been developed" (The Riverside Shakespeare 143); William Rossky views this scene as a farce that makes Valentine's offer of his lady--his "adherence to a false code," as Rossky puts it--appear ridiculous (219).

<sup>11</sup> Anne Barton, for instance, observes that "Launce's real devotion, his gestures of genuine self-sacrifice, are reserved for Crab, his dog" (The Riverside Shakespeare 145).

<sup>12</sup> For an Elizabethan sanguinary theory of mutual love at first sight, see Blood Will Tell, pp. 25-26.

<sup>13</sup> This peasant at the risk of his life attacks his master Cornwall when the latter is cruelly blinding the innocent Gloucester. Berkeley, however, remarks that the servant's advantages of gentle nurture--he was brought up by Cornwall--mitigate the unnaturalness of his behaviour (23-24).

<sup>14</sup> Ale and beer were beverages of the base-born in Shakespeare's time: they were considered to reduce heat in the body, which would cause a loss of blood. On the other hand, claret and other wines were reserved for persons of gentle birth as "an aristocratic means of allaying cowardice" (Berkeley 54).

<sup>15</sup> There are numerous examples of this association of beauty with gentility in the entire canon of Shakespeare: see Blood Will Tell, pp. 17-19.

<sup>16</sup> Shakespeare in the play assigns gentle birth to the outlaws, probably in his wish to mitigate the fact that Valentine, his model of a gentleman, should be associated with such robbers.

<sup>17</sup> Body odor and bad smell, usually bad breath, are another mark of class distinction in Shakespeare's plays, as the playwright often assigns them to his base-born

characters: in Coriolanus, the hero dismisses the "rank-scented many" (III.i.66); in Julius Caesar, the hero is almost choked by "the stinking breath" of the crowd (I.iii.246-7); in Antony and Cleopatra, Octavius describes Egyptian plebeians as "knaves that smells of sweat" (I.iv.21). However, in the entire canon of Shakespeare, no character of gentle class is ever said to smell bad.

<sup>18</sup> One of physical characteristics with which Shakespeare endows his gentles is "fairness of complexion" (Berkeley 18).

<sup>19</sup> Lawrence Babb, an authority on Renaissance conceptions of melancholy, associates stupidity with plebeianism when he says that "black bile or its vapors disorder the physical instruments of perception and thought" (29).

### CHAPTER III

#### PRINCE HAL'S ESCAPE FROM THE TAIN OF BASTARDY: SHAKESPEARE'S BLOOD-CONSCIOUS MODIFICATIONS OF HIS SOURCES IN HENRY IV, I & II

Critics have failed to perceive that the passage in which Mistress Quickly reminds Falstaff of the time "when the Prince broke thy head for liking his father to a singing-man of Windsor" (2 Henry IV II.i.89-90)<sup>1</sup> strongly suggests blood-consciousness as a main theme of the Henry IV plays.<sup>2</sup> This incident--the only time that Prince Hal ever strikes Falstaff--points up the Prince's keen consciousness of his royal blood: the Prince, who can tolerate many gibes from the jolly knight, cannot endure the open imputation of his own bastardy which, by its association with baseness in birth and conduct, would jeopardize his right of succession to the throne.

Blood-consciousness as a main theme is a completely new approach to the Henry IV plays.<sup>3</sup> Refuting some currently popular interpretations of the plays, David S. Berkeley in his Blood Will Tell asserts that a main theme of 1 Henry IV is "the politic concealment and exhibition of seminally transmitted virtue, vulgarly, 'blood will tell'" (27). Berkeley argues that viewing the play as focusing on the

education of a prince is a superficial reading ignoring Prince Hal's first soliloquy which makes plain the point that the Prince, being complete at the outset of the play, needs no education but will reveal his essential nature at any time of his own choosing.<sup>4</sup> Berkeley also finds it inadequate to read the plays in terms of a morality play, for "Hal requires no repenting as he needs no growing up or educating" (30).<sup>5</sup> As to another common view that 1 Henry IV is mainly about the idea of honor, Berkeley considers honor a merely minor point supporting the play's main theme of "blood will tell," for honor is one, not all, of the Prince's many inherent virtues. Berkeley observes that 1 Henry IV mainly reflects the conventional theory of hereditary virtue that placed greatest value on royal personages who, by virtue of their high birth, were believed to possess the best human qualities: Prince Hal's royal blood, despite his lack of kingly training, manifests itself for what it is. Berkeley's argument is sound but needs reinforcement by a further investigation of the blood theme. Indeed, comparing the two Henry IV plays with their primary sources--The Third Volume of Chronicles of Raphael Holinshed for the historical material and the anonymous play entitled The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth for the rest<sup>6</sup>--helps to verify the blood theme, for Shakespeare modifies these sources according to his preoccupation with Hal's royal blood: departing from his sources, Shakespeare constantly focuses attention on Hal's birth by having him

frequently, and of course falsely, suspected of bastardy; he makes the Prince a much more outstanding figure than in the sources, endowing him with many kingly virtues such as political ingenuity, excellent soldiership, and filial piety; and, in reworking his sources, he places more emphasis on hereditary factors than on either educational or inexplicable ones in making the ideal hero-king. ✓

Bastardy, according to the Elizabethan theory of hereditary virtue, was identified with baseness not only in birth but also in conduct. John W. Draper in his "Bastardy in Shakespeare's Plays" states that the Elizabethans associated "loyalty and truth with the well born [legitimate gentle-borns]" and "the corresponding vices with bastards and with the lower classes" (130). Edmund, the bastard of King Lear, cries out against the social prejudice against illegitimacy: "Why bastard? Wherefore base? . . . Why brand they us / With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?" (I.ii.6-10) Draper then observes that Shakespeare reflects this opinion of his age by portraying most of his bastard characters as villains in the ethical sense: notably, Don John in Much Ado, who is said to be "compos'd and fram'd of treacherie" (130); Edmund in King Lear, "the villain paramount in a tragedy of villains" (133); and Thersites in Troilus and Cressida, "the most foul-mouthed character in Shakespeare" (134). Draper omits discussing Faulconbridge in King John and the Bastard of Orleans in 1 Henry VI, for the former is legitimate according to law and custom (King John

thus settles the trial of Faulconbridge in I.i.116-20) and the latter is merely an incidental figure whose role is of little significance in the action of the play. Moreover, illegitimate children were deprived of the right of inheritance. Therefore, the imputation of bastardy was the supreme insult to gentry, as shown in the heated exchange of insults between Suffolk and Warwick in 2 Henry VI (III.ii.210-31).

Neither Holinshed nor Famous Victories raises any questions about Prince Hal's legitimacy. However, Shakespeare in the Henry IV plays has other characters often brand the Prince, either directly or by implication, as a bastard for his seemingly riotous life. From the opening scene of the play, Henry IV speaks of Hal as if he were a changeling: the King, ashamed of his own son and envious of Northumberland's renowned son Hotspur, wishes that "some night-tripping fairy had exchanged / In cradle clothes our children where they lay, / And called mine [Hal] Percy, his [Hotspur] Plantagenet!" (I.i.87-89). The King in his private conversation with the Prince again hints at the possibility of the latter's bastardy when he points out that the Prince's inclinations ("affections" [III.ii.30]) are greatly different from those of his ancestors. When Hotspur calls Hal "that same sword-and-buckler Prince of Wales" whom he would have poisoned with "a pot of ale" (I.iii), he intimates that the Prince is base-born--therefore illegitimate--because sword and ale were associated with

people of low birth while rapier and wine belonged to gentry (Berkeley 33). But it is Falstaff who most frequently imputes bastardy to Hal. Early in 1 Henry IV Falstaff taunts Hal by questioning his legitimacy:

A king's son! If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild geese, I'll never wear hair on my face again. You Prince of Wales! (II.iv.150-54)

A little later in the same scene, he again teases the Prince in the same manner: "Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a micher and eat blackberries? a question not to be ask'd. Shall the son of England prove a thief and take purses?" (II.iv.407-10) In 2 Henry IV, recognizing Hal disguised as a drawer, Falstaff directly calls him "a bastard son of the King's" (II.iv.283). Furthermore, he refers to a singing-man of Windsor as Hal's father.

Such frequent imputations of bastardy to him seem to be Prince Hal's only concern and fear during the period of his politic concealment. One often sees Hal being very conscious of his station--i.e., his royal blood. When begged by Falstaff to join the Gadshill robbery, Hal, unlike the Prince of the Famous Victories who appears to be the active leader of the robbers, is astonished at the impropriety of that invitation--"Who, I rob? I a thief? Not I, by my faith" (1 Henry IV I.ii.138)--although later he accepts it with reservations: "Well then, once in my days

I'll be a madcap" (I.ii.142). It is at the end of this scene that Hal speaks the famous soliloquy revealing his motive for hiding his essential nature. In Part II, Hal shows a similar response to Poins's suggestion of disguising himself as a drawer, astonished at it first and then accepting it with reservations:

From a God to a bull? a heavy descension! it was Jove's case. From a prince to a prentice? a low transformation! that shall be mine, for in every thing the purpose must weigh with the folly.

(II.ii.173-76)

When the King hints at Hal's possible bastardy, the Prince remorsefully promises him that he "shall hereafter . . . / Be more myself" (emphasis added) (1 Henry IV III.ii.92), that is, the King's legitimate son. Being aware of Hotspur's branding him as a degenerate or illegitimate prince (V.i.94-5), Hal always looks forward to the time when he will defeat the rival. At Falstaff's likening Hal's father to a singing man, Hal loses his usual calmness and strikes the insulter on the head, the only time that the Prince, despite much provocation, ever resorts to physical punishment of the knight.

Why does Shakespeare have those characters impute to Hal bastardy that is never mentioned in his sources? Shakespeare, who consistently associates bastardy with baseness in many of his plays, cannot be suspicious of the legitimacy of Henry V, whom he portrays as the best of

English kings in his entire canon. Indeed, all those suggestions of Hal's bastardy turn out to be wrong in the plays. The King at Shrewsbury witnesses Hal's great achievements that manifest the Prince's royal blood; again, the King at his deathbed is convinced of Hal's filial piety and thus completely reconciled with his son. Hotspur's judgment on Hal's nature also turns out to be greatly mistaken at Shrewsbury, where the Prince defeats and kills the rebel leader. Falstaff's accusations of bastardy against Hal are probably made in jest because, when he urgently needs Hal's protection, the fat knight acknowledges the Prince's royal blood by confessing that "Thou [the Prince] art essentially made" (1 Henry IV II.iv.492-93).<sup>7</sup> Shakespeare, most probably, brings up the matter of bastardy in order to highlight, by way of contrast, the actual glory of Hal's royal blood, the zenith of human blood--and his reputation the nadir--according to the Elizabethan theory of hereditary virtue. Hal himself conceals his essential quality which, when revealed, "shall show more goodly and attract more eyes" (I.ii.214) "like bright metal on a sullen ground" (I.ii.212), for the sun shall "be more wond'ered at / By breaking through the foul and ugly mists / Of vapors that did seem to strangle him" (I.ii.201-3). Likewise, Shakespeare makes Hal's royal blood appear more precious by having him escape from the taint of bastardy. In his efforts to unveil the true nature of Henry V the hero-king, in reworking his sources Shakespeare makes Hal a most

exemplary statesman, warrior, and son.

Prince Hal, later Henry V, is one of the most competent statesmen in Shakespearean canon. First of all, Hal is skillful at politic concealment as proven in his success in hiding his essential nature by mingling with disreputable companions from pure policy; on the contrary, Shakespeare's sources take Hal's legendary escapades as genuine. The ability of politic concealment was a great virtue for Renaissance princes and other gentlemen, for they believed that a man who constantly discloses all his purposes to the public would be easily victimized by his enemies. Shakespeare reflects this tendency of his age in many of his gentle-born characters--to name some, Hamlet, Edgar, Portia, Camillo, and Paulina--who achieve their aims better by employing deception rather than openness (Berkeley 29). Accordingly, Henry IV, a shrewd politician himself, exhorts Hal not to appear in public too often lest people, "being with his presence glutt'd, [gorg'd], and full" (III.ii.84), begin "To loathe the taste of sweetness" (III.ii.72) as is the case with Richard II. But it turns out that the son is more skilled than his father in practicing the art of politic concealment, for his method of counterfeiting a madcap prince, when his essential self is revealed, produces a more striking effect than merely hiding his person. Ignoring such political background of the Elizabethan period, many of Shakespeare's best critics--Maurice Morgann, William Hazlitt, A. C. Bradley, G. B. Shaw, L. C. Knight,

and H. C. Goddard--unjustly condemn Hal as a callous youth who manipulates his friendships for the sake of his public image.<sup>9</sup> The king at that time, as a symbolic figure, was identified with the nation rather than being a private person; hence, Henry V once notes that the king is "Twin-born with greatness" (Henry V IV.i.234). Therefore, anything done on behalf of the king would promote the national interest. Judged by this standard, Hal's dissimulation is a sound policy, more commendable than blamable, reflecting his political genius.

On the other hand, disclosing one's heart without restraint was thought an unjudicious trait because it would make him easy work for his enemies; revealing one's inmost thoughts and feelings, an attitude that has ever been applauded since the birth of the Romantic Age, was thus disapproved in the Elizabethan period as, to use Berkeley's term, a "plebeian openness" (29); hence, Shakespeare's upper-class characters often disparagingly use the epithet "honest" for their inferiors--e.g., "honest Iago" (Othello II.iii.177). Hotspur, a rival or foil to Hal in 1 Henry IV, represents this openness by his total inability to conceal his mind. Hotspur was, in fact, older than Henry IV, having been born in about 1364, and Holinshed did not describe him as particularly passionate and hasty. Departing from Holinshed, his main source for the historical material, Shakespeare considerably reduces Hotspur's age in order to set up the rivalry between him and Hal, following in this

matter Samuel Daniel's The First Fowre Bookes of the Civile Wars; Shakespeare then points up, to a greater extent than Daniel, Hotspur's rash, impulsive temperament that is in striking contrast to Hal's calmness and thoughtfulness to highlight Hal's superiority to Hotspur in political ability. Hotspur's inability to veil his heart often places him at a disadvantage. Early in 1 Henry IV Northumberland and Worcester labor in vain to stop Hotspur's tirade against Henry IV, for he will "ease my heart, / Albeit I make a hazard of my head" (I.iii.127-28). For this outburst of speeches Hotspur is rebuked by his father Northumberland, a cautious politician who is probably aware of the value of politic concealment: "Why, what a wasp-stung and impatient fool / Are thou to break into this woman's mood, / Tying thy ear to no tongue but thine own!" (I.iii.236-8) Later in a conference of the rebel leaders, Hotspur fails to put up with Glendower's boasts at the risk of jeopardizing the alliance with him; this outspokenness also invites Worcester's warning that Hotspur's defect--i.e., failure to conceal his "Pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain"--will overshadow his merits--"greatness, courage, blood" (1 Henry IV III.i.178-87).

In his efforts to heighten Hal's political image further, Shakespeare frequently modifies his sources to stress the Prince's regard for public order even before he abandons his wild companions. Unlike the Prince in Famous Victories, Shakespeare's Hal joins the robbery in jest--for

the fun of tricking Falstaff--and returns the money with interest to its rightful owners; moreover, it is not the robbed but the robbers--Falstaff and his crew--that Hal assaults. Although in the source it is the Prince himself who speaks of a rule of licence after King Henry IV's death--"I tell you sirs, and the King / My father were dead, we would be all kings" (11.93-94 ;456-57); ". . . ile turne all these prisons into fence Schooles" (11.465-66)-- Shakespeare has Falstaff voice the theme of anarchy: ". . . shall there be gallows standing in England when thou art king?" (1 Henry IV I.ii.59-60); "Let us take any man's horses, the laws of England are at my commandment" (2 Henry IV V.iii.135-37). In addition, the literal blow that the Prince in Famous Victories gives to the Chief Justice on stage is merely reported in Shakespeare. Shakespeare gives a heavier emphasis to the role of the Chief Justice than his source. To be sure, in Famous Victories Hal appoints the Chief Justice as "Protector over my Realme" (1.886); however, the position of royal mentor and "father" conferred on him, as well as his brave defence of his action, is Shakespeare's own. Prince Hal, Shakespeare's ideal statesman, thus rejects Falstaff, who embodies anarchy, and chooses the Chief Justice, who stands for law and order.

A Prince, wrote Machiavelli, must imitate the fox (politician) and the lion (soldier), for the lion cannot protect himself from traps, and the fox cannot defend himself from wolves (101). Following the Machiavellian

concept of ideal princehood, Shakespeare in reworking his sources makes Prince Hal not only an ingenious statesman, but also a matchless warrior full of chivalric virtues such as courage, strength, courtesy, and generosity. Before the Battle of Shrewsbury, Hal does not appear to be afraid at all of the powerful rebel forces. When Falstaff reminds Hal of the three formidable rebel leaders--"that fiend Douglas, that spirit Percy, and that devil Glendower"--and then asks him, "Doth not thy blood thrill at it?" the Prince answers curtly, "Not a whit" (II.iv.368-71). Hal's greatness as a warrior culminates in his great military achievements at Shrewsbury, in describing which Shakespeare again departs from Holinshed, his primary source for the historical material, to follow Daniel. Although Holinshed credits Hal with fighting bravely in spite of a wound in his face, his Hal is not so much prominent as Shakespeare's, who is the central figure of the royalist forces. Vernon, though he joins the rebel forces, pours on Hal the most respectful terms of praise:

I saw young Harry with his beaver on,  
 His cushes on his thighs, gallantly arm'd,  
 Rise from the ground like feathered Mercury,  
 And vaulted with such ease into his seat  
 As if an angel [dropp'd] down from the clouds  
 To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus,  
 And witch the world with noble horsemanship.

(1 Henry IV IV.i.104-10)

At Shrewsbury Shakespeare's Hal proves that he has no equal in Britain as soldier. Despite his wound Hal puts to flight the formidable Douglas, although Holinshed does not credit the Prince with this feat. Shakespeare's Hal also kills the renowned Hotspur, although Holinshed's account of Hotspur's death is unclear as to who killed him: "The other on his [the King's] part," who in Holinshed "slew the Lord Percy, called Sir Henry Hotspur" (191), presumably means others of the King's party. Perhaps Shakespeare may have misread this account, mistaking "the other" for Hal because the Prince is mentioned at the beginning of the same paragraph. Whether the change was made deliberately or mistakenly, crediting Hal with killing Hotspur serves Shakespeare's purpose of highlighting the Prince's role in the battle. Moreover, Shakespeare portrays Hal as an epitome of chivalry by inventing some events that highlight the Prince's courtesy to his enemies. When he offers a single combat with Hotspur, Hal shows a great regard for the rival's merits:

This present enterprise set off his head,  
 I do not think a braver gentleman,  
 More active, valiant, or more valiant, young,  
 More daring or more bold, is now alive  
 To grace this latter age with noble deeds.

(1 Henry IV V.i.88-92)

This courteous speech invites Vernon's another encomium on the Prince: "I never in my life / Did hear a challenge urg'd more modestly" (V.ii.51-2). After defeating Hotspur Hal

condoles the spirit of the vanquished opponent by covering the latter's mangled face with his own favours. Shakespeare also, unlike Holinshed, credits Hal with releasing Douglas without ransom for his valour--a final touch of Hal's generous chivalry.

Although Famous Victories focuses on Hal's defiance of his father, Shakespeare makes the Prince a son full of filial piety despite his seeming riotousness. The source presents Hal's scandalous visit to the sick king: the Prince comes to court in a cloak full of needles, with a dagger in his hand, and attended by disorderly companions--all of which signify his impatience for ascending the throne. The Prince in Famous Victories wishes for his father's early death, proclaiming his intention that "the breath shall be no sooner out of his mouth but I will clap the crown on my head" (11.479-80); Shakespeare's Hal is greatly sorry for his father's illness--"my heart bleeds inwardly that my father is so sick" (2 Henry IV II.ii.48)--although he hides his emotion. At Henry IV's deathbed, Hal's response to his father's reproach for taking away the crown is full of self-denying concern for his father; Hal's one thought is to console the dying father with assurance that he will defend the crown by all means. Above all, Hal is made to save his father at Shrewsbury, whereas Holinshed attributes the rescue to unnamed persons (191). Filial piety was an indispensable virtue for Elizabethan gentry, who had a high regard for or pride in their family lines, whereas the lower

classes had little reason to esteem their family origins (Berkeley 51-2). Reflecting this trend of his age, Shakespeare often associates base birth with filial disobedience: Edmund, the bastard in King Lear, betrays his father to usurp his title (III.iii.21-5); Lancelot Gobbo, the servant of Shylock, makes fun of his father (The Merchant of Venice II.ii); Joan de Pucelle, a shepherd's daughter, denies her own father to his face (1 Henry VI V.iv.7-9). Accordingly, Shakespeare changes Prince Hal, whose birth signals the zenith of human blood, from a defiant to a dutiful son.

Shakespeare attributes Hal's excellence as a statesman, soldier, and son to his blood quality by omitting whatever source materials or historical facts may credit either the Prince's formal training or his unforeseen conversion with making the future hero-king. Holinshed's Hal has a governor, the Earl of Worcester, who presumably has given the Prince a kingly training on a regular basis. Shakespeare omits this matter and makes Hal, from the beginning of the Henry IV plays, complete enough to be free from tutelage. Shakespeare also omits Hal's early participation in politics and battlefields—a historical fact that does not appear in the sources either—that may have sharpened the Prince's political and martial skills (Saccio 59); Shakespeare's Hal has been a "truant" to chivalry (1 Henry IV V.i.94) and statesmanship before the Battle of Shrewsbury. This omission, if Shakespeare was aware of the historical facts

about Hal, again reflects his intention to emphasize the Prince's untrained superiority. Some critics consider Hal's experience in Eastcheap as his education in increasing wisdom and knowledge of his subjects, indispensable qualities for the Prince to become a fully developed man as well as a successful king (Tillyard 264-304; Ribner 173). Warwick seems to endorse this education theme when he compares Hal's disreputable companions to "gross terms" that the Prince needs to learn but will cast off "in the perfectness of time" so as to turn "past evils to advantage" (2 Henry IV IV.iv.73-8). It is certainly true that Hal can benefit from increasing his knowledge of mankind by associating with a greater variety of people; however, what is more stressed throughout the Henry IV plays, though unnoticed by the critics who advocate the education theme, is Hal's inborn ability that can control his environment so profitably as even to take advantage of his bad company. In Famous Victories, on the other hand, Hal undergoes a last-minute conversion that is too sudden and unanticipated to be plausible. In Shakespeare Hal's change--"That noble change that I have purposed" (2 Henry IV IV.v.154)--is not a correction of erroneous ways but a revelation of his true nature to the public, as his first soliloquy--Shakespeare's notable addition to his sources--makes clear the point from the beginning. In brief, Shakespeare's belief in the Elizabethan theory of hereditary virtue ascribes Hal's excellent human qualities to his royal blood, minimizing the

force of any other possible factors such as formal education, association with the vulgar, and sudden conversion.

Shakespeare removes from Hal the taint of bastardy by thus idealizing the national hero as a most exemplary statesman, soldier, and son, and then stressing the point that such kingly traits derive from no sources but his royal blood--the Plantagenet blood, which is a diametrical opposite to the base, tainted blood of bastards. Hal's blood, accordingly, produces effects quite different from those of the blood of Shakespeare's bastard characters: Hal is morally sound, whereas Edmund and Don John are villainous; Hal is conscious of his hereditary virtues, whereas Thersites is totally devoid of self-respect as he declares himself "a rascal, a scurvy railing knave, a very filthy rogue" (Troilus and Cressida V.iv.28-9).

Hence, in Shakespeare, the quality of one's blood determines his character. Hal's lack of education and his bad company cannot affect his nature derived from the Plantagenet blood, although Poins once, erroneously, attributes the Prince's seeming degeneration to a corrupt influence of Falstaff (2 Henry IV II.ii.63). The king at his sickbed refers to the immunity of his sons' royal blood from evil influence:

. . . the united vessel of their blood,  
Mingled with venom of suggestion  
(As, force perforce, the age will pour it in),

Shall never leak, though it do work as strong  
As aconitum or rash gunpowder.

(2 Henry IV IV.iv.44-8)

The Henry IV plays thus embody the motif of nobility revealing itself in spite of vile environment as do many medieval and Renaissance romances--Havelok, King Horn, Malory's Le Morte D'Arthur, Spenser's The Faerie Queene, etc.--and other Shakespearean plays such as Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, and As You Like It. Hal, Perdita, the mountain princes, and Orlando--all have such excellent blood that they are perfect with no aid from books and tutors; moreover, whatever circumstances they are placed under do not impair their blood-derived perfection.

The blood theme of the Henry IV plays effects many improvements of the plays on their crude sources. Thematically, Hal's essential princeliness despite his unseemly appearances, as Berkeley aptly notes, is a specific configuration of Shakespeare's recurrent theme of appearance and reality, "the differences between men as they are and men as they seem to be" (35); neither Holinshed nor Famous Victories suggests this theme. Accordingly, Shakespeare's Hal is a character much more sophisticated than the Prince in Famous Victories, in whom appearance and reality are one. As for plot, Hal's disclosing of his hidden virtues in right time is much more plausible than the abrupt conversion experienced by the Prince in the anonymous play. Finally, Shakespeare's Hal produces the effect of dramatic irony by

concealing his essential nature to all the other characters--both his friends and enemies--while revealing it to his audience.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> All quotations from Shakespeare come from The Riverside Shakespeare.

<sup>2</sup> Critics usually dismiss this passage by concluding that the Prince is annoyed simply because singing men in general were drunken and disreputable (Humphreys 234). Ernest Brennecke, however, suggests that Falstaff may be referring here to either John Maudelen or Perkin Warbeck--both pretenders to the throne; accordingly, likening the King to either man "bore a suggestion of treason and a hint of conspiracy" (1192). Either interpretation fails to note that the passage reflects the Prince's indignation at the suggestion of his own bastardy.

<sup>3</sup> Many critics view Parts 1 and 2 of Henry IV as a unified whole; for instance, J. Dover Wilson observes that "Part II, so far from being as one critic has called it 'an unpremeditated sequel' to Part I, is a continuation of the same play, which is no less incomplete without it than Part II is itself unintelligible without Part I" (4). E. M. W. Tillyard also treats the two parts as a single play (Shakespeare's History Plays 264).

<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Theodore Spencer remarks that Shakespeare intended this soliloquy to "reassure his audience about Hal's true character; he is not the wastrel he seems to be";

Spencer also points out that Hal's comparing himself to the sun--the symbol of kingship--in the soliloquy even more highlights the Prince's royal nature (78).

<sup>5</sup> Tillyard, for instance, considers Hal as a Morality figure who has to choose between extremes--between "sloth" and "chivalry" and between "disorder" and "order" (265).

<sup>6</sup> Most source scholars agree with this point (Whitaker 144; Griffin 94-6; Satin 151; Bullough 158-61, 250; Muir 91; etc.).

<sup>7</sup> Critics who read "mad" for "made" fail to find any thematic importance in this sentence; I follow critics who call for "made," such as H. H. Adams, according to whom the speech means that "Hal is made of the essence of princeliness" (209).

<sup>8</sup> Goddard, for example, calls Hal "the deliberately and coldly ambitious Prince" (1: 171-72).

## CHAPTER IV

### "AY, EVERY INCH A KING!": SHAKESPEARE'S BLOOD-CONSCIOUS MODIFICATIONS OF HIS SOURCES IN KING LEAR

Critics have paid little attention to the passage in which Lear professes himself to be "every inch a king" (IV,vi,110)<sup>1</sup>--with perhaps the only exception of Charles Landstone, who sees the King's claim as "a boastful assertion of his unquestionable majesty" rather than "a casual aside which, to those who do not know the play, might pass unnoticed" (98). Landstone, however, provides no specific examples to support his point; neither does he make explicit that the passage, revealing Shakespeare's preoccupation with royal blood, indicates the idea of "blood will tell" as a main theme of the play.

Shakespeare's emphasis on Lear's royal blood was unique, for no sources of his play--including his two primary sources, the anonymous The True Chronicle Historie of King Leir<sup>2</sup> and Sidney's The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia<sup>3</sup>--had paid so much attention to the matter of hereditary dignity as he did. Indeed, comparing Shakespeare's Lear with the anonymous play's Leir makes it evident that Shakespeare's blood-consciousness caused many

changes in the legendary king's character. Between the two kings, according to Elizabethan physiology, Shakespeare's Lear was a much more "kingly" king on account of his rich blood and choler, and Lear's royal blood--the best of human blood--was the very source of his frequent "heartbreak" experiences and extraordinary physical strength.

Shakespeare's special concern for royal blood in reworking his sources into King Lear is equally evident in his modifications of the other royal members, whom one may divide into three types: non-degenerate royals like Cordelia, degenerate royals like Goneril and Regan, and prospective royals like Edgar and Kent. Again departing from his sources, Shakespeare employs the two villains--Edmund and Oswald--as foils to the prospective royals.

Shakespeare's characterization in King Lear, as is usual in his entire canon, closely follows Renaissance psychology and, as expounded by John W. Draper in The Humors and Shakespeare's Characters, is determined by the four humors in Renaissance physiology; during the Renaissance, as is widely known, "physiology and psychology were no more separable than they are today" (Babb 1). The four humors were analogous to the four elements, each humor or element having two primary qualities: blood (like air) hot and moist, choler (like fire) hot and dry, phlegm (like water) cold and moist, and melancholy (like earth) cold and dry (Berkeley 9). As air and fire rank higher than water and earth, Shakespeare "contrasts sanguine air and choleric fire

with the duller and grosser nature of phlegmatic water and melancholic earth" (Draper, Humors 18): the Dolphin in Henry V praises his highbred horse, "He is pure air and fire; and the dull elements of earth and water never appear in him" (III.vii.21-22); Cleopatra declares, "I am fire and air; my other elements / I give to baser life" (Antony and Cleopatra V.ii.289-90). Moreover, Elizabethan physiology valued natural heat, contained in both blood and choler, as "the flame of life" and condemned bodily coldness, common to both phlegm and melancholy, as "hostile to life" (Babb 5). Accordingly, Shakespeare usually assigns blood and choler to his highborn characters, and phlegm and melancholy<sup>4</sup> to other ranks.

Shakespeare's sanguine characters, as Draper asserts repeatedly, "are generally the favored ones of this world in wealth and social place," most of them being "nobles or at least great gentlemen" (Humors 19,26). Duncan's abundant blood in old age makes Lady Macbeth question, "Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?" (V.i.39-40). Caesar's blood is also copious enough to let his several assassins "bathe [their] hands in Caesar's blood / Up to the elbows" (Julius Caesar III.i.106-7). Phebe in As You Like It praises Rosalind's sanguine complexion (III.v.115-16). Shakespeare makes Lear one of the most sanguine characters in his entire canon by having the King show symptoms of heartbreak three times (II.iv.121; II.iv.284-85; V.iii.310) and eventually die of it; Leir of

the source play, who ends up regaining his kingdom, never experiences the same. Critics are right in believing that Shakespeare had his Lear die in order to make a tragedy of the old happy-ending play. However, lacking interest in the physiological cause of the King's death, they have failed to perceive the importance of his heartbreak as a mark of his sanguine humor--i.e., the royal blood that Shakespeare admired time and again during his entire career.

Elizabethan physiologists held that noble blood affords a wider range of emotions because it is capable of producing "animal spirits" that are responsible for emotional attitudes<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, in Shakespeare, heartbreak is an experience reserved for gentle characters: e.g., Lear, Gloucester (King Lear II.i.89-90; V.iii. 197-200), Kent (King Lear V.iii.314), and Enobarbus (Antony and Cleopatra IV.vi.33); in addition, Antony mentions Caesar's capability of "burst[ing] his mighty heart" (Julius Caesar III.ii.186). Shakespeare's base-born characters, their blood being deficient in quantity and low in heat, lack emotional intensity in sufficient degree to crack their hearts; the base-born Parolles in All's Well That Ends Well represents his class when he says, "If my heart were great, / 'Twould burst at this" (IV.iii.330-31). It is a manifest proof of Lear's superior blood, abundant and hot, that it swells so often as to eventually rupture his heart in spite of his extreme old age: Lear is eighty (IV.vii.60) and old men in Shakespearean plays usually have little blood. Elizabethan

physiology tended to link the young with sanguine humor, regarding melancholy, cold and dry, as the predominant humor for the old: Levinus Lemnius in The Touchstone of Complexions observes, "Bloud and vital Spyrite are in their chiefest Pryme and most abound in lusty and flourishing yeares . . . although in ald worne age, bloud begynneth to draw to a coldness, & the vital spyrit, then neyther so hoate, neither so stronge and effectuous" (90<sup>v</sup>); Robert Burton in The Anatomy of Melancholy speaks of old age as "being cold and dry, and of the same quality as Melancholy . . . by diminution of spirits and substance" (239-40). This tendency to correlate old age with blood diminished in quantity and impaired in quality is often present in Shakespeare's plays, as exemplified by such old characters who in spite of their high birth have little blood as Nestor (Troilus and Cressida I.iii.301) and Antigonus (The Winter's Tale II.iii.166-67); the aged Leonato in Much Ado about Nothing voices the same view when he proudly claims that "Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine" (IV.i.193). Therefore, whenever Shakespeare shows any of his aged characters (no base-born persons, however) possessing a large amount of blood, one can assume that he aims at special effects by doing so: in Macbeth he flatters James I--who is known to have greatly valued his own blood as the sign of his divine right--by endowing the King's ancestor Duncan with, contrary to nature, abundant blood in old age; in Julius Caesar, the overflow of the elderly Caesar's blood

indicates the playwright's high regard for the Roman hero. Lear is another exemplary old man whom Shakespeare, departing from his primary source, favors with abundant blood in order to emphasize the hereditary worth of the King.

The sanguine humor--the hot and abundant blood--was believed to effect not only emotional intensity, as shown in Lear's heartbreak, but also bodily strength as Sir Thomas Elyot points out its physical effects:

Bloude hath preeminence ouer all other humours in susteinyng of all liuyng creatures, for it hath more conformitie with the oryginall cause of liuyng, by reason of the temperatenesse in heate and moysture, also nourisheth more the body, and restoreth that which is decaied, being the very treasure of lyfe, by losse whereof death immediately foloweth. (Castel of Helth 8)

Batman upon Bartholome his Booke De Proprietatibus Rerum, the popular vernacular encyclopedia, also tells that "Isidore saith, the bloud has this name Sanguis of Greek for the bloud sustaineth strength, helpeth and confirmeth the lyfe" (29v). Therefore, we find Shakespeare's sanguine characters often triumphant in battlefields, steadfast in adversity, and even immune from fatigue: Prince Hal in 1 Henry IV, despite his wound, proves to be a matchless warrior at the battle of Shrewsbury; in 1 Henry VI, Talbot asserts that the Knights of the Garter, who were of noble

birth, were "always resolute in most extremes" (IV.i.38); Edgar in King Lear grows strong and wise in adversity; in Henry IV, Poins believes that weariness cannot attach to "one of so high blood" like Hal (II.ii.23). Lear's royal blood, hot and abundant enough to cause heartbreak, likewise makes the King a man of extraordinary strength even in old age: Lear still goes hunting (I.iii.7); in contrast to his source play's Leir, who is "faint for want of sustenance" and weakly tells Perillus that "our bodies must have end" (1.2115, 2121), Shakespeare's Lear never appears to be tired while passing through his terrible ordeals, both physical and mental; and he is able to stand up to the furious winds and rain of the moor. Lear's physical strength is best proven in his killing of the assassin, a military captain who is no doubt much younger than the aged King; the source play's Leir, though accompanied by Perillus, is completely at the mercy of a single murderer. Shakespeare thus transforms the weak king of his primary source into the robust Lear, whose strength qualifies him as the chief defender of Britain.

Besides Lear's heartbreak and bodily strength, Shakespeare makes another important change from King Leir in order to highlight the King's royal blood: he omits the incident in which Perillus offers his blood to the famished Leir. For the blood-conscious Shakespeare, it would be unthinkable to mingle a king's blood with lesser blood, for such a transfusion would make the king less kingly, both

physically and mentally, than his former self. Being an ardent advocate for the Elizabethan view of heredity as determining human individuals, Shakespeare in his plays always expresses a reverential attitude toward the "blood royal" (1 Henry IV I.ii.140-41) of legitimate, non-degenerate kings: the Bishop of Ely attributes Henry V's valor to the royal blood of his ancestors that "runs in [his] veins" (Henry V I.ii.119); Hamlet's father's blood, before his death, was "thin and wholesome" (Hamlet I.v.70); Duncan's blood is described as "golden" (Macbeth II.iii.112); and the royal blood of such old but exemplary kings as Lear and Duncan suffers no deterioration, not decreasing in quantity and temperature contrary to nature. Shakespeare's ideal kings, by virtue of their excellent blood rather than of their education, possess superior human qualities. Prince Hal, later Henry V, is a marvelously fast learner, in addition to his other kingly qualities such as ingenious statesmanship and martial prowess, as the Archbishop of Canterbury speaks of him, "Never was such a sudden scholar made" (Henry V I.i.32). Hamlet's father's countenance and figure are so handsome as to be compared to Hyperion, Jove, Mars, and Mercury in appearance (Hamlet III.iv.56-58). Hamlet is as good-looking as his father, as Ophelia describes him as "Th' expectation and rose of the fair state, / The glass of fashion and the mould of form" (III.i.152-53); Shakespeare's plays often illustrate the idea that "beauty breedth beauty" (Venus and Adonis 1.167).

Duncan is also favorably portrayed as an exemplary king who has been "So clear in his great office, that his virtues / Will plead like angels . . . against / The deep damnation of his taking-off" (Macbeth I.vii.18-20); Shakespeare, in his special consideration of Duncan's royal blood, thus modifies the character of the King, whose irresolute nature makes him incompetent as a king according to The Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Ireland,<sup>6</sup> Shakespeare's primary source of the play. Shakespeare's plays never allow the sublime blood of kings, which is the source of their kingly qualities, to be mixed with that of inferior quality. His omission in King Lear of Perillus's blood offer to Leir is not a solitary case of his avoiding the suggestion of such a cross-class blood trasfusion<sup>7</sup> that appears in some of his sources. In As You Like It, Shakespeare also omits a similar incident occurring in his source, Thomas Lodge's Rosalynde, in which the aged servant Adam offers his blood to save his master Rosader's life when they wander starving in France. Shakespeare would have thought Adam's offer not only presumptuous, but also unnecessary and even harmful, for such a young gentleman like Orlando--whose youth, high birth, bodily strength (proven in the wrestling match), intuitive learning ability ("never school'd and yet learned" [I.i.166-67]), and steadfastness in adversity all bear witness to his hot and rich blood<sup>8</sup>--would little benefit from, or rather degenerate by, an inflow of the cold and thick blood of such an aged base-born servant. Indeed, in

Henry V, the French Herald Montjoy speaks for Shakespeare when he is horrified at seeing the bloody battlefield:

For many of our princes (woe the while!)  
 Lie drown'd and soak'd in mercenary blood;  
 So do our vulgar drench their peasant limbs  
 In blood of princes, . . . (IV.vii.75-78)

Montjoy petitions for separating the corpses, and Henry V does not deny him. In the following passage, Berkeley aptly sums up Shakespeare's reverential attitudes toward the royal blood of his exemplary kings, as well as the grounds for the playwright's persistent objection to a cross-class blood transfusion:

Shakespeare's plays suggest with few exceptions that the poet especially desiderated the potentialities inherent in the bright red, hot, thin, fast-flowing, sweet-tasting blood of divinely sanctioned kings, and rated every departure from this blood, by the extent of its divergence, as a diminution in human quality, the great dividing line being that between gentry (including royals, of course) and base-borns. (14)

Another prominent sign of Lear's royalty is his choleric humor. Choler, as well as blood, was considered to be superior to phlegm and melancholy and therefore associated with the gentry. Elizabethan physiologists believed the choleric humor, by means of its heat, to arouse "combative passions--boldness and anger" (Babb 12) and aid

blood in defeating enemies: it enflamed the body "with a sodaine burning heate" (Bullein 24<sup>v</sup>). Its chief characteristics were "courage, pride, liberalitie, audacitie, and cheerfulness, and a good grace and pleasantnesse" (Huarte 280).<sup>9</sup> Choler was even identified as the greatest of "violence" of all passions, so that none was "more dangerous" (Coeffeteau 598). Mostly highborn characters reveal this humor in Shakespeare's plays, with the exception of the upstart steward Malvolio in Twelfth Night, who appears a choleric melancholiac<sup>10</sup>: in 1 Henry VI, the King urges his kinsmen York and Somerset to "digest / Your angry choler on your enemies" (IV.i:167-68); Richard II asks Bolingbroke and Mowbray, the two "Wrath-kindled gentlemen," to "purge this choler without letting blood" (Richard II I.i.152-53); Northumberland finds his nephew Hotspur "drunk with choler" (1 Henry IV I.iii.129) when the latter pours out his tirade against Henry IV; Tybalt admits his "willful choler" (Romeo and Juliet I.v.89); the King of France ("the hot-bloodied France" [King Lear II.iv.212]) leaves Lear's court "in choler" (I.ii.23), and Kent in the same play is highly choleric too as seen in his impatience with the base upstart Oswald on two occasions (I.iv; II.ii); Hamlet's choleric humor manifests itself through his vehement accusations of Gertrude for marrying Claudius; Othello's violent choleric humor replaces his love for Desdemona; Coriolanus mentions that to be "milder" would be "False to my nature" (Coriolanus III.ii.14-15).

Lear is one of the most choleric characters in Shakespeare's canon, his wrath recurring throughout King Lear: Lear banishes both Cordelia and Kent, irritated by the former's unflattering way of expressing her love for him and the latter's outspoken criticism of his blind judgment (I.i); he strikes Oswald for the servant's impertinence (I.iv); he is infuriated at Goneril's and Regan's ingratitude and curses both in a most terrible manner (II.iv.278-82); and he kills in fury the assassin who has hanged Cordelia (V.iii). Goneril is afraid of her father's "choleric" (I.i.299) temper, which is a main reason why she wishes him to leave her house. Lear's choler is directed toward not only individuals, but also the whole mankind, the universe, and even gods. In the storm scene, the King urges the elements to annihilate all created things including the human species: "Strike flat the thick rotundity o' th' world! / Crack nature's moulds, all germains spill at once / That makes ingrateful man!" (III.ii.7-9). He then rebukes the elements themselves:

But yet I call you servile ministers,  
 That will with two pernicious daughters join  
 Your high-endanger'd battles 'gainst a head  
 So old and white as this. (III.ii.21-24)

In another scene Lear sternly enjoins gods not to "stir these daughters' hearts / Against their father, fool me not so much / To bear it tamely" (II.iv.274-76). Indeed, as A. C. Bradley points out, Lear's choler, or "the force of his

passion" as Bradley terms it, makes one feel that the King's nature is great (281).

Shakespeare in King Lear creates this highly choleric king, ever sensitive to personal injuries and even defiant against divinities, out of the meek, timid Leir of its source play. Leir, except for only two occasions--his outbursts against his unflattering youngest daughter and his loyal counselor Perillus--evinces no choleric temperament throughout the anonymous play. Kenneth Muir aptly sums up Leir's character when he finds the king "lachrymose and pathetic, without the rage, the energy, or the tragic grandeur of Lear" (Introduction to King Lear xxix). Perillus in a soliloquy reports on how patiently Leir puts up with Gonorill's insolent behavior towards him:

He [Leir] sojournes now in Cornwall with the eldest,  
 Who flattred him, untill she did obtayne  
 That at his hands, which now she doth possesse:  
 And now she sees hee hath no more to give,  
 It grieves her heart to see her father live.  
 Oh, whom should man trust in this wicked age,  
 When children thus against their parents rage?  
 But he, the myrrour of mild patience,  
 Puts up all wrongs, and never gives reply:  
 Yet shames she not in most opprobrious sort,  
 To call him foole and dotedd to his face,  
 And sets her Parasites of purpose oft,  
 In scoffing wise to offer him disgrace. (ll. 748-60)

Whereas this king represents "mild patience," Shakespeare's Lear is neither mild nor patient. Lear reacts in fury to Goneril's accusations, invoking the goddess Nature to make her become sterile or "have a thankless child" (I.iv.289). Later, when received coldly by Regan too, Lear rages against not only his two daughters, but also gods:

You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!  
 You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,  
 As full of grief as age, wretched in both,  
 If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts  
 Against their father, fool me not so much  
 To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,  
 And let not women's weapons, water-drops,  
 Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnatural hags,  
 I will have such revenges on you both  
 That all the world shall--I will do such things--  
 What they are yet I know not, but they shall be  
 The terrors of the earth! (II.iv.271-82)

This is not the passive, crestfallen man who mourns with Perillus ever after leaving Gonorill's house. Shakespeare's monarch resists every offense to his dignity or moral sense invoking "noble anger," something unaccustomed to the playwright's nongentle characters with very few exceptions.<sup>11</sup> Lear's choler, except for his rash outbursts against Cordelia and Kent (which are rather inflexible source stuff), always derives from his sound moral judgments on such human vices as filial ingratitude. We hardly see

Shakespeare's base-born characters incensed in such a noble manner; in most cases, they merely put up with their superiors' unjust or insolent treatments because of their hereditary cowardice, associated with their bodily coldness (Richard II I.ii.34).

The nobly incensed Lear is indeed a striking contrast to the meekly submissive Leir, who not only cannot speak up against his ungrateful daughters but even cowers before a mere base-born murderer. Before the villain appears before him and Perillus, Leir has had a dream in which his daughters "stabd me in a hundred places, / . . . with the feare of this I did awake, / And yet for feare my feeble joynts do quake" (ll. 1493-1501). When the assassin suddenly appears, the already fearful king, as well as Perillus, panics and reels. The insolent villain addresses Leir as "Sirra" (l.1575), a class term used for the base-born by their superiors; and calls the King to his face "the old slave," "a churle," and "a vyle old wretch" (l. 1517, 1594, 1596). In spite of all these outrageous insults, Leir shows no sign of resentment at all; instead, he keeps on trying to humor the villain by addressing him as "my friend," "gentle friend," and so forth. Most of Shakespearean kings and other highborn characters (Henry VI is an exception) do not react to a base-born's rudeness toward them in such a timid manner as Leir shows. Suffolk in 2 Henry VI rages against one of his assassins: "Obscure and lousy swain, King Henry's blood, / The honorable blood

of Lancaster, / Must not be shed by such a jaded groom" (IV.i.50-52); "It is impossible that I should die / By such a lowly vassal as thyself" (IV.i.110-11). Richard II in fury strikes his insolent keeper and then, snatching an ax from one of his murderers, kills two of them before his own fall (Richard II V.v). Macduff's son, though he is a mere boy, upbraids a murderer for calling his father a traitor: "Thou li'st, thou shag-ear'd villain!" (Macbeth IV.ii.83). To be sure, there is a French gentleman who yields to an English base-born (Pistol) and begs his life in a servile manner (Henry V IV.iv); however, this rare incident occurs probably because of the English dramatist's patriotism that sometimes has priority over his class-consciousness.<sup>12</sup> In King Lear Shakespeare has his choleric King kill the murderer, whereas the villainous messenger of the source play domineers over Leir and then, suddenly stricken with remorse, spares his life. In his play Shakespeare drastically reduces the role of the messenger. For instance, Lear's would-be murderer appears on stage fleetingly, whereas the messenger of the source play appears in its several scenes; accordingly, Shakespeare drops all of the villain's insolent actions and language. The playwright also omits the incident in which the murderer, moved by Leir and Perillus's pleas, becomes remorseful and spares their lives; Shakespeare's base-born characters scarcely ever act upon their moral judgment.

Shakespeare's transformation of Leir into Lear ("every

inch a king") is not the only clue to the playwright's penchant for royal blood; the same tendency is evident in his omission of Cordella's egalitarian attitude toward marriage. In King Leir, Cordella is willing to undertake a cross-class marriage in her romantic love for a poor palmer (although he turns out to be the French King). With her characteristic directness, Cordella urges the Palmer to marry her without any scruples, for "What e're you be, of high or low discent, / All's one to me" (11.717-18). Shakespeare omits this episode, his Cordelia marrying the French King who does not disguise himself as a peasant. Shakespeare's entire body of plays never dramatize a cross-class match, as his highborn characters firmly object to it: Sir Toby in Twelfth Night pokes fun at Malvolio's ambition to wed Olivia; in The Winter's Tale Polixenes strongly objects to his son's marriage with Perdita, a seeming peasant girl; in All's Well That Ends Well Bertram resents his forced marriage with Helena, a mere physician's daughter<sup>13</sup>. Samuel A. Tannenbaum incorrectly views Imogen's marriage with Posthumus in Cymbeline as a cross-class match. He labels Posthumus as a man of "obscure and humble family" (154), although the play provides much evidence to prove him a gentleman. At the beginning of the play, Posthumus is described as a "poor but worthy gentleman" (I.i.7), and it is heredity--not poverty or wealth--that determines Shakespeare's division of his characters into the gentry and the base-born. The two Gentlemen keep on calling him a

"gentleman" (I.i.34,39), having as parents the heroic warrior Leonatus ("lion-born") and "his gentle lady" (I.i.38). At the Court, he is so highly esteemed for his "So fair an outward and such stuff within" that "not a courtier . . . hath a heart that is not / Glad at the thing [his marriage]" (I.i.23, 12-15). Most of Shakespeare's base-born characters do not harbor such presumption as to wish to marry their social betters; if they do, they end up with experiencing such humiliating frustrations as Malvolio undergoes in Twelfth Night. Although Malvolio alludes to a yeoman who married the Lady of the Strachy (II.v.39-40), such precedents occurred so rarely as to be scandalous in the hierarchical society of the Elizabethan period. Elizabethan physiology defined semen as white blood-- "nothing else but Blood, made White by the Naturall Heat," according to Jacques Ferrand in Erotomania, or a Treatise of Love (261). The age therefore held that through copulation husband and wife shared the same blood, and Shakespeare's plays often reflect this view: the Clown of All's Well That Ends Well says that "He that comforts my wife is the cherisher of my flesh and blood" (II.iii.46-47); Portia in Julius Caesar claims to be "stronger than [her] sex" because she, as Cato's daughter and Brutus's wife ("Being so father'd and so husbanded"), must possess their superior bloods (II.i.293-97). It is then obvious that Shakespeare objects to a cross-class marriage in order to avoid a fusion of gentle and base bloods. His omission in King Lear of

Cordella's desire for a cross-class love-match thus points to his ever reverential attitude toward royal blood--his strong wish to keep the blood of royal personages pure and intact from bloods of lesser qualities. Although Shakespeare often presents romantic love marriages, especially in his comedies and romances, he does not cross the boundaries of base and gentle in coupling his lovers.

The rest of the Lear family in King Lear, Goneril and Regan, represent the case of degenerate royal blood, as Albany denounces them as "most degenerate" daughters (IV.ii.43). Noble blood could become common by losing its heat and quantity, as amply illustrated throughout Shakespeare's plays. The aging process diminished both the amount and temperature of blood, although such eminent royals as Lear and Duncan (and perhaps Julius Caesar) are immune to degeneracy even in old age. The effects of diabolism could be another cause of degeneracy, for devils were thought to suck human blood, a trouble plaguing Joan de Pucelle in 1 Henry VI (although she cannot degenerate because she is base of birth) and perhaps Lady Macbeth as well. Extreme fear could affect one's blood, as Caesar's ghost makes Brutus' blood cold (Julius Caesar IV.iii.280). Excessive venery caused loss of blood--semen was "white blood"--thus causing such deterioration in character as Antony undergoes intermittently in Antony and Cleopatra; John Makluire states in The Buckler of Bodilie Health, "The immoderate use of this natural exercise [venery] doth weaken

the body, and hinder all generation, and the inordinate doth procreate weake and unable birth" (72). Grief could consume blood too, as the Queen in 2 Henry VI alludes to "blood-drinking sighs" (III.ii.63); she reinforces this point by again saying, "Oft have I heard that grief softens the mind, / And makes it fearful and degenerate" (IV.iv.1-2). Gross food could impair blood, as "cold dishes" (Cymbeline II.iii.114) and "broken meats" (King Lear II.ii.15) are associated with peasantry. Another, perhaps the most potent, cause of degeneracy was having sexual relationships with the base-born, which would cause the influx of their base bloods through semen. Although Shakespeare's plays present no explicit case of a cross-class marriage, some noblemen like Gloucester in Lear engage in sex with some women of obscure origin; as a result, they not only debase their own persons but also beget bastards--such as Edmund, Don John in Much Ado, and Thersites in Troilus and Cressida--whose nature is evil due to their base birth (Draper, "Bastardy" 130-34). Shakespeare's plays show that the sublime blood of royalty, with very few exceptions, is also vulnerable to these causes of degeneracy; Henry IV speaks of Hal, fearing for the Prince's bad company, "Most subject is fattest soil to weeds" (2 Henry IV IV.iv.54).

In Shakespeare's plays, Goneril and Regan are two most degenerate royal members who exemplify the last line of his Sonnet 94--"Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds." Goneril and Regan's degeneracy--as evidenced by their

hypocrisy, filial ingratitude, cruelty, and lust--is so striking a contrast to their sister's virtues that Kent proclaims that "one self mate and make could not beget / Such different issues" (IV.iii.34-35). A. C. Bradley touches upon Shakespeare's interest in the matter of blood-based heredity when he comments on Kent's passage that "Shakespeare had been musing over heredity, and wondering how it comes about that the composition of two strains of blood or two parent souls can produce such astonishingly different products" (266); however, Bradley does not develop this matter as the present study attempts to do. It is indeed perplexing to the blood-conscious author that the virtuous Cordelia's two sisters behave so wickedly in spite of their royal blood. However, Shakespeare could not alter their evil nature, which had been firmly established in many previous accounts of the Lear legend such as Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae, Holinshed's The Second Booke of the Historie of England, John Higgins' The Mirror for Magistrates, Spenser's The Faerie Queene, and Shakespeare's primary source the anonymous The True Chronicle Historie of King Leir. Still, Shakespeare does what he can do to alleviate his puzzlement over the villainous royal members. Departing from (or reinforcing) his sources, he suggests some possible causes of Goneril's degeneracy--her bastardy, adultery, and diabolic nature--which can account for her villainy. Although Regan seems to suffer less from these evil causes than Goneril, Shakespeare

on the whole treats Regan as another Goneril; throughout the play, Regan is her sister's equal in hypocrisy, cruelty, lust, and fiendishness.

Although none of his sources allude to Goneril's birth, Shakespeare has his Lear once imply that she is an illegitimate child, and once declare her to be so. Noticing the first sign of her impudence in Act I, Lear questions her, "Are you our daughter?" (I.iv.218). When he is more convinced of her filial ingratitude, he declares that she is a "Degenerate bastard" (I.iv.254). In the next act, Lear again identifies disobedient children with bastards: he tells Regan that her ingratitude "would divorce me from thy mother's tomb, / Sepulchring an adult'ress" (II.iv.131-32). Filial piety was an indispensable virtue for Elizabethan gentry, who greatly valued their own family lines. Cordelia, the non-degenerate princess, describes parent-child relationship as a "bond" (I.i.93), meaning a natural tie. She bears no grudge against her father who disinherited her, but devotes herself to restoring his former status: "O dear father, / It is thy business that I go about" (IV.iv.23-24). She even sacrifices her life for him, which Lear exalts as an action in compliance with the divine law of Nature: "Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia, / The gods themselves throw incense" (V,iii,20-21). Lear, as well as Kent, wonders how he and his dead wife--"one self mate and make"--could beget such different children, two disobedient and one obedient. Therefore, he attributes

Goneril and Regan's ingratitude to their possible illegitimacy. If their mother had been adulterous before Goneril and Regan were born, her copulations with a man of lesser blood (possibly a base-born person) would have debased her royal blood as well as the blood of her bastard children; then, their degenerate or base blood would cause their vicious nature. Albany endorses Lear's view when he judges Lear's two disobedient daughters, whose nature "contemns its origin," as "Most barbarous, most degenerate" (IV.ii.32,43).

In order to provide another potent cause of her degeneracy, Shakespeare makes Goneril an adulteress who has two or more base-born lovers; none of his sources, primary or possible, suggest her adultery. The play twice hints at her sexual relationships with Oswald, her base-born steward. Regan once tells Oswald that "I know you are of her [Goneril's] bosom" (IV.v.26); one supposes that Regan means adultery here because she uses a similar expression regarding Edmund's sexual alliance with Goneril: "I am doubtful that you [Edmund] have been conjunct / And bosom'd with her" (V.i.12-13). After killing Oswald, Edgar speaks to the corpse, "I know thee well; a serviceable villain, / As duteous to the vices of thy mistress / As badness would desire" (IV.vi.251-53). This speech strongly suggests that Oswald, like Poor Tom in the same play, "serv'd the lust of my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with her" (III.iv.86-88): Oswald's present and Poor Tom's past are

almost identical as are Kent's tirade against Oswald (II.ii) and Poor Tom's account of his past career as a servingman (III.iv). Also hinted in the play is Oswald's role as a pander of providing Goneril with other lovers: Kent calls Oswald a "pandar," "one that wouldst be a bawd in way of good service" (II.ii.19-22). Goneril's adulterous relationship with the bastard Edmund is more explicit. They have exchanged "reciprocal vows," and Goneril addresses herself as Edmund's wife (IV.vi.262,270) although Albany, her lawful husband, is alive. The passage in which she tells Edmund that their kiss "Would stretch thy spirits up into the air" (IV.ii.23), with its strong sexual innuendo, best illustrates her lustful nature. One can assume that her recurrent sexual activities with her base-born lovers would constantly debase her blood, the condition of which then would cause her evil nature. She plots to murder her highborn husband in her love for a mere "Half-blooded fellow" (V.iii.80); she poisons her sister in order to keep the bastard to herself. Edmund's personal charm seems to fall short of a sufficient motive for her all such atrocious crimes; indeed, something evil runs in her blood. One may also consider Regan's unseemly love for Edmund as a sign of her degeneracy. Her affection for the bastard unfolds her shamelessness; for instance, shortly after her husband's death, Regan declares in public that "I create thee [Edmund] here / My lord and master" (V.iii.77-78), totally ignoring Goneril's and Albany's accusation of indecorum against her.

Still another cause of Goneril's and Regan's degeneracy is their diabolic nature. Perillus in King Leir once calls Gonorill a devil: "thou monster, shame unto thy sexe: / Thou fiend in likenesse of a humane creature" (11.2581-82). This incidental remark develops into a leitmotif in King Lear, in which Goneril and Regan (especially the former) are recurrently compared to, or identified with, devils. Lear personifies Goneril's "Ingratitude" to identify it as a "marble-hearted fiend, / More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child / Than the sea-monster" (I.iv.259-61). He then curses her with production of a monstrous child: "base things sire base," says Belarius in Cymbeline (IV.ii.26). Lear also calls both Goneril and Regan "wicked creatures" and "unnatural hags" (II.iv.256,278). Albany is Lear's equal in condemning Goneril as a "devil": "thou art a fiend, / A woman's shape doth shield thee" (IV.ii.59, 66-67). If Lear and Albany are correct, Goneril's mind (and Regan's too, according to Lear) is dominated by a devil, although she retains her body in a woman's shape. The devil, by its nature, will constantly suck her blood derived from her royal mother (although the mother's blood itself would have been partly contaminated if, as Lear supposes, she had been adulterous) and daily produced by her royal diet.<sup>14</sup> When Lear wonders at Regan's cruelty--"let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that make these hard hearts?" (III.vi.76-78)--we may attribute the cause to the devil that, firmly settled in her

heart, gradually debases her nature by diminishing her blood. In Shakespeare's canon, one finds another ungrateful daughter engaged in diabolism, Joan de Pucelle, who not only denies her father to his face but also calls him a "base ignoble wretch" (1 Henry VI V.iv.7-9). She summons fiends who are her "familiar spirits" and whom she was "wont to feed . . . with my blood" (V.iii.10,14). One assumes that her filial ingratitude is an effect of her base blood that is impaired anew by the fiends. Lady Macbeth also invokes evil spirits to "fill me from the crown to the toe topful / Of direct cruelty!" (Macbeth I.v.42). She then invites them to "Make thick my blood" and "Come to my woman's breasts"<sup>15</sup> (I.v.43,47). One may attribute Lady Macbeth's vicious nature, as well as her infertility,<sup>16</sup> to her blood spoiled and diminished by the devils. Goneril and Regan, however, are more diabolic in nature than Lady Macbeth. However treacherous and cruel she is, Lady Macbeth at least suffers some qualms of conscience that compel her to re-enact the murder of Duncan in the famous sleep-walking scene. Goneril and Regan have no voice of conscience at all; with all their atrocities, they are never remorseful. One possible reason why Goneril and Regan are more degenerate than Lady Macbeth is that their fiends are ever present in their hearts (as Lear and Albany suppose) whereas Lady Macbeth's evil spirits visit her only when invoked; obviously, the former have more opportunities to feed on human blood.

When the royal family of King Lear ceases to rule

Britain--Lear and Cordelia tragically (or rather heroically) dead, and Goneril and Regan disqualified to rule on account of their degenerate blood even if they were alive-- Shakespeare considers either Edgar or Kent as the next king who will inaugurate another royal line. Toward the end of the play, Albany tells both Edgar and Kent, "Friends of my soul, you twain / Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain" (V.iii.320-21). Of the two candidates to succeed Lear, Shakespeare's ultimate choice is Edgar--Kent is about to die--who, by virtue of his youth, can rule longer and whose blood has been less subject to the aging process than Kent's. Shakespeare's plays comply with the monarchic necessity that whatever causes a royal line to cease, a new one must begin. When Richard II is dethroned with no son, Shakespeare rather endorses the succession of the usurper Bolingbroke, Duke of Hereford, because this lord presumably possesses purer Plantagenet blood than the King; Richard II's homosexual relationships with his minions, such as Bushy and Green, must have debased his royal blood considerably, and the King is therefore branded as a "most degenerate king" (II.i.262). Shakespeare's idealization of the English hero-king Henry V (the second Lancastrian king) in the Henry IV plays and Henry V again testifies to the playwright's approval of the Lancastrian succession to the throne. When Richard III has murdered all the Yorkist contenders and is killed himself, the Earl of Richmond, who not only has the best claim to the throne on the Lancastrian

side but also has married the Yorkist princess, comes to the throne to found the Tudor dynasty. And Shakespeare's enthusiasm for this new dynasty is evident in Henry VI's auspicious prophecy on the Earl of Richmond (3 Henry VI IV.vi.68-76) as well as Cranmer's on the infant girl (Henry VIII V.iv.14-55) that is to become Queen Elizabeth in Shakespeare's time. It is indeed strange that the Duke of Albany, who outranks Edgar and Kent (both are earls) and thus has the best claim to the British throne after Lear's death, should resign the kingship to Edgar and Kent, unless Shakespeare has the duke do so for physiological reasons. Albany reveals some signs of degeneracy, perhaps because he is the husband of the diabolic Goneril whose base or degenerate blood would impair his night after night. For example, he cannot effectively stop his wife from mistreating her father; therefore, his wife is right in attributing to him "milky gentleness" and "want of wisdom" (I.iv.341,343). Goneril again calls him a "Milk-liver'd man" and even a "vain fool" (IV.ii.50,61): a whitish liver, which produced little or no blood, indicated cowardice, a common effect of base blood (Berkeley 67); besides, a fool is often a code-word for base-borns in Shakespeare.<sup>17</sup> To be sure, Albany's character grows in the course of the play, and one may suppose that the duke is to be the next king since the play's last four lines are assigned to him in the Quarto text. This interpretation, however, does not account for Albany's offer of the throne to Edgar (or Kent);

moreover, it is Edgar who utters the last speech in the Folio text. Overall Albany is no match for Edgar in kingly qualities; it is for the good of the kingdom that the degenerate duke resigns the throne to Edgar, whose noble blood is evidenced by his superior human qualities such as noble appearance, politic discretion, martial skills, and filial piety. Shakespeare portrays Edgar, the new king of Britain at the end of King Lear, as another "every inch a king," who is comparable with his predecessor Lear and the country's later hero-king Henry V. It befits Edgar's character that his prototype was a noble prince--Leonatus in Sidney's Arcadia, from which Shakespeare derived the second plot of King Lear.

In his effort to qualify Edgar as the next King of Britain, Shakespeare is quite faithful to his source in transferring Leonatus's princely qualities to Edgar. The playwright even changes some incidents in the source so as to stress Edgar's superiority to Leonatus in certain aspects. Leonatus, as well as his father (the King of Paphlagonia), has an air of distinction even under unlikely circumstances: "yet through all these miseries, in both these [Leonatus and his blinded father] seemed to appear a kind of noblenesse, not sutable to that affliction" (Bullough, 7: 403). Similarly, Edgar's "outside looks so fair and warlike" that Edmund waives the "rule of knighthood" that exempts him from a judicial combat with a person below his rank (V.iii.143,146).<sup>18</sup> Moreover, Albany

tells Edgar that "Methought thy very gait did prophesy / A royal nobleness" (emphasis added) (V.iii.176-77). Just as Leonatus manages to survive by hiding himself from the world, so does Edgar succeed in concealing his identity by handling all sorts of disguises with the utmost ingenuity. Edgar's disguise is parallel to the politic concealment of Prince Hal, who hides his essential nature from pure policy in the Henry IV plays. The art of dissimulation was a great virtue for Renaissance princes and other gentlemen, for they believed that a man who constantly discloses all his purposes would be victimized by his enemies. Edgar manages this art most competently in that he can control his emotions, that he reveals his identity only when the occasion is right, and that his concealment helps him win his restoration. Indeed, Leonatus is not so adept in the art of dissimulation as Edgar, whose perfection in this art promises a more successful career as a ruler than his prototype.

Another princely quality of Leonatus is his martial competence. When hired as a private soldier in a country of exile, he is "redy to be greatly advaunced for some noble peeces of service" (Bullough, 7: 405). When confronted single-handedly with Plexirtus, his wicked half brother, and his forty attendants, Leonatus "made the death of the first that assalted him, warne his fellowes to come more warily after him" (Bullough, 7: 406); this fight is parallel to Edgar's slaying of Oswald. In addition, speaking of

Leonatus's siege of his half brother, the narrator "cannot but acknowledge the prowess of those two brothers [Leonatus and Plexirtus], then whom the Princes [Pyrocles and Musidorus] never found in all their travell two men of greater habilitie to performe" (Bullough, 7: 407). Although Sidney's story is not concerned with determining who is the mightier warrior of the two brothers, Shakespeare invents a judicial battle in which Edgar vanquishes Edmund so as to make Edgar appear a more potent military hero than his prototype.

Leonatus is also an exemplary son who risks his life for his father, although the father previously gave an order to kill the son. Likewise, Edgar protects his blinded father from all dangers, such as Oswald's assault and the old man's attempt to commit suicide, although his father's displeasure formerly endangered Edgar's safety. Edgar's extraordinary filial piety impresses Gloucester so much as to cause the father's heartbreak, which is a sign of Gloucester's noble blood. Edgar's blood is also hot and abundant enough to permit heartbreak: Edgar says when reporting on his father's death, "when 'tis told, O that my heart would burst!" (V.iii.183). Finally, as Leonatus becomes the next king of Paphlagonia, so is Edgar nominated for the kingship by the Duke of Albany.

Shakespeare, however, departs from Sidney in that he stresses more than his predecessor the Elizabethan theory of hereditary virtue that legitimate children are superior in

human qualities to their illegitimate counterparts. Departing from Sidney's story, Shakespeare makes Edmund a foil to Edgar. Although Edmund is handsome (I.i.18) and "valiant" (V.iii.40), Edgar is even superior to him in both aspects. For instance, Shakespeare has Edgar kill Edmund in a duel, whereas Leonatus pardons Plexirtus in Sidney's story. Edgar is "noble / Whose nature is so far from doing harms" (I.ii.179-80), whereas Edmund's evil nature was prenatally determined because of his bastardy: Edgar condemns Edmund's mother's womb as "The dark and vicious place where thee [Edmund] he [Gloucester] got" (V.iii.173). As for their filial behavior, Edgar is a most dutiful son, whereas Edmund betrays his father to usurp his title. On the whole, Shakespeare makes Edgar a parallel to Cordelia in that they are both of noble nature and dutiful children, whereas Edmund is similar to Goneril and Regan in that they are all vicious in nature and ungrateful to their fathers. Shakespeare of course frustrates Edmund's mounting ambition that has widened its scope from dispossessing his father to ascending the throne. Lear's successor is rightfully Edgar, whose hereditary worth is amply proven by his various kingly qualities: noble appearance, politic discretion, martial prowess, and filial piety.

Albany names Kent as another candidate to succeed Lear--i.e., the founder of a new royal family--although Kent's imminent death prevents him from considering this offer. Kent is a much nobler character than Perillus, his

prototype in King Lear, who seems to have no other virtue than loyalty. Kent's blood is rich enough to burst his heart twice in the play, whereas Perillus never experiences the same. Edgar reports that when Kent recounts "the most piteous tale of Lear and him . . . / His grief grew puissant and the strings of life [heart-strings] / Began to crack" (V.iii.215-18). Kent is again heartbroken at Lear's death: "Break, heart, I prithee break!" (V.iii.313). Kent is choleric, valiant, and physically strong in contrast to the timid Perillus, who trembles at the appearance of the base-born murderer, the Messenger. Kent does not tolerate Oswald's impertinence towards Lear in Act I: he denounces the steward as a "base football player" (I.iv.86)<sup>19</sup> and trips him up. Oswald, Goneril's base-born steward, has no prototype in King Lear; Shakespeare invented him as a foil to Kent. When Kent encounters Oswald again before Gloucester's castle, he pours out a most class-conscious tirade against the base-born upstart: "A knave, a rascal, an eater of broken meats . . . a lily-liver'd, action-taking, whoreson . . ." (II.ii.15-24). Kent then challenges Oswald to fight and beats him, and Oswald's cowardice--his failure to stand up against Kent--confirms his base origin. Rosalie L. Colie aptly views Kent's outburst against Oswald as "that of the old aristocrat, against the falsity of a cowardly, braggart 'new' man, a nobody" (204). Kent's loyalty--he is more loyal than Perillus<sup>20</sup>--is different in kind from the sycophantic subservience of Oswald. Whereas Oswald's

servile nature makes him obey whatever his evil mistress bids (with no personal judgment of right and wrong), Kent's independent spirit and moral integrity make him loyal to truth as well as to his king. Therefore, Kent stands up against Lear when the King's blind judgment endangers not only his own well-being but also the integrity of the whole kingdom. Moreover, Kent's freedom of speech in the presence of a king, which is indeed unparalleled in Shakespeare's entire canon, raises his dignity so much as to justify Albany's offer of kingship to him.

In sum, King Lear reflects Shakespeare's preoccupation with the "blood royal"--his consistent efforts to assign the throne of Britain to the rightful ruler whose untainted royal blood guarantees his excellent leadership. Lear's hot and abundant blood, as well as his choleric humor, qualifies him as a rightful sovereign of Britain. Lear's countenance, undoubtedly noble and ruddy by virtue of his royal blood, indeed evokes others' voluntary subjection to his authority, as Kent tells the King, "you have that [authority] in your countenance which I would fain call master" (I.iv.27-28). When degenerate royal personages, such as Goneril and Regan, come to the throne, the whole kingdom sinks into the chaotic world as foreshadowed in the storm scene. If any base-born upstarts, such as Edmund, dream of ascending the throne, their ambition should be frustrated. Finally, when a royal line ceases to continue, the throne should be transferred to a non-degenerate nobleman like Edgar, whose blood is

wholesome enough to found another royal family.

Shakespeare's blood-conscious modifications of his sources in King Lear corroborate the playwright's penchant for royal blood. None of Shakespeare's sources mention Lear's heartbreak--a definite sign of his hot, abundant blood in extreme old age--that occurs three times in his play; indeed, neither degenerate gentles nor base-borns experience heartbreak in the play. In contrast to the weak, submissive Leir of his primary source, Shakespeare's Lear is physically strong despite his old age and highly choleric in temper: cholera, by reason of its heat, often accompanies fine blood. Unlike Perillus in King Leir, no subject of Lear in Shakespeare's play is so presumptuous as to offer his blood to his sovereign, for the keenly blood-conscious dramatist would not allow a fusion of royal blood with lesser blood. For the same reason, Shakespeare's Cordelia never harbors such an egalitarian sentiment as her prototype's willingness to marry a palmer of obscure origin; such a cross-class match would debase the prime blood of the Princess. Shakespeare also attributes the degeneracy of Goneril and Regan to some blood-related causes--such as bastardy, cross-class copulations, and diabolism--that hardly appear in his sources. As for the two candidates for the next king, the playwright changes his source's timid Perillus into the valiant Kent whose strength, cholera, ability to experience heartbreak, and independent spirit all testify his hereditary worth. Shakespeare also invents a

foil to Kent, Oswald, whose subservience and cowardice highlight Kent's virtues by way of contrast. Edgar, Shakespeare's ultimate choice for Lear's successor, has a royal prototype (Leonatus) whose princely qualities--noble appearance, martial prowess, and filial piety--manifest themselves to a higher degree in the next king of Britain. Finally, Shakespeare's incorporation of Sidney's story in Arcadia into the Lear legend--which no author had attempted before--reinforces the playwright's blood themes: Edgar is parallel to Cordelia in possessing fine blood that is the source of their filial piety; Edmund's base blood is akin to Goneril and Regan's degenerate blood, and they are all disobedient children.

In his controversial treatise Tolstoy on Shakespeare, Tolstoy unconvincingly claims that King Lear is "incomparably and in every respect superior to Shakespeare's adaptation [King Lear]" (62). As a main reason for the inferiority of King Lear, Tolstoy points out the play's class-bias toward the aristocracy (114). Tolstoy perhaps perceives, although he does not mention, Shakespeare's preoccupation with royal blood in the play, which indeed intimates the playwright's great regard for royal personages. However, Tolstoy fails to discern that Shakespeare's blood-conscious modifications of his sources in King Lear have many positive artistic effects on the play. As "every inch a king," Lear is a much richer character--majestic, passionate, and strong--than his

prototype Leir, who is a doddering old man depicted as having no depth. Similarly, Kent is a more complex character than Perillus, who is merely a type of "loyal subject" with little individuality: Kent's kingly qualities--truthfulness, choler, and independent spirit--make him a man of strong personality. Shakespeare also provides some physiological rationales for the degeneracy of Goneril and Regan, who are little more than types of "ungrateful children" in his sources. Moreover, Shakespeare's blood theme encompasses--and thus gives a unity to--most of the themes appearing in his sources: to name some, filial ingratitude, anger, illegitimacy, loyalty, nature, divine justice, and so forth. And his fusion of the two plots--derived from King Leir and Arcadia--reinforces the master theme of blood by way of parallel and contrast. Such thematic and structural unities of King Lear prove Shakespeare's superb craftsmanship as a dramatist.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> All quotations from Shakespeare come from The Riverside Shakespeare.

<sup>2</sup> Although there had been many preceding Lear stories, the anonymous play was no doubt the major source of Shakespeare's King Lear (Bullough 276; Satin 445; Muir, Sources 197).

<sup>3</sup> Most source scholars agree that the Edgar-Edmund-Gloucester plot derived from the story of the Paphlagonian king in Sidney's romance (Ribner 63-68; Bullough 284; Satin 446; Muir, Sources 201).

<sup>4</sup> This refers to melancholy of the base Galenic kind--i.e., "villainous melancholy" (King Lear I.ii.135)--which should be distinguished from "the fashionable pseudo-Aristotelian melancholy linking Olivia, Orsino, and Viola of Twelfth Night and other gentles like Hamlet" (Berkeley 9).

<sup>5</sup> According to Elizabethan physiologists, three degrees of spirits--"generative," "vital," and "animal"--were distilled from blood one after another, each carrying on different functions. Gentle blood could produce all the three kinds of spirits, whereas base-borns, because of the paucity of their blood, could afford only "generative spirits," which were thought responsible for corporeal functions such as "nutrition, growth, and reproduction"

(Berkeley 10).

<sup>6</sup> Holinshed reports that "after it was perceived how negligent he [Duncan] was in punishing offenders, manie misruled persons tooke occasion thereof to trouble the peace and quiet state of the common-wealth" (488).

<sup>7</sup> Leir and Perillus are different in class because the gentry can be divided into many sub-classes.

<sup>8</sup> Draper regards Orlando as one of the most sanguine characters in Shakespeare's plays (Humors 23-24).

<sup>9</sup> Huarte's description includes both groups in Draper's astrological subdivision of the choleric type: i.e., "those more violent under the planet Mars, appropriate to soldiers and ambitious schemers, and those more pleasing under the benign influence of the sun, including courtiers . . ." (Humors 45).

<sup>10</sup> Draper correctly identifies Malvolio's dominant humor as choler: "Indeed, choler, expressed in pride, seems to guide the course that Malvolio steers throughout the comedy" (Twelfth Night 104). Draper, however, fails to see melancholy as another prevailing humor of Malvolio, although all the data he has gathered from Elizabethan physiology indicate that most of Malvolio's character traits--vengefulness, sullenness, bitter witticism, obstinacy, greed, solitariness, laboriousness, etc.--are those of a thorough melancholiac of the bad Galenic type (Twelfth Night 100-101).

<sup>11</sup> Among Shakespeare's characters, there are three

exceptional base-borns who, according to their own moral judgment, rise up against their social betters: Jack Cade in 2 Henry VI, Malvolio in Twelfth Night, and Cornwall's First Servant. However, Shakespeare portrays these characters in a ludicrous or incidental manner. He makes Cade a braggart as well as an impostor whose claim to descent from the family of Mortimer is absurd; in addition, Cade's "stinking breath" (IV.vii.12) is an indisputable sign of his base origin, for none of Shakespeare's gentles manifest that stigma. Shakespeare humiliates Malvolio, the upstart steward like Oswald, frustrating his ambition to rise in the social structure. Cornwall's First Servant, who rises up against his master's savage cruelty, is merely an incidental character who appears on stage momentarily and is forgotten soon. It is not likely that Shakespeare was propagandizing levelling ideas by creating these three exceptional base-borns.

<sup>12</sup> For instance, the base-born English soldiers in Henry V, though starved and outnumbered, fight so valiantly as to win the Battle of Agincourt, which utterly humiliates the French aristocracy. Shakespeare's extraordinary patriotism causes another notable change from King Leir to King Lear: his deliberate reversal of the French conquest of Britain.

<sup>13</sup> Although physicians, as well as teachers and clergy, were considered gentlemen "by right of university degree" (Berkeley 13), they were inferior to gentlemen by blood: it

took many generations to produce a well-qualified gentleman (Markham 47-48).

<sup>14</sup> John Huarte stresses the importance of choice diet in sustaining the high blood of the gentry; for instance, "the meat be delicat and of good temperature, of such is the bloud made; and of such bloud such seed [semen]" (303).

<sup>15</sup> The physiological books of Shakespeare's age regarded human milk as a form of blood--"blood dealbated or thrice concocted," according to Tobias Whitaker (30).

<sup>16</sup> The devils would prevent her pregnancy by consuming her husband's semen ("white blood"), which is daily transferred to her uterus through their supposedly frequent copulations (the Macbeths are determined to have an heir).

<sup>17</sup> D. E., Doctor of Physick, associates stupidity with plebianism when he asserts that if the blood is thick and gross, "the minde is dull and sad" (4-5); so does Babb, when he comments that "black bile [melancholy] and its vapors disorder the physical instruments of perception and thought" (29).

<sup>18</sup> Edgar's fine speech--another gentlemanly quality in Shakespeare (Two Gentlemen of Verona III.i.104-105, IV.i.55; Twelfth Night II.iv.23)--also impresses Edmund (V.iii.144).

<sup>19</sup> Playing football was a lower-class diversion in Shakespeare's day.

<sup>20</sup> Kent's voluntary return to serve Lear, who has banished him, is more impressive than Perillus's continuation in Leir's service.

## CHAPTER V

"TRIUMPH OF BLOOD" FROM "TRIUMPH OF TIME":

### THE WINTER'S TALE FROM PANDOSTO

The primary source of The Winter's Tale is Robert Greene's Pandosto: The Triumph of Time, whose chief moral, as its title states, is that "time will tell." Greene introduces his story as one, "Wherein is discovered by a pleasant Historie, that although by the meanes of sinister fortune, Truth may be concealed yet by Time in spite of fortune it is most manifestly revealed" (157). Greene's Time, thus set in opposition to Fortune, serves to rescue men from Fortune's tyranny; therefore, it is Time, rather than humans, that works out the happy ending of Pandosto. Shakespeare, however, changes Greene's benevolent Time into something identifiable with Greene's fickle Fortune, who manipulates human events as she pleases<sup>1</sup>; Shakespeare's Time, appearing as a choric character in the middle of the play, claims that he tries all things: "I that please some, try all: both joy and terror / Of good and bad" (IV.i.1-2).<sup>2</sup> Critics who fail to notice this change tend to view Time as the sole agent that brings about the happy resolution of The Winter's Tale as well as of its source: Gareth L. Evans, for instance, comments that "As in Greene's tale, for

Shakespeare the role of Time is to heal, to right wrong, to expunge evil . . . " (368). In fact, the play owes its happy ending more to its characters than to Time, as Geoffrey Bullough aptly comments: "Shakespeare, unlike Greene, manipulates events more through character than through Time" (8: 143). Indeed, Shakespeare highlights human merits more than anything else in the play and he, as is usual in his entire canon, attributes each character's worthiness to the quality of his or her blood. The Winter's Tale thus greatly departs from Pandosto in focus--from "the triumph of time" to "the triumph of blood."

A few critics have noticed the theme of blood-consciousness in the play. Albert H. Tolman observes that Perdita's exquisite refinement and marvelous knowledge, which she has acquired without any means of education, are all explained by her "mere possession of royal blood" (288). G. Wilson Knight also finds in the play a "close association of royalty . . . with superhuman strength and wisdom" (119). Leonard Tennenhouse ascribes the last scene, in which the Queen's statue comes to life, to Shakespeare's reverence for royalty (184-85). In their "Blood-Consciousness as a Theme in The Winter's Tale," David S. Berkeley and Zahra Karimipour give the fullest discussion so far of the blood theme of the play. Calling Perdita "a marvel of gentility in unlikely circumstances" (90), they attribute all her wondrous qualities--extraordinary beauty, intelligence, and a wider range of emotion--to her royal birth. They also

find in the Shepherd and Clown "all qualities of the base-- e.g., cowardice, stupidity, lack of honor, ugliness of face and figure" (91). They further point out that Shakespeare made three important changes from Pandosto in order to stress the class-originated folly and cowardice of the baseborn father and son: i.e., the Shepherd's and the Clown's delusion that they are gentled by wearing upper-class clothing (93); the Clown's cowardice and lack of "honor" as revealed in his failure to aid Antigonus in the bear scene (95); and Shakespeare's unwillingness to knight the foolish, cowardly father and son (95). Berkeley and Karimipour's article, however, provides no more comparisons between the play and Pandosto. Therefore, the present chapter attempts to reinforce the blood theme of The Winter's Tale through a thorough comparison between the play and its source. Indeed, in the play one finds that Shakespeare tends to put more distance between gentles and baseborns than he found in Pandosto: he frequently modifies Greene's story so as to portray his gentleborn characters in a more favorable light than other ranks.

Many critics have condemned Leontes as an obnoxious character whose motiveless jealousy ruins not only himself but also many innocent persons around him: Granville-Barker views the play as "a study of jealousy indeed, perverse, ignoble, pitiable" because "Leontes has, as far as we can see, hardly the shadow of an excuse for his suspicion" (21). G. Wilson Knight observes that "He [Leontes] has allowed

himself to be temporarily possessed, dominated, by something in himself which, given power, has 'transported' him, that is, changed his nature as by magic" (94); elsewhere Knight identifies the "something" with the devil (84,86,91). Ann J. Cook pictures the King as "a man locked in the torments of groundless but obsessive jealousy" (23). These critics, in their preoccupation with Leontes' jealousy, overlook the fact that Shakespeare makes the King, with the single exception of his jealousy, an admirable character.

Shakespeare could not leave out Leontes' jealousy which, like Lear's blind judgment, derives from an intractable source that provides the major conflict of the play:

Bullough says, "Leontes's jealousy, like Lear's division of his kingdom and his love-test, is a postulate which we must accept" (8: 137). Leontes's jealousy also signifies his temporary degeneration to which almost all humans--especially highborn persons, because "Most subject is fattest soil to weeds" (2 Henry IV IV.iv.54)--are subject; in this regard, Knight's attribution of Leontes's jealousy to diabolism suggests a blood-related cause of the King's brief deterioration. Shakespeare's kings are by no means free from errors but, except for some most degenerate kings like Richard II, they are restored to their original integrity in character: e.g., Leontes, Lear, and Cymbeline. Leontes is, as Eric Johns comments on Gielgud's performance as the King, "a great man with a mistaken passion [like Lear] . . . [who] repents after great suffering" (7).

Except for the brief period during which he is afflicted with jealousy, Leontes is almost a flawless king whose royal blood manifests itself in his excellent human qualities such as fortitude in adversity, constancy in penance, and handsomeness; in these qualities and more, Shakespeare makes Leontes a king much superior to Pandosto. Pandosto's responses to the tragic deaths of his Queen and Prince are those of despair: he "sancke from his seat in a swound" (171) and, when revived, attempts suicide. Shakespeare permits his King neither to faint nor to take any desperate course. Ever after he is "touch'd / To th' noble heart" (III.ii.221-22) (emphasis added), Leontes performs "a saint-like sorrow" (V.i.1-2) carrying out his vow of daily penance (III.ii.238-242) during sixteen years<sup>3</sup>; in Pandosto the repentance of Pandosto is not emphasized. Whereas Leontes is faithful to his supposedly dead wife, Pandosto is still lustful. The backsliding King in Pandosto conceives a passion for his unknown daughter and imprisons her lover. Shakespeare omits the incest-motive that disgraces Pandosto's character again, the King's lust being more despicable than his former jealousy. When Leontes is struck by the beauty of Perdita, he shows neither lust nor rivalry with Florizel for her; instead, he gently compliments her on her beauty and promises to support the marriage of the young couple. Shakespeare also departs from Pandosto by often alluding to Leontes's handsomeness, whereas Greene never mentions Pandosto's physical

appearance. Perdita owes her matchless beauty considerably to Leontes, since Paulina calls her "copy of the father-- eye, nose, lip, / The trick of 's frown, his forehead, nay, the valley, / The pretty dimples of his chin and cheek, his smiles, . . ." (II.iii.100-102); Shakespeare also alludes to the striking resemblance between Leontes and the handsome Prince Mamillius three times (I.ii.122,130,208). Blood-originated beauty among the gentry is common in Shakespeare's canon: Venus in Venus and Adonis asserts, "Seeds spring from seeds, and beauty breedeth beauty" (l.167); Theseus in A midsummer Night's Dream reminds Hermia that her father "compos'd your beauties" (I.i.48); Faulconbridge has "a trick of Coeur-de-lion's face" (King John I.i.85). Leontes's handsome features signify his noble nature, for physical appearance often has ethical implications in Shakespeare. In Pericles, Marina tells Leonine, "You are well-favored [facially handsome], and your looks foreshow / You have a gentle heart" (IV.i.85-6). Lucrece cannot imagine Tarquin to be evil because of his extraordinarily handsome features (The Rape of Lucrece ll.1534-1535). Similarly, Miranda asserts Ferdinand's virtue on account of his handsome figure: "There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple. / If the ill spirit have so fair a house, / Good things will strive to dwell with't" (The Tempest I.ii.458-60). Furthermore, Shakespeare omits Greene's allusion to Pandosto's timidity. Though convinced of the supposed adultery of Egistus and Bellaria, Pandosto

gives up taking revenge on Egistus, for Egistus's "great puissance and prowess" as well as his powerful allies "daunted Pandosto his courage" (164). Shakespeare drops this concern of Pandosto that weakens the King's character again; instead, he transfers Pandosto's timidity—"willing mind but a weake arm" (164)—to the base-born Shepherd, who is too cowardly to act on his moral decisions. Finally, Leontes is amply rewarded for his noble qualities, especially for his exemplary fortitude and penance: above all, Leontes is reunited with his supposedly dead Queen, whereas Pandosto ends up with committing suicide.<sup>4</sup> When Kenneth Muir attributes Leontes's happiness to Shakespeare's "obsession with forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration" (273), he overlooks another important obsession of the playwright—his special regard for the royal blood. It is neither Time nor Fortune, but Leontes's blood-derived human qualities that work out his eventual felicity.

Critics have showered Hermione with their praises<sup>5</sup>, but usually failing to notice that Shakespeare's idealization of the Queen reveals his blood-consciousness, his intention to highlight the extraordinary qualities of royal personages. With his usual preoccupation with the royal blood, Shakespeare portrays Hermione as a more majestic queen than her prototype in Pandosto. Hermione bears adversity more courageously than Bellaria, who is often overcome with grief and despair.<sup>6</sup> Hermione confronts Leontes's incomprehensible charge with courage and goes to prison with no tears: "I am

not prone to weeping, as our sex / Commonly are; the want of which vain dew / Perchance shall dry your pities" (II.i.108-10)). In the same scene, she even chides her women for weeping: "Do not weep, good fools, / There is no cause" (118-19). On the same occasion in Pandosto, there is no confrontation between Bellaria and Pandosto, who sends his guards to arrest her, and in the prison she spends her time "with sighs and teares" (163). Shakespeare also omits Bellaria's ensuing soliloquy in which she laments in despair: "Die then Bellaria, Bellaria die" (165). In addition to her fortitude, Shakespeare highlights Hermione's intelligence and eloquence, which are best demonstrated in the indictment scene. Bullough explains how Shakespeare expands the scene and Hermione's part in it from its counterpart in Pandosto:

Bellaria's clipped antitheses are expanded into a well-poised oration, interrupted by Leontes, but making a reasoned and total rejection of his absurd accusations. This is no shrinking Desdemona but a mature matron with an intelligence sharper than her husband's. (8: 139-40)

Another mark of Hermione's royalty is her keen blood-consciousness, her high pride in and deep concern for her royal family. Whereas Bellaria merely reminds herself in a soliloquy that she is a princess "borne to the one by discent" (165), Hermione in her grand speech calls the public's attention to her family lines of royal blood:

For behold me,  
 A fellow of the royal bed, which owe  
 A moiety of the throne, a great king's daughter,  
 The mother to a hopeful prince, . . .

(III.ii.37-40)

Hermione's pride in her family lines here is similar to that of Portia in Julius Caesar, who esteems herself for being Cato's daughter and Brutus's wife: "Being so fathered and so husbanded," Portia asserts that she is "stronger than [her] sex" (II.i.293-97). Hermione values her family so much that she would vindicate her honour not for herself but for her family (III.ii.42-45).<sup>7</sup> Hermione's royal grandeur culminates in her miraculous survival that is certainly the most drastic of the changes from Pandosto, in which Bellaria actually dies. To interpret the statue scene, in which Hermione comes back to life, in terms of its theatrical effects alone is to miss the significance of the scene in highlighting the blood theme of the whole play. It befits Hermione's royal position and quality that she acts the part of a statue, for she possesses a statue-like fortitude and majesty of both body and soul: Leontes compares the statue to her real person, "O, thus she stood, / Even with such life of majesty . . . O royal piece, / There's magic in thy majesty" (V.ii.34-39). Tennenhouse perceptively interprets the scene as Shakespeare's tribute to royalty:

In ritual fashion the aristocratic body then comes back to life part by part, each part receiving due

reverence. . . . This play works a variation on the concluding scene of Cymbeline where Jupiter's message attests that a higher law works through the royal family of Britain. With the apotheosis of Hermione performed on the stage, the aristocratic body becomes a deus ex machina in its own right. (184-85)

Shakespeare honors none of his base-born characters in such a grand manner. Greene's lachrymose Bellaria simply ends up with dying of grief.

Hermione's best native qualities reappear in Perdita, who best illustrates the theme of blood-consciousness in the play. Shakespeare highlights Perdita's royal strain so much that she appears superior to her prototype in Pandosto in every human quality: i.e., beauty, intelligence, courage, refined speech and taste, and so forth. Fawnia lacks Perdita's magic beauty, which is according to Harold Goddard "infectious in the sense that it seems to endow all who come near it . . . with the power to say something beautiful about it" (2: 268). Her breath-taking beauty evokes not only beautiful speeches, but also many class-conscious comments. For instance, Polixenes tells that her beauty is too distinguished ever to be born in a cottage:

This is the prettiest low-born lass that ever  
 Ran on the green-sord. Nothing she does, or seems,  
 But smacks of something greater than herself,  
 Too noble for this place. (IV.iv.156-59)

Shakespeare further emphasizes her blood-originated beauty by referring to her resemblance to her royal mother and father (V.ii.51-52; II.iii.100-102), whereas Greene never compares Fawnia with her parents in physical appearance. Perdita has beauty not only of countenance but also of character, and she appears superior to Fawnia in her inner beauty as well as in her physical beauty. Her discussion of the relative importance of art and nature, as well as her classical allusions (IV.iv.116-25), reveals her marvelous intuitive intelligence: Camillo says, "I cannot say 'tis pity / She lacks instructions, for she seems a mistress / To most that teach" (IV.iv. 582-4). Fawnia demonstrates no classical knowledge, and her wit, which occasionally arouses Dorastus's admiration, lacks depth and insight compared with Perdita's. Perdita is also a model of the resolute womanhood and constancy which Hermione had shown. She bears affliction more courageously and patiently than Fawnia, a quality denied such base-born characters as the Old Shepherd in the play. When Polixenes threatens to kill Perdita and the Shepherd for the intended marriage between her and Florizel, Perdita's reactions are noble and courageous,<sup>8</sup> whereas the Shepherd is crushed with fear. She neither cringes before the King nor appears to be afraid of death (IV.iv.441-46). On the contrary, on a similar occasion in Pandosto, "The feare of death brought a sorrowfull silence upon Fawnia" (198). Perdita demonstrates her fortitude in adversity again when she refutes Camillo's advice that

"Prosperity's the very bond of love": "I think affliction may subdue the cheek, / But not take in the mind"

(IV.iv.577-78). This spirited response causes Camillo to make another class-conscious comment on her quality: "There shall not at your father's house, these seven years<sup>9</sup> / Be born another such" (IV.iv.578-79). Perdita's beauty and grace are not only in her appearance and actions, but also in her exquisite refinement. Shakespeare adds to Pandosto some incidents that reveal her penchant for pure language and elegant taste. She has a strong aversion to hearing coarse words: before a servant leads a ballad singer (Autolycus) into the house, she asks the servant to "Forewarn him that he use no scurrilous words in 's tunes" (IV.iv.213-14). In Pandosto there is no mention of Fawnia's particular interest in the purity of language. She also speaks in polished blank verse, although her foster-father and foster-brother usually utter prose. Perdita's refined taste manifests itself in that, unlike Mopsa and Dorcas (shepherdesses whom Shakespeare invented as foils to Perdita), she shows no interest in Autolycus's coarse ballads or such trifles as he vends; the gifts that she truly values, according to Florizel, are "pack'd and lock'd / Up in my heart" (emphasis added) (IV.iv.358-59). In Pandosto there is no incident suggesting such a class distinction in taste. Furthermore, Shakespeare does not show his exquisitely refined Princess engaged in physical labor, whereas Greene often mentions Fawnia's hard work as a

shepherdess. Elizabethan gentry in general held manual labor in contempt: "Corporall and base exercise," declares Giovanni Nenna in A Treatise of Nobility, "doth bring contempt unto the nobility of bloud and convert it into his contrary" (77).<sup>10</sup> Perhaps this consideration led Shakespeare to have Perdita "retired, / As if [she] were a feasted one" on the day of the sheep-shearing feast, as the Shepherd contrasts her behaviour with that of his dead wife who, on the same day every year, would be "both pantler, butler, cook" with "her face o'fire / With labour" (IV.iv.55-69). Similarly, Shakespeare sees to it that Perdita's hands remain soft and white (IV.iv.362-365), although a shepherdess' hands should be rough and brown. Finally, Perdita is more class-conscious--rather blood-conscious--than Fawnia. Blood-consciousness is a common trait in her family, as well as in all gentle families in Shakespeare's plays.<sup>11</sup> Leontes is greatly troubled about the supposed bastardy of Perdita and even Mamillius (though Pandosto has no doubt of Garinter's legitimacy), and his horror of bastardy foreshadows Perdita's dislike of certain flowers that are produced by cross-breeding and thus called "bastards" (IV.iv.83). Accordingly, she does not give in Polixenes's theory that propagandizes a cross-class marriage:

You see, sweet maid, we marry  
 A gentler scion to the wildest stock,  
 And make conceive a bark of baser kind

By bud of nobler race. (IV.iv.92-5)

It is natural for Perdita to show such a blood-conscious attitude toward these matters, which are not brought up in Pandosto, for she is, in truth, of royal birth. One can assume that Shakespeare endorses Perdita's blood-conscious attitude toward marriage because he dramatizes no single instance of a cross-class match in his entire canon; when he refers to one in Twelfth Night, he utterly frustrates and humiliates the base-born Malvolio, who aspires to marry his noble mistress.

Although his events follow fairly closely those of Garinter in Pandosto, Mamillius appears as a more princely figure than his prototype, so that his royal status is more emphasized than in the source. Mamillius, although a mere boy of about seven, is praised as "a gentleman of the greatest promise . . . a gallant child; one that physics the subject, makes old hearts fresh" (I.i.35-39). To be sure, Garinter is also a noble prince "adorned with the gifts of nature" whose perfection "greatly augmented the love of the parents, and the joys of their commons" (157). Nevertheless, Garinter lacks Mamillius's striking charm and vitality which, like Perdita's beauty, have such a lasting effect that even after sixteen years Paulina recalls him as "jewel of children" (V.i.116). One may include Mamillius in Shakespeare's small group of noble children--such as Prince Arthur in King John, young Lucius in Titus Andronicus, Macduff's son in Macbeth, and so forth--who are charming and

intelligent boys. Especially, the cause of Mamillius's death is strongly suggestive of his high blood. Whereas Greene mentions no definite cause of Garinter's death in Pandosto, Shakespeare has Mamillius die of heartbreak, an experience reserved exclusively for persons of high birth in Shakespeare<sup>12</sup>: Paulina says that the young prince's "honourable thoughts / (Thoughts high for one so tender) cleft the heart" (III.ii.195-96). Shakespeare would not allow any of his base-born characters--such as the Clown, the Shepherd, Autolycus, or Mopsa--to die of broken hearts. Berkeley and Karimipour in the following passage point out the physiological reason why this symptom can be a class determinant:

The hearts of gentry, especially upper gentry, possess the propensity to be overwhelmed by blood and heat and thus to be susceptible to riving under sanguinary pressure. Non-gentles in Shakespearean plays do not die of broken hearts because their diminished blood supply does not possess force enough to break their hearts. (95)

Two other gentle-born characters in the play experience a similar symptom, although they survive it: Hermione collapse at the news of Mamillius's death, her heart "o'ercharg'd" (III.ii.150); witnessing this doleful scene, Paulina in turn cries, "O cut my lace, lest my heart, cracking it, / Break too!" (173-74). Furthermore, one may compare Mamillius to Hamlet, who extremely resents Gertrude's incestuous marriage

with Claudius, considering that one possible cause of Mamillius's death is his shame at the supposed adultery of his mother and consequent taint of blood<sup>13</sup> upon himself.<sup>14</sup> Leontes considers this shame as a sign of his son's noble character:

To see his nobleness,  
 Conceiving the dishonor of his mother!  
 He straight declin'd, droop'd, took it deeply,  
 Fasten'd and fix'd the shame on't in himself,  
 Threw off his spirit, his appetite, his sleep,  
 And downright languish'd. (II.iii.12-17)

Shakespeare thus dignifies Mamillius's royal status to a greater degree than Greene does in Pandosto by assigning to him two major effects of high blood, one physical and the other mental, which are absent in Garinter.

The noble character of Camillo also shows a remarkable growth from that of his prototype in Pandosto; he is full of gentlemanly virtues such as intelligence, honor, wisdom, loyalty, and courage. In the first part of the play, Camillo is modelled on Franion, who disappears from the story after helping Egistus to escape. In the second part, he is mainly Shakespeare's invention although to some extent he performs a similar role to Capino's. Shakespeare, unlike Greene in Pandosto, alludes to Camillo's gentility by both birth and education: Polixenes tells Camillo,

As you are certainly a gentleman, thereto  
 Clerk-like experienc'd, which no less adorns

Our gentry than our parents' noble names.

In whose success we are gentle. . . .

(I.ii.391-94)

Polixenes's speech portrays Camillo as a man embodying the ideal state of nobility in which noble ancestry is accompanied by personal merits. Thus being a model of nobility, Camillo appears as a more honorable man than Franion. Franion, after Pandosto ordered him to kill Egistus, is "so combred with divers cogitations that hee coud take no rest" (161); this is a contrast to Camillo's dignity and brevity on the same occasion (I.ii.351-63). As a man of principle Camillo is, in contrast to Franion, not tempted in the least by the prospect of preferment or any thought of gain that will follow if he obeys the unjust command; instead, he promptly arrives at a moral decision--motivated purely by his sense of honor and justice--that he should, even at the sacrifice of everything dear to him, save the innocent King Polixenes. Camillo is a man not only of honor, but also of intelligence and wisdom. Leontes points out Camillo's high intelligence or perception: "thy conceit is soaking, will draw in / More than the common blocks" (I.ii.224-25).<sup>15</sup> Camillo is a wise and able administrator who is competent in the art of dissimulation, a gentlemanly virtue that is best practiced by Prince Hal of the Henry IV plays. As Prince Hal counterfeits a madcap prince to produce a better effect when his essential nature is revealed, so Camillo deceives others twice--Leontes and

Florizel respectively--to bring out better results for everyone concerned: Camillo saves Polixenes from Leontes's fury and then reconciles Florizel to Polixenes, thus achieving happy reconciliation for all. Camillo is also loyal and brave, but his loyalty is first of all to the right, not to a person: Camillo's outspokenness before his King is comparable to Kent's in King Lear. Camillo once stands up against Leontes when the latter brands Hermione as a sexually loose woman:

Leon. My wife's a hobby-horse, deserves a name  
As rank as any flax-wench that puts to  
Before her troth-plight: say't and justify't.

Cam. I would not be a stander-by, to hear  
My sovereign mistress clouded so, without  
My present vengeance taken. 'Shrew my heart,  
You never spoke what did become you less  
Than this; which to reiterate were sin  
As deep as that, though true. (I.ii.276-84)

In this speech, Camillo is so enraged that he addresses Leontes bluntly as "you" instead of using such deferential phrases as "your majesty," "your highness," "my lord," and so forth. Similarly, Camillo in the same scene condescendingly addresses the King with the thou: "I have lov'd thee" (emphasis added) (I.ii.324). None in the play, except for the Officer who reads the indictment of Hermione (III.ii.12-21), thou's his superior. Many other characters of the play praise Camillo's noble character; for instance,

Leontes describes Camillo's character as "most humane / And fill'd with honour" (III.ii.62,165-66); Florizel esteems him as "Preserver of my father, now of me, / The medicine of our house" (IV.iv.587-8). Shakespeare rewards Camillo for his merits by marrying Paulina to him, whereas Franion is forgotten in Pandosto.

Shakespeare invents this gentle-born character, Paulina, whose marvelous human qualities are characteristic of gentry in the play: her prime virtues are compassion, courage, and wisdom. In her compassion for both the Queen and the newborn princess, she endeavors to stir Leontes's sympathy by bringing the baby to him. This action also reveals her courage, for she is aware that her role as Hermione's advocate may incur the King's wrath. In Pandosto, a kind-hearted jailer attempts to arouse Pandosto's pity by telling him that Bellaria is in labour. On the contrary, Shakespeare's jailer even denies Paulina's request for an interview with the Queen. The jailer recognizes Paulina as "a worthy lady / And one who much I honour" (II.ii.5); however, like Shakespeare's typical base-born characters who are cowardly and selfish, he shows no desire to imitate his virtuous superior. Paulina's robust courage manifests itself best in her declaration that she "would by combat make her [Hermione] good, so were I / A man" (II.iii.60-61): she would prove that the Queen is virtuous in judicial combat. In Pandosto there is no character corresponding to Paulina: Pandosto threatens to

burn Bellaria and the newborn baby, but there is no reference to trial by combat. Paulina, wise and resourceful, serves as an agent working for happy reconciliation of Leontes and Hermione. She contributes to reinforcing Leontes's penance by deliberately professing that she is a clumsy talker: in Act III, for instance, she tells the King that she ought to be punished for reminding him of what he should forget; in fact, she immediately reminds him three times of the misfortunes of his wife and children. Paulina is also, like Camillo, a competent practitioner of the art of dissimulation. She falsely reports Hermione's death, and it is a noble lie because her motives are good as in the case of the good Friar in Much Ado about Nothing. She finally brings Leontes to her chapel, where she effects the miracle of reunion, as if she were performing the role of deus ex machina. Fitzroy Pyle values Paulina, quite correctly, as a character who "carries a great deal of the action of the play on her shoulders and directs its course" (35). Myles Hurd, similarly, points out the crucial role of Paulina in the play: "Despite the presence of supernatural elements in this drama, it is Paulina who works the real magic. . . . Healing time does in fact triumph in this play--but not without the help of Paulina" (310). Shakespeare rewards Paulina by marrying her to the noble Camillo, who on his part has acquired a most precious wife.

Polixenes appears a more majestic figure than Egistus, for his blood-consciousness manifests itself in a more

prominent way than in Pandosto and he is also a nobler example of the aristocratic cult of male friendship. Egistus is merely a conventional figure who takes for granted inter-class marriages in both theory and practice. Polixenes in theory upholds the idea of mingling high and low stocks by marrying "A gentler scion to the wildest stock" (IV.iv.93); however, in practice, Polixenes is as outraged as Egistus at the prospect of his son marrying a peasant. When he discovers his son's intention to marry a shepherdess, Polixenes bitingly derides him as "a sceptre's heir, / That thus affects a sheep-hook" (IV.iv.419-20) and also calls him a "royal fool" (IV.iv.424), which is a class-conscious oxymoron (Berkeley 77). This ironic situation highlights Polixenes's deep-rooted blood-consciousness: Polixenes's rejection of his son's cross-class match contradicts the theory on which he has been harping and reveals the King's preoccupation with his own royal blood, by way of contrast, in a more striking way than Egistus's matter-of-fact disapproval on the same occasion. Polixenes again reveals a keen consciousness of his royal blood when Camillo informs him of Leontes's suspicion of his adultery with Hermione. Polixenes replies to Camillo's warning by referring to his own royal blood: "O then, my best blood turn / To an infected jelly, and my name / Be yok'd with his that did betray the Best!" (I.ii.417-19). Here, Polixenes exemplifies the general tendency of Shakespeare's gentle characters who, as Berkeley and Karimipour aptly observe,

"are usually very conscious of the quality of their blood and often speak of it or its effects whereas the base do not in serious context mention their blood" (90). Polixenes's lines exhibit the Elizabethan notion of hereditary virtue that associates one's ethical nature with his blood quality: such vices as adultery and betrayal of friendship, Polixenes supposes, derive from base blood only. Polixenes grafts his blood-consciousness even on Christianity by implying that Judas's blood is degenerate like "infected jelly" and Jesus has the best blood. Although Christianity had no real connection with heredity, some religious authorities attempted to amalgamate the two: George Meriton in A Sermon of Nobilitie labels Nabal as "a foolish clowne" and Laban as "a frowning clowne" (CI<sup>v</sup>); the Geneva Bible translators sometimes used terms of their own social classes--such as "fellow" (Acts 24:5) and "churl" (Isa. 32:5)--for biblical characters. Polixenes's allusion to his own blood, his association of one's blood quality with his ethical nature, and his application of heredity to Christianity--all suggest that his blood-consciousness is more deeply rooted than that of Egistus, who never refers to his blood. Furthermore, Polixenes exemplifies better than Egistus the Elizabethan cult of noble friendship, which had been highly valued as a gentlemanly ideal since antiquity. When he visits Leontes in Act V--Egistus sends his ambassadors--Polixenes exhibits his heartfelt friendship toward Leontes, although the latter in the past unjustly accused him of adultery and attempted

to kill him. Polixenes not only forgives Leontes, but also takes blame upon himself in order to comfort his friend:

Dear my brother,

Let him that was the cause of this have pow'r  
To take off so much grief from you as he  
Will piece up in himself. (V.iii.53-56)

Here Polixenes's magnanimity is representative of the ideal friendship of Elizabethan gentlemen, which would be well understood by Shakespeare's gentlemanly audience; one finds its parallel in Two Gentlemen of Verona, in which Valentine not only forgives Proteus but also offers his lady to the penitent friend. On the contrary, the long passage of time does not diminish Egistus's fear of his friend. At the news of Dorastus's imprisonment by Pandosto, Egistus is anxious about his son's safety, but he sends his ambassadors instead of going to Pandosto himself, probably for fear of his personal danger. Shakespeare thus makes Polixenes a more kingly king than Greene's Egistus--more magnanimous and more strikingly conscious of his royal blood.

Florizel and his prototype in Pandosto, Dorastus, are both noble princes--handsome, courageous, resolute, and self-sacrificing. However, Shakespeare makes Florizel's nobility appear more prominent than Dorastus's in many ways. First of all, Florizel's disguise as a shepherd cannot conceal his royal identity, as Perdita tells him, ". . . your youth, / And the true blood which peeps fairly through't, / Do plainly give you out an unstain'd shepherd"

(IV.iv.147-9); Dorastus's disguise in the same manner, however, fails to produce the same effect, as Fawnia "seeing such a manerly shepheard . . . began halfe to forget Dorastus" (184). Moreover, Florizel's attitude toward marriage, befittingly to his royal status, appears less egalitarian than that of Dorastus, who refuses an actual offer of a royal marriage with a Danish Princess in his preference of a shepherdess; Shakespeare omits this proposal, probably to avoid an unnecessary rivalry between a princess and a peasant. Another noticeable change in the play is that Florizel appears to be less concerned than Dorastus about his mistress' lowly social rank. This can be attributed to Florizel's superior intuition, an effect of high blood in Shakespeare's plays, that perceives ample evidence of noble origin in the queenly qualities of his lover; similarly, the high intuition of the mountain prince Arviragus enables him to almost recognize Imogen as his sibling, although they have never met before (Cymbeline III.vi.71). Florizel's such intuitive knowledge of Perdita's royal origin can account for his constantly worshipful attitude toward her, even addressing her as Flora, the goddess of flowers (IV.iv.2). On the contrary, Dorastus reveals no intuitive perception of Fawnia's royal birth, and his attitude toward her is often that of condescension; for instance, Dorastus is so ashamed of his falling in love with Fawnia, a seeming shepherdess, that he blames "the basenesse of his mind, that would make such a

choice" and endeavors to "avoid the Syren that inchaunted him" (178). Furthermore, Florizel bears adversity more courageously than Dorastus. When his father threatens to break his relationship with Perdita a second time, Florizel is resolute in his love of her and defies Fortune:

Dear, look up.

Though Fortune, visible an enemy,  
Should chase us with my father, pow'r no jot  
Hath she to change our loves. (V.i.215-18)

On a similar situation in Pandosto, Dorastus is silent in despair when "neither could his sorrow nor perswasions prevaile" (197). It is neither Time nor Fortune, but Florizel's extraordinary resolution and courage, which brings him abundant rewards in the last act. Perceiving Perdita's blood-originated beauty and grace, Florizel sacrifices everything for his lady and surmounts every obstacle, and such princely qualities are of fundamental importance in the happy resolution of the play.

As for his base-born characters in The Winter's Tale, Shakespeare considerably alters their prototypes in Pandosto or invents new ones in order to stress their blood-derived base nature. The Shepherd of the play, for instance, is ugly, cowardly, "honest," and foolish, whereas these base qualities are either absent or unstressed in Porrus.<sup>16</sup> The Shepherd even has no individual name, but goes by his plebeian occupation so as to represent his own class in name as well as in fact. Shakespeare emphasizes the Shepherd's

ugliness to make him a foil to the play's royal personages--especially Perdita--who are invariably handsome, although Greene never alludes to Porrus' physical appearance: the Third Gentleman compares the Shepherd to "a weather-bitten conduit [gargoyle] of many kings' reigns" (V.ii.56-7). The Shepherd's blood-originated baseness involves not only his ugly countenance, but also his ignominious cowardice. When Polixenes balks Florizel's project of marrying Perdita and threatens to punish her and her father, the frightened Shepherd utters a most frightened speech (IV.iv.451-62): "I cannot speak, nor think, / Nor dare to know that which I know. . . ." (IV.iv.451-62). Here the Shepherd is too worried about himself to offer any help to his foster daughter. Shakespearean plays label cowardice and fear as plebeian traits deriving from bodily coldness: for instance, cowardice is "pale cold" (Richard II I.ii.34), and fear is associated with "cold heart" (1 Henry IV IV.iii.7). Bodily coldness comes from phlegm and melancholy, which dominate the constitutions of Shakespeare's base-born characters; in this regard, Berkeley observes that "The state of having little or no blood was a physiological explanation of cowardice (cf. Love's Labor's Lost V.ii.691-92), whose proper lodging was the base-born heart" (21). The Shepherd's fearful speech, which reveals his class-oriented cowardice, is a striking contrast to Porrus's bold speech addressed to the King and other noblemen for the purpose of saving Fawnia: "Pandosto, and ye noble Embassadors of

Sicilia, seeing without cause I am condemned to die; I am yet glad I have opportunitie to disburden my conscience before my death . . . " (198). The Shepherd, to be sure, sometimes reveals good intentions. After hearing about the shipwreck and the bear's attack upon Antigonus, the Shepherd assures his son, "Would I had been by, to have help'd the old man!" (III.iii.108). However, his good intentions accompany no good actions, as his son replies in retort that "your charity would have lack'd footing" (III.iii.110-11). The Shepherd thus exhibits another common trait of Shakespeare's baseborn characters--their failure to act on their moral judgment, mainly due to their lack of courage. The Shepherd also reveals his humble origins by referring to his father as "honest": he wishes to be buried beside his father's "honest bones" (IV.iv.456). This term "honesty" is a class discriminant in Shakespeare's plays--e.g., "Iago is most honest" (Othello II.iii.6)--implying the base-born's failure to conceal their minds so as to make easy victims of their enemies (Berkeley 50). Many of Shakespeare's gentleborn characters--to name some of the most prominent ones, Hal, Edgar, Hamlet, Portia, Viola, Rosalind, and Vincentio--achieve their purposes better by means of disguise than honesty. Polixenes, disguised as a guest for the Shepherd's sheep-shearing feast, succeeds in obtaining from his base-born host as much information as he needs. The King has already predicted his success as he tells Camillo that "we will (not appearing what we are) have some

question with the shepherd; from whose simplicity I think it not uneasy to get the cause of my son's resort thither" (IV.ii.47-50), and as he has anticipated, the Shepherd is "simple and tells much" (IV.iv.346). Even Autolycus, when dressed in Florizel's clothes, condescendingly addresses the Shepherd and Clown as "honest plain men" (IV:iv.132). The Shepherd's "honesty" also contrasts sharply with Camillo's and Paulina's dissimulation. Furthermore, the Shepherd is foolish in believing that his gentlemanly clothes will make him a true gentleman. Although Leontes thanks the Shepherd and calls him "brother" for the sake of Perdita, there is no reason to suppose that the King has actually knighted him. Shakespeare's undoubted intention to ridicule the Shepherd and Clown (V.ii)--they are boastful, in a preposterous manner, of their changed circumstances--convinces one that their pretensions to knighthood are their foolish illusion that their newly acquired riches and clothes have brought them to believe. In Shakespeare's plays as well as in his time, Berkeley observes, "Gentility, including royalty of course, had no necessary relationship to economic status" (15); for instance, Cesario (Viola) claims to be a gentleman whose parentage is above his fortunes (Twelfth Night I.v.277-78). In Pandosto Pandosto actually knights Porrus: "Pandosto, willing to recompense old Porrus, of a shepheard made him a Knight" (199). Greene appears to have no scruples at all about gentling Porrus, and throughout the story, he portrays the shepherd as a shrewd rather than

foolish person. Shakespeare avoids this instant gentling in Pandosto and makes fun of the Shepherd's asinine pretention in imagining himself to be a gentleman by means of his upper-class clothing. In his entire canon, Shakespeare shows no base-born characters rising above their ranks except for the mass-gentling of Henry the Fifth's common soldiers in Agincourt; this single exception owes to the intractable sources that were too well known in England to be changed.

Shakespeare's omission of Greene's Mopsa, Porrus' wife, who nurses the infant Fawnia, may suggest his intention of avoiding a base-born woman's nursing of a royal princess, for physiological books of Shakespeare's age considered human milk as another form of blood. Leontes expresses the same concern when he accuses Hermione of adultery, "I am glad you did not nurse him" (II.1.56). As Shakespeare does not allude to the unidentified princess' physical labor, which is frequently mentioned in Pandosto, so he avoids as often as possible such direct causes of degeneration as a cross-class blood transfusion through nursing. In The Winter's Tale, Mopsa appears as the Clown's beloved, not his mother, and therefore not--and this is the point--Perdita's nurse.

Shakespeare invents the Clown, the term meaning a foolish rustic, to present him as the most representative base-born character in the play. The Clown's ugly features and asinine character indeed confirm the maxim that "base

things sire base" (Cymbeline IV.ii.26): Autolycus, for instance, describes both the Clown and his father as "rough and hairy" (IV.iv.722). The Clown is even more foolish, more cowardly, more selfish, and coarser in taste and language than his father. The Clown's innate stupidity makes him an easy victim of Autolycus's trickeries, so even the trickster comments that his gull "wants but something to be a reasonable man" (IV.iv.605). The Clown also commits a malapropism, mistaking "prosperous" for "preposterous" (V.ii.148), which is characteristic of Shakespeare's stupid base-borns such as Mistress Quickly in the Henry IV plays. The Clown's folly is also revealed in his belief that swearing is the prerogative of gentlemen (V.ii.159-60); Cloten in Cymbeline also expresses this asinine view (II.i.10-11) which, as well as his other plebeian traits, makes one suspect the authenticity of his royal identity. The Clown's liking for coarse ballads is another mark of his plebeianism: Autolycus says, "My clown . . . grew so in love with the wenches' song, that he would not stir his pettitoes till he had both tune and words" (IV.iv.604-7). In the play, it is only base-born characters who cherish Autolycus's song. The play's gentle-born characters reveal no interest in his songs: as for Perdita, she is even afraid that Autolycus's songs might contain some scurrilous words. Moreover, the Clown's relationship with Mopsa is so gross and trivial that it depends on his buying her trifles such as "certain ribbons and gloves" (IV.iv.233-34). This is a

striking contrast to the relationship of Florizel and Perdita, which appears to have been mutual love at first sight--an experience limited to gentle-born characters in Shakespeare's plays: e.g., Romeo and Juliet and Ferdinand and Miranda in Tempest. The most egregious of the Clown's plebeian characteristics is his incorrigible cowardice, which is fully revealed in the scene in which he reports the bear attack: he narrates his cowardly behavior with no feeling of shame. The Clown is too cowardly to aid Antigonus, who has been attacked by the bear; what is worse, he is neither willing to help the old gentleman nor ashamed of his refusal to help him. Even the Shepherd is aware of the ethical implication of a failure to help others in distress: he at least pays lip service to honor by saying that if he had been there, he would have helped the old gentleman. The Clown totally lacks "honor"<sup>17</sup> and "generosity"<sup>18</sup>: like Shakespeare's many other base-born characters, he would never make any moral judgment and act on it at the risk of his own safety. The Clown's cowardice and selfishness make a striking contrast to the courage and self-sacrificing generosity shown by the play's gentle-born characters to save Hermione's life from Leontes' fatal jealousy: a lord lays down his own life for Hermione (II.i.129-30); to defend the Queen's honor, Antigonus is willing to sacrifice his three daughters (II.i.143-150); and Paulina would prove that the Queen is innocent in trial by battle (II.iii.61-62).<sup>19</sup> Such a class distinction in

behavior, unstressed in Pandosto, reflects Shakespeare's usual tendency to distance the gentry from the baseborn more than his sources do. Shakespeare, of course, does not gentle the Clown, whose vices--folly, cowardice, and selfishness--derive from his base blood.

Autolycus is another invented base-born character who also represents plebeianism by his occupations and nature: he is a vagabond, peddler, ballad-singer, trickster, and thief. Autolycus is to some extent modelled on Capino, a gentle-born attendant to Dorastus, who hazards his own life in his loyalty to the Prince. In Autolycus Shakespeare creates a character very different from Capino: Autolycus is a base-born rogue who is selfish, cowardly, and servile. Probably, Autolycus was added to the play not only for his comic role, but also as another foil to its highborn characters. He is a ballad singer, a base occupation in Shakespeare's time, who sings typical peddlars' songs or coarse love songs. Except when he sings, as well as when he temporarily plays the role of a grandiloquent gentleman before the Shepherd and Clown (IV.iv.715-830), Autolycus invariably speaks in prose, another distinctive feature of the lower classes in Shakespeare's plays. Above all, Autolycus is a thief, although his wit and vivacity may mislead one into overlooking his crimes. As for his moral character, Autolycus is selfish like people of his own class in the play such as the Shepherd and Clown. Autolycus's self-interest motivates his every act, even when he

occasionally helps others. For instance, when he facilitates Florizel's escape by deflecting the Shepherd and Clown from their intended visit to Polixenes, Autolycus's chief motives are to extort gold from the two rustics and obtain preferment from the Prince (IV.iv.833-35). His selfish motives contrast sharply with the disinterested services to others of the play's gentle-born characters, such as Camillo and Paulina. Again like the Shepherd and Clown, Autolycus reveals his class-originated cowardice. When he is afraid of his trickeries being discovered, Autolycus's fear manifests itself to such an inordinate degree as to occasion Camillo's soothing comment: "How now, good fellow? why shak'st thou so? / Fear not, man, here's no harm intended to thee" (IV.iv.628-29). Autolycus then replies in a servile manner, "I am a poor fellow, sir" (emphasis added) (IV.iv.630), thus introducing himself as a man of base birth. Autolycus's servile nature is more evident when he cowers before the Shepherd and Clown, who have been recently enriched and dressed in fine clothes; after he promises to reform, the two clownish upstarts become his patrons. However entertaining and sometimes even charming his words and actions may be, Autolycus cannot conceal his essentially selfish, cowardly, and subservient nature--his base blood will tell. Similarly, gentlemanly clothes cannot conceal Autolycus's base origin, as the same is true with the Shepherd and Clown: when Autolycus is dressed in Florizel's clothes, even the foolish Shepherd

detects that the rich garments do not suit the wearer (IV.iv.749-50). Autolycus is not preferred in the end, being reduced to a minor puppet after his comic role is over; one is reminded that the Fool in King Lear disappears once his satiric role is finished. Shakespeare seems to achieve happy endings by adjusting the disposition of each character according to his blood quality.

In The Winter's Tale, Shakespeare thus modifies Greene's gentle-born characters in Pandosto into nobler or more prominent figures, and the source story's base-borns into more ridiculous ones. Into the play he also introduces some new characters whose blood-originated human qualities represent their different classes. As a result, one notices in the play, as is usual in Shakespeare's plays, more distance between the two classes than in its source; indeed, almost all characters of the play are subjected to the playwright's strongly blood-conscious modification and invention. In Pandosto, it is Time, rather than humans, that determines the fates of its characters. In The Winter's Tale, however, its gentle-born characters' innate virtues resolve all the conflicts so as to bring out the happy ending; they indeed owe nothing to Time, as Florizel tells Leontes, "you ow'd no more to time / Than I do" (emphasis added) (V.i.219-20). What one finds in the play is not the triumph of Time, which Greene professes his Pandosto shows, but the triumph of noble blood--blood that effects such superior human virtues as penitence, patience,

courage, beauty, constancy, sympathy, honor, generosity, and so forth. Affliction cannot alter the innate virtues of the play's royal and other noble characters, and the play ends happily as a result of their triumph over adversity and suffering. In the play all highborn characters, with the single exception of the dead Mamillius, are rewarded for their virtues, whereas in Pandosto Pandosto, Bellaria, and Franion, in addition to Garintus, are left out of its happy ending. This play thus confirms Berkeley's observation of the blood-based reward and punishment in a Shakespearean plot: "gentlemen and gentlewomen of blood are almost always rewarded (unless they are degenerate) by being given a status that accords with their internal quality" (8). In this prestigious group one can include the penitent Leontes, for he is restored to his former integrity after a temporary period of degeneracy. As is usual in Shakespeare's plays, the play's base-born characters are forgotten in the final scene, in which the play's happy ending culminates in Hermione's restoration. To be sure, the Shepherd and Clown, the play's base-born characters, enjoy great material advancements by virtue of their being Perdita's foster-father and foster-brother. However, it is not reward in the full sense of the word, for they are ridiculed after all. In the play's penultimate scene, Shakespeare indeed gets good fun out of their asinine pretensions to gentry after they are enriched and dressed in expensive clothes, whereas Greene actually knights Porrus and never ridicules him. One

can attribute the two rustics' sudden wealth either to the generosity of the play's aristocrats toward their inferiors or to Shakespeare's intention to satirize many base-born upstarts' social pretensions that reveal their innate unworthiness even in a more despicable manner. Shakespeare simply does not allow the two base-born characters to rise above their given position in the social hierarchy; instead, he employs them as foils to their social superiors. The business of The Winter's Tale is thus to highlight the dignity of the gentle-born, especially royal persons, as the First Gentleman finds the resolution of the play "worth the audience of kings and princes, for by such was it acted" (V.ii.79-81).

Shakespeare's blood-conscious modifications of Pandosto in The Winter's Tale result in many improvements on the source. First of all, Shakespeare heightens the play's dramatic effects by introducing the statue scene in which Hermione's royal body is gradually coming alive in a most dignified manner; he also creates the effect of dramatic irony by having Polixenes advocate a cross-class marriage when the King is there to condemn it. Whereas Greene focuses on the conventional theme that Time will resolve all human conflicts, Shakespeare's theme concerns human nature; Shakespeare is concerned more with the effects of human blood than with either Time or Fortune. As a result, Shakespeare's plot is more plausible than Greene's, for the play's happy resolution is not a facile triumph, but one

that has been won by human merits. Shakespeare's characters, accordingly, are not automatons manipulated by Time, but active agents of their own wills and merits who struggle against what Time tries. In addition, the plebeian aspects of the play's lower-class characters heighten the effect of verisimilitude, for they introduce everyday realism from contemporary peasantry. At the end of the play, Leontes suggests the other royal or noble characters to exchange one another's experiences that are "Perform'd in this wide gap of time" (V.iii.154). They will recount how each, through his or her blood-derived merits, has defeated Time (or Fortune) that has worked against, rather than for, them all along.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Greene's *Fortune*, for instance, begins by favoring Pandosto--he succeeds in wars, marries a perfect princess, and begets a promising heir; she then, "envious of such happy successes," "turn'd her wheele, and darkned their bright sunne of prosperitie, with the mistie cloudes of mishap and misery" (157).

<sup>2</sup> All quotations from Shakespeare come from The Riverside Shakespeare.

<sup>3</sup> Joan Hartwig compares Leontes's penance with Posthumous's in Cymbeline: "each accepts the responsibility for his own action, and each attempts to requite his sin by enduring." She adds, "Leontes's penance is sixteen years longer than Posthumous's" (105).

<sup>4</sup> Northrop Frye comments that "his death is clearly a big relief all round" (160).

<sup>5</sup> "In Hermione," said Granville-Barker, "I seem to see an exquisitely sensitive woman, high-minded, witty too, and tactful . . . No play of Shakespeare boasts three such women as Hermione, Perdita, Paulina" (23). J. H. P. Pafford similarly admired her as "one of Shakespeare's loveliest pictures of resolute womanhood" (lxxiv). H. D. Hudson also points out "her Roman firmness and integrity of soul, heroic in strength, heroic in gentleness" (465).

<sup>6</sup> Steadfastness in adversity often appears as a virtue of the gentry in Shakespeare (Berkeley, Blood Will Tell 21).

<sup>7</sup> Gentry among Shakespeare's audience had a high regard for their own families, whereas the lower classes had little reason or enough knowledge to esteem their obscure origins. Good blood was considered a familial as well as individual possession (Berkeley, 46).

<sup>8</sup> In Shakespeare, fine blood is often synonymous with courage; for instance, the Bishop of Ely tells Henry V: "The blood and courage that renowned them [the King's ancestors] / Runs in your veins" (Henry V I.ii.118-19).

<sup>9</sup> proverbial expression meaning a long time

<sup>10</sup> One rarely sees Shakespeare's gentle-born characters involving themselves in manual labor. When Ferdinand is compelled, though temporarily, to work as a piler of logs, Miranda weeps and says that "such baseness / Had never like executor" (The Tempest III.i.12-13).

<sup>11</sup> Berkeley observes that gentry in the Shakespearean plays valued their blood so much that to them "the imputation of villeinous blood by bastardy" is "the supreme insult" (50).

<sup>12</sup> Some prominent figures who experience this symptom in Shakespeare's canon are Lear, Gloucester, and Kent in King Lear (II.i.89-90, V.iii.197-200, and V.iii.314 respectively); and Enobarbus in Antony and Cleopatra (IV.vi.33).

<sup>13</sup> The Elizabethan theory of hereditary virtue

associated bastardy with baseness.

<sup>14</sup> Besides, there is a similarity between the role of Hamlet as an ideal prince (Hamlet III.1.152-54) and that of Mamillius (I.i.34-41).

<sup>15</sup> Berkeley gives some prominent examples of "common blocks" in Shakespearean plays, most of whom are "devoid of abstracting power": Mistress Quickly in the Henry IV plays, the Nurse of Romeo and Juliet, the "rude mechanicals" of A Midsummer Night's Dream, and so forth (57).

<sup>16</sup> Ann J. Cook, who overpraises the Shepherd's adoption of the deserted baby (Perdita) as "truly 'gentle' behaviour," unconvincingly argues that the play tends to emphasize the gentleness of the base-born (the Shepherd and the Clown) and the baseness of the gentle-born (Leontes and Antigonus) (26); she leaves out more important characters--Perdita, for instance--and overlooks another side of each character chosen in her discussion; Cook's argument may apply to Pandosto, in which Pandosto often behaves basely and Porrus once displays his courage.

<sup>17</sup> Lack of honor is associated with "cold blood" (Henry VI I.i.184) and thus considered as a plebeian trait.

<sup>18</sup> This word, derived from Latin "generosus," denoted both unselfishness and noble birth in Shakespeare's time.

<sup>19</sup> In Shakespeare's other plays, Orlando is a supreme exemplar of blood-originated courage and generosity: though unarmed, he rescues Oliver from the attack of a lion, no matter how cruelly Oliver has treated him.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

During the whole span of his theatrical career and through most of the kinds of drama that he tried, Shakespeare consistently modified--added to, altered, and omitted from--his primary sources to place more distance between his two genetic classes--the gentry and the base-born--than he had found in the sources. In his early comedy Two Gentlemen of Verona, Shakespeare restricts the aristocratic ideals of courtly love and male friendship--which are the main features of the play--to his gentle-born characters only. Its primary source, Diana Enamorada, however, presents almost all the characters--both gentle and base--as courtly lovers; besides, the source hardly stresses the element of friendship. In Shakespeare's comedy, moreover, the gentry exceed their social inferiors in such human qualities as handsomeness, fine speech, and chastity; there are no such class distinctions in the source, in which the paragon of beauty is a lowly shepherdess instead of a noblewoman. In 1 & 2 Henry IV, his early-middle history plays, Shakespeare often departs from his primary sources--Holinshed's The Third Volume of Chronicles and the anonymous The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth--in order to

highlight Prince Hal's royal blood: Shakespeare's plays portray Hal as a much more kingly figure than the sources and attribute the Prince's outstanding virtues to heredity rather than experience. In his late-middle tragedy King Lear, Shakespeare makes Lear a more sanguine king-- therefore, more virile and courageous--than his prototype Leir. Similarly, Cordelia, Edgar, and Kent are nobler characters than their counterparts in the play's two sources, the anonymous King Leir and Sidney's Arcadia. As for the play's evil characters--Goneril, Regan, and Edmund-- Shakespeare frequently departs from his sources to associate their base conduct with their real or supposed base births. Lastly, in his late romance The Winter's Tale, Shakespeare transforms almost all the gentle-born characters of Pandosto into nobler figures while changing its base-borns into more ridiculous ones. In his play he even introduces some new characters--e. g., the admirable Paulina and the foolish Clown--to separate the two classes even more.

Shakespeare thus conforms to the predominant Elizabethan view of society that all is well with the world when the best blood is enthroned, when members of the nobility and gentry are virtuous and loyal to the sovereign, and when the base-born are content with their humble stations in society, performing their often mechanically oriented occupations faithfully. Unless these happy conditions prevail, Shakespeare believed, human society will be out of joint as envisioned in Ulysses' famous speech on

"degree" in Troilus and Cressida:

O, when degree is shak'd,  
 Which is the ladder of all high designs,  
 The enterprise is sick. How could communities,  
 Degrees in schools, and brotherhoods in cities,  
 Peaceful commerce from dividable shores,  
 The primogenity and due of birth,  
 Prerogative of age, crowns, sceptres, laurels,  
 But by degree stand in authentic place?

(I.iii.101-108)

England enjoys both internal and external prosperity--cessation of civil wars and victories over the French--when Hal, who possesses the richest blood, ascends the throne.<sup>1</sup> When the best-blooded Lear resigns the throne and a bastard like Edmund attempts to usurp it, the order and stability of the kingdom are jeopardized. Besides, Edmund's first soliloquy directly challenges the hierarchically oriented social custom that gives a legitimate son precedence over a bastard and an older brother over a younger. When such virtuous noblemen and noblewomen as Kent, Camillo, and Paulina serve their sovereigns faithfully, their kingdoms triumph over adversity and suffering. On the other hand, when a nobleman like Hotspur rebels against his king and attempts to displace a prince, the nation suffers bloodshed. When a base-born person like Oswald deliberately insults Lear, he outrageously ignores the superiority of degree; Lear strikes Oswald and Kent trips him to teach the

impertinent steward proper manners. Greene's knighting of a peasant, Porrus, in Pandosto was evidently so obnoxious to Shakespeare that he not only discarded it, but in his play also ridicules the Shepherd's delusion that he has been gentled by virtue of his newly acquired riches and clothes. With the sole exception of Henry V's common soldiery at Agincourt, Shakespeare allows no plebeians to rise above their given positions in the social hierarchy. Even when some of Shakespeare's clowns and rogues, such as Launce and Autolycus, have somewhat engaging personalities, they are nevertheless full of vices characteristic of the class to which they belong. Such firm belief in the genetically based hierarchy of human beings sets Shakespeare apart from writers like Chaucer, Marlowe, and Milton, all of whom exhibit their base-born characters--e. g., Grisilde, Faustus, and Samson--rising to eminence or excellence. Unlike these authors Shakespeare was, to quote from Berkeley's Blood Will Tell again, "the arch-conservative, the most obdurate insister . . . on the merits of the gentry and the demerits of the base-born" (7).

The theme of blood-consciousness in Shakespeare's plays is an unwelcome reminder of feudalism to many modern readers who have been imbued with egalitarian liberalism. These readers are either blind to the theme or, even though they notice it, unwilling to admit the truth. Willing to believe the best they can of the greatly admired playwright, they shut their eyes to the blood-based division of human merits

and demerits in his plays. Indeed, they pay little attention to such a telling speech as the King of France makes in All's Well That Ends Well, which can apply to all Shakespeare's plays:

Strange is it that our bloods,  
Of color, weight, and heat, pour'd all together,  
Would quite confound distinction, yet stands off  
In differences so mighty. (emphasis added)

(II.iii.118-21)

Finally, Shakespeare's preoccupation with good blood was neither eccentric nor superstitious, but perfectly justifiable by Elizabethan standards. Much of Elizabethan literature, especially many physiological books, attests the fact that heredity as the source of human qualities was a widespread belief of the period. If a modern democratic reader overlooks the historical background and blames Shakespeare for his blood-oriented class prejudice, the reader should remember that he is also prejudiced against the author and his time.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> one assumes that Shakespeare chose the reign of Henry V, the English hero-king, as the period in which the country had enjoyed its greatest harmony at home and victory abroad and provided a model for Elizabethans to equal if they could.

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