“…to make our way back into the bright world”

(closing *Canto* XXXIV, Dante’s *Inferno,* 133-134)

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Hamlet opens with much the same mood as Canto V of Dante’s *Inferno*:

> “I came to a place stripped bare of every light
> and roaring on the naked dark like seas
> wracked by a war of winds.(Ciardi trans.)
>
> And: “Shadows borne onward by the aforesaid stress.
> Whereupon said I: "Master, who are those
> People, whom the black air so castigates?"” (Longfellow, trans.)

Compare the utterance of Horatio, upon sight of the Ghost of Hamlet’s father,

the former King of Denmark:

> “What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
> Together with that fair and warlike form
> In which the majesty of buried Denmark
> Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!
>
> &
>
> “A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
> In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
> A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
> The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead
> Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
> As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
> Disasters in the sun; and the moist star

Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
And even the like precurse of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.— ”

Indeed, besides the supernatural or spiritually-charged atmospheres of both, the dark, rough and savage forest in which Dante found himself at the *Inferno's* opening is much like the dungeon Hamlet declares Denmark to be.

Though Hamlet's guide is by no means as benevolent as Dante's Virgil, nonetheless, by the end of *Hamlet,* our protagonist has reached a similar kind of spiritual acceptance of what "be"— **"**There's a divinity that shapes our ends,/Rough-hew them how we will" **(Act V, sc. II).**

Though he never learns *the secrets of [his father's] prison house,* Hamlet not only come to understand that his father is undergoing some "Purgatorial" transformation but too endures one of his own—as the redeemer of his countrymen still good (*e.g.,* Horatio), of the Time that now will be *set right.*

Whether or not Shakespeare ever had access to the work of Dante or not is of no matter[1], as both men created out of similar fields of metaphor and allegory. For us as audience, Hamlet's "curse to set [the Time] right" becomes a

[1] Dante's Italian may have been available to Shakespeare in Latin. Translations are of course a "rough-hewn" proposition; for the title cite and the rest of the last Canto, 34, I used that done by Robert Hass; besides Ciardi and Longfellow the rest are Allen Mandelbaum's. All chosen aim towards the "poetic" meaning. .

cathartic "journey" as allegorically powerful as the pilgrim Dante's through the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio.* Upon climbing out of the *Inferno's* Ninth Circle, past the treacherous figure of Judas/Cerberus—hate in it's beady eyes, leathery wings flapping mightily to no avail—frozen in the very bottom of Hell, an exhausted Dante and his guide Virgil, find "It was no palace hall, the place in which we found ourselves, but with its *rough-hewn* floor and scanty light, a *dungeon* built by nature." (*Canto* XXXIV, 97-100). Dante's told that here's where "he [the Christ] fell from Heaven [as a temporary resting spot]," and that "here it is morning when it's evening there." Out of respect for one who "set the Time right," the sea has made "a veil" to shield…

Yet Dante exhibits a faith or enabling of belief that, by the time in which Hamlet is set (and, too, by the time of Shakespeare's London), was not readily available as a similar path. As the late Romance literature and language scholar Erich Auerbach said that by Medieval times, Christianity had undergone great crises and had brought about "a great need for self-orientation, and will to trace the secret forces of life [outside of traditional Church and belief system]."

We see this type of existential crisis of "faith" in *Hamlet.* Though apparently not a "believer," nonetheless Hamlet is confronted with the "purgatory" visage of his father—"[u]nhous'led, disappointed, unanel'd"—*i.e.,* without the traditional Catholic "last rites" of *Eucharist, absolution,* and *anointing* (I.iv.77). Dante's "First Circle" of Hell has those who died without said matter (or were

never baptized) undergoing purgatory (*Inferno, Canto* IV). As Horatio notes (I.i.158-164), "Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes/ Wherein our Savior's birth is celebrated,/This bird of dawning singeth all night long, And then, they say…The nights are wholesome…No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,/So hallowed and gracious is that time."

So, with Hamlet—*upon a fearful summons*—we descend as did the made-spiritual-witness Dante. (One might see, too, a parallel as a "Tibetan Book of the Dead" excursion into the *Bardo's To Be* as Hamlet's psychological journey.) Through the "rottenness of Denmark" into lower and lower "Circles of Hell," with attendant "Cities of Dis and Maleboge"—some of whose residents bear an eerie resemblance to those "peopling" Hamlet's Denmark…

At play's end, with Horatio's wish for Hamlet that *flights of angels sing thee to thy rest* (V.ii.37), we emerge as Dante did: "...until I saw, through a round opening, some of the things of beauty Heaven bears. It was from there that we emerged, to see—once more—the stars." *(Inferno, Canto XXXIV. 136-7;* End).

The critic William Hazlitt described (1819) Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* as one "difficult to stage well," *i.e., "a wave o'er the sea…"* Though the phrase is from *The Winter's Tale* (4.4), where Florizel tells Perdita (in deceptively

"simple" words) how much he appreciates her natural grace and beauty, to *Hamlet* applies not only that matter but too the biblical allusions.[2]

For the wordplay in this complex work, nature's imagery of the wave, as well, is most apt: the deep currents becoming groundswells, building and peaking to a crest—tumbling with thunderous force—arcing *o'er* to completion and washing gently, as foam, upon a sandy beach. We see this rhythm is the play's pattern; before resolving itself into the short and speedy preludes to *action,* there is the "doubling" into delay (as in quantum physics, where energy, contradicting "either/or" logic, can be both a "particle" and "wave" at the same time, the same principle works, as "suspension of disbelief," for Shakespeare).

Though fashionable as "modern" too many stagings geld Hamlet's muscular prose (the play's profound rhythms) and thus lose these reverberations—our "times" all too "cynical," our "beliefs" dusty as "learn`d opinions." Merely the crackling of foam—empty pops, *signifying nothing*—with no connection to the vast ocean beyond…

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[2] [3] But thy providence, O Father, governeth it: for thou hast made **a way in the sea, and a safe path in the waves** (*Wisdom of Solomon,* 14); [18] Suretiship hath undone many of good estate, and shaken them as a **wave of the sea**: mighty men hath it driven from their houses, so that they wandered among strange nations.[19] A wicked man transgressing the commandments of the Lord shall fall into suretiship: and he that undertaketh and followeth other men's business for gain shall fall into suits.[15] Forget not the friendship of thy surety, for he hath given his life for thee (*Wisdom of Jesus, Son of Sirach,* 29);
[5] If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.[6] But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a **wave of the sea** driven with the wind and tossed. (*James* 1)
[10] But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. [11] Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. [12] These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; [13] **Raging waves of the sea**, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. (*Jude,* 1)

Such was the California Shakespeare Festival performance that our class recently saw. The staging was bleak, spare, the pace of the play uniformly snappy. Make-up, costumery, almost clown-like in parody. So much so that the challenging ebb and flow of Hamlet's character—as a "great one"—to bring to life, and not merely to "madness," (As Polonius, *aside*, *Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't*) onstage never ensued, leaving just the staccato outburst of a petulant little boy. All of it paleing by comparison with, say, the now-disfavored "contemplative/melancholic" approach of a Gielgud or Olivier.

And yet, whether one looks backward (to eventually go *forward*) towards Western or Eastern civilized thought one finds common ground in understanding the unique "fullness" of character embodied by Hamlet.

The late Allan Bloom, recently paid homage by Saul Bellow's fiction, describes in a somewhat overlooked but invaluable book, *Shakespeare's Politics* (U. of Chicago Press, 1964 ed.):

> "Schiller pointed out that modern times are characterized by abstract science on the one hand and unrefined passion on the other and that the two have no relation. A free man and a good citizen must have a natural harmony between his passion and his knowledge; this is what is meant by a man of taste, and it is he whom we today seem unable to form. We are aware that a political science which does not grasp the moral phenomena is crude, and that an art uninspired by the passion for justice is trivial. Shakespeare wrote before the separation of these things; we sense that he has both intellectual clarity and vigorous passion and that the two do not undermine each other." (p. 12)

Such, as well, is the warrior tradition of Buddhism. Zen calls the result of challenging one's thought processes, with the attendant "franticness" blossoming —like a lotus reaching from the muddy bottom into the thousand-petalled, "clear light" surface—into some "kind of [unexpected] joy" a *kensho* experience, or "glimpse of awakening."

The classic anecdote is: *at first mountains are mountains, seemingly solid for all time, and streams are streams, lambent with mutability…Then, as a teacher disabuses one of the fixed, rigid concepts of "ignorant" ego, a thing takes on the characteristics of its opposite; now gazing at a mountain, one sees how changes of light make it mirage-like, softly lambent itself in appearance, one gazes at a stream and sees the surface as adamantine-brilliant, seemingly impenetrable as a many-faceted diamond…Then, one day, without one even "knowing," the dialectic is complete, and mountains have again become mountains, streams are still streams, the universe has resumed its natural hierarchy (which one know understands and appreciates as the "suchness" of "emptiness"...)*

The *samurai* traditionally acknowledged this process of "letting go" by having "no fear" as *one is already dead, no thing there or present to lose.* One would often prepare for combat (as if in the "face of defeat') by immaculately bathing and grooming oneself, to acknowledge the *natural order of all affairs.*

Another wonderful teaching metaphor has one sitting on a rock cliff overlooking the ocean. From just a swell in the distance one surmises that a

tsunami (tidal) wave is heading straight for one. The challenge is to sit tight—perhaps as Hamlet:

> Not a whit, we defy augury: there's a special
> providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now,
> 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be
> now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the
> readiness is all

As the great wave nears—and, too, one realizes that it's not just a *mote in the mind's eye*—disaster certainly augers, threatening to *break[] down the pales and forts of reason.* Yet as what one fears crashes upon one, the matter is let go, the rivulets run off, the skin goosebumps and tingles in the sun, once again.

And yet, as we see with Hamlet's lamenting that *this too too solid flesh would melt,* this path is not without "pain." Describing how dissimilars conjoin in a maddening fashion is the great Tibetan Buddhist Rimpoche Chogyam Trungpa :*the third category of letting go is sadness and joy joined together [your heart becomes all raw and bleeding in empathetic awareness]...Here you develop sadness and joy at once. You begin to feel tender...(Shambhala, the Sacred Path of the Warrior)*

The notion of "warrior," however—just as in "spirituality"—is another categorical now without imperative and certainly not faring well in our

modern or *post*-modern mindset. The Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism edition of *Hamlet* (Bedford, St. Martins, 1994) has a "New Historicist" approach linking madness and ambition, by Karin S. Coddon, following the text. She, like some other "historian-Shakespearean's," sees Robert Devereux, the 2nd Earl of Essex, as a model for the character of "Hamlet": [after the abortive rebellion of 1601] "Essex, 'brilliant, melancholy and ill-fated,' becomes the embodiment of the Elizabethan *mal de siecle,* his Icarian fall mirroring the fate of a generation of aspiring minds (Wilson, 228; Esler, 97-99)." (at 380).

An ally and friend of Essex, Shakespeare most certainly was one bearing "witness." Though we moderns like to fixate upon the allegedly "Freudian" conflict betwixt Hamlet and his Queenly mother[3] one can't help but feel that another of the Master's "concealment" devices is at work here—his disguising his creative exploration of a "royal" nature—or *ill*-nature. As Queen Elizabeth is said to have remarked:

[3] Many have ventured "Freudian' or "psychoanalytic" opinions not just about "Hamlet" but his creator, Shakespeare. The matter in this country began in our repressive 1950's and, as such scholars as Frederick Crews (author, former English Professor at U.C. Berkeley) have recently noted, Freud's followers have commandeered paramount importance in this country's interpretive industry—to the point of "cult status."
O'Connor, *supra,* at 200, has interesting material culled from his research: "H.G. McCurdy, *The Personality of Shakespeare* (1953) defines personality types of characters and explains the poet's paranoid suspiciousness by virtue of the suppression of his feminine traits and a homosexual tendency. The dramatist emerges as a bisexual personality, aggressive, aggressive with wildly fluctuating moods." (*f.n.,* at 357-8) "Trevor Nunn [the director] believes that regardless of how Shakespeare spoke and looked, and uncomfortable electricity would have come off him, 'which in your contact with him could lead you to think you had made a fool of yourself and inadequately represented yourself.' Nunn senses a dissatisfied person, dissatisfied in appetite and quite scathing: 'There would be signs of an obsession with these uncharted areas…'"Medical opinion, as well as a fair body of criticism, not to mention the man on the street, holds the opposite view: the psychiatrist Aubrey Lewis comments that surmises and diagnoses of an unbalanced Shakespeare are unwarranted. 'The little we know for sure about Shakespeare's way of life, his steady activities, his attention to business, and how he seemed to his contemporaries—all this speaks strongly against the assumption of instability and mental illness.' (at 200)"

> "He that will forget God will forget his benefactors. This tragedy [*Richard II* , with its dangerous "secession scene"] was played forty times in open streets and houses. I am Richard II, know ye not that?"

Ian Wilson's *Shakespeare the Evidence* (St. Martin's, 1993), too, has an historically-derived account of the Essex and Southampton trial in Westminster Hall (the setting for Richard II's deposition, by the way). Upon the sight of his mortal enemy, Lord Grey, "packing" the jury of their trial-by-peers, Southampton is reported to have burst out laughing—

"And waits upon the judgement…/What devil was't/That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?/ Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,/Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all…(3.4.70-80, *passim*)

—a short while later Judgement is pronounced: hooded executioners are to drag them through the City, hang them and then (while still alive) open and remove their bowels and burn the entrails "before your face," followed by beheading and quartering, the matter all "to be disposed of at her Majesty's pleasure." (pp. 278-9).

The night before the date of execution ("Ash Wednesday," 2/25/1601), Shakespeare & Co. are required to perform (again!) *Richard II,* with Will as the "deposed King." Wilson notes this *fiat* to be a "very grim sort of humour…a gesture of contempt, triumph and warning… [A]n increasingly hideous old woman surrounded by her pretty ladies and grim bodyguards must have seemed a particularly Topcliffean torture." (p. 280). This Topcliffe, Elizabeth's heir to the "spymaster" Walsingham's grim *apparatchik,* even used his own Westminster mansion to torment and rack the religious poet Robert Southwell.

"Rebellious hell,/…mutine[in g]

in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax…
And reason panders will." (III.iv.80-88)

Essex—who in his "ambition" often flattered the matronly Queen Elizabeth as his "only love"—was granted her last "favours" of a private beheading. As Garry O'Connor, a Royal Shakespeare Company Director, has noted in *William Shakespeare, A Popular Life* (Applause, 2000), has noted, the now infamous bursting in of a mud-spattered Essex on the Queen in her bedchamber, *en de'shabille',* is "the essence of the great Gertrude–Hamlet scene of Act III." (O'Conner, at 190). *Confer* Dante's *Inferno,* Canto VIII, *"How many up above now* ***count themselves /great kings****, who'll* ***wallow here like pigs in slime****,/ leaving behind* ***foul memories of their crimes****." (at 49-51)*

Nor was Essex the only one to notice a "crisis of authority" occurring at the Court; the French Ambassador DeMaisse (perhaps piqued by her lack of interest in a "royal marriage") commented, "The Court is prey of two evils—delay and inconstancy; and the cause is the sex of the sovereign." (O'Connor, at 363).

Surely the sight of Essex so classically "manly," having made such a "forceful" entrance upon this "Virgin Queen" (*e.g.,* an item in the "San Francisco

Chronicle," 7/19/2000, on Queen Elizabeth II's 100 birthday, noted her "Victorianish" habits of keeping a cadre of "aging gay males" always around her to attend to her hygiene) must have given rise to most contradictory emotions.[4]

From a 1631 newsletter, Southampton's friend Sir Charles Danvers is depicted preparing for his public (as opposed to Essex's private) axing "in most cheerful manner, rather like a bridegroom, than a prisoner appointed for death." (Wilson, supra, at 280).

Not only is this grim surrealism said to have been witnessed by Shakespeare, but, as well, to have impacted him deeply. Wilson compares the "a bridegroom in my death" depiction in *Antony & Cleopatra* (IV.xiv.99) and *Measure for Measure* (III.i.83).

Pragmatic in her "matchmaking," Elizabeth was a shrewd politician. Essex —known for advocating points-of-view on behalf of the English "commoners/yoemen" or "oppressed" peoples like the Irish—perhaps nevertheless was left the same realization as dawned on Mark Antony in ancient times: Julius Caesar is said to have remarked—perhaps reminding—to a reclaimed-from–exile Antony, *You of all people, Antony, should know how fickle popular opinion is…* (Antony a victorious survivor of the humbling "Arena" experience—see, *e.g.,* the recent "Dreamworks SKG" epic, *Gladiator,* for a glimpse of the whimsical

[4] Historical accounts exist of Elizabeth exhibiting a bit of what the Freudians might term "sexual hysteria"; she took, late in life, to appearing at inner court functions bare-breasted—none present daring to make comment of the (later reported as) "stale with age" withered, "leathery" skin; Ben Jonson is said to have remarked of (the deceased) Elizabeth, in the William Drummond conversations, that "she had a *membrana* on her, which made her incapable of men, though for her delight she tried many." Elizabeth Jenkins, *Elizabeth the Great* (1958).

cruelties possible by an *editor, i.e.,* the one who pandered the crowd to follow his *thumbs up!* or *thumbs down!*).

—"No contemporary could fail to get the message when Vergil, discussing bees with an imagery that consistently suggests the human society as well, stresses their fidelity to one single King (the ancients thought the queen bee a male) and advises that, where there are two rivals, described with their followers in terms of like those used elsewhere of Octavian and Anthony and *their* followers, 'the one who seems the worse, him...give over to death, let the better reign in his place' [*Georgics]* (iv. 88-102, 206-214).No wonder that Octavian so appreciated the poem upon his return to Italy after Actium he had it read to him over four consecutive days..."

Colin Wells, *The Roman Empire* (Harvard U., 2nd ed., 1997), p. 15. [An interesting account, as well, of the *Res Gestae* misappropriation of the "merits of another" by the once-termed "teenage butcher," Octavian].

"Vergil and Horace make Octavian's decision to hark back to the 'restored' Republic and Rome's 'traditional' values now seem inevitable, but in the decade before Actium, history might well have seemed to be on Antony's side." Ibid, at 30.

Easy to see why the sovereign would not want any more "fancy" of Essex's "strange designs"—as in Hamlet's *wild and whirling words*—infecting the populace's allegedly "ill-breeding minds."

Too, why Shakespeare—perhaps through his character Hamlet, may have reached a point himself where "*I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises…"* (2.2.319, to the once high school chums, now "unreliable" Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, sent for "espial' purposes on Hamlet).

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hough "lawful" nonetheless troubling is this matter of Claudius and his *urgings*—as he's fearful of Hamlet's "crafty madness" and "turbulent and dangerous lunacy," (3.i.8,4) bringing his treachery to light. Again, I think the too-often-fixated upon "Oedipal" business pales when other factors of composition—as with Shakespeare's use of Essex—are added; Hamlet's "north by northwest" in his knowing "a hawk from a handsaw" (*i.e.,* a "hack" making grating noises as opposed to a noble, "warrior" bird) alludes to Edinburgh, Scotland, and its politics, according to *Arden.* Elizabeth's half-sister Mary, "Queen of Scots," was implicated in the murder of James VI's father after the child's full Catholic baptismal, the lover of Mary—accused, then "cleansed"—then married her with full *Protestant* rites. Shakespeare and his Essex/Southampton clique were familiar with not only the "intrigue" going on there but too the poets.[5]

[5] One such was Montgomerie, Alexander (**b. 1556? d. *c.* 1611)** "Scottish poet, one of the last of the *makaris* (poets writing in Lowland Scots in the 16th century). Montgomerie enjoyed the favour of James VI and was awarded a pension in 1583. In 1597 Montgomerie's pro-Catholic political intrigues brought about his disgrace when he was implicated in a plot to establish a Spanish garrison at the mouth of the Firth of Clyde.Montgomerie's contemporary reputation was high, and during the 17th and 18th centuries his best known poem, "The Cherrie and the Slaye," was reprinted many times. This poem, first printed in 1597 and later enlarged, is an allegory in the medieval manner, fresh in its descriptions but conventional in its May-morning setting. The poet's dilemma--whether to struggle toward the noble cherry tree on the crag or to be content with the sloe bush at his feet--leads to an intricate and tedious debate with such figures as Danger, Dreid, Reason, Curage, and Dispaire. The poem was printed by Allan Ramsay in *The Ever Green* (1724), and its long stanza was revived by Robert Burns in "The Jolly Beggars." Montgomerie's other poems include the scurrilously invective "The Flyting betwixt Montgomerie and Polwart" (1621); some versions of the Psalms; and a large number of sonnets, lyrics, and songs, the best of which reveal a fluent and radiant talent for love poetry" **[Source: Encyclopedia Britannica and: "flyting"]:**
(Scots: "quarreling," or "contention"), poetic competition of the Scottish *makaris* (poets) of the 15th and 16th centuries, in which two highly skilled rivals engaged in a contest of verbal abuse, remarkable for its fierceness and extravagance. Although contestants attacked each other spiritedly, they actually had a professional respect for their rival's vocabulary of invective. The tradition seems to have derived from the Gaelic *filid* (class of professional poets), who composed savage tirades against persons who slighted them. A Scandinavian counterpart is the *Lokasenna* ("Flyting of Loki"), a poem in the *Poetic* (*Elder*) *Edda* in which the trickster-god Loki bandies words with the other gods, taunting them with coarse jests. Although true flyting became obsolete in Scottish literature after the Middle Ages, the tradition itself never died out among writers of Celtic background. The style and language of Robert Burns's "To a Louse" ("Ye ugly, creepin, blastit wonner / Detested, shunn'd by saunt an' sinner") parodies earlier Scots flyting, and James Joyce's poem "The Holy Office" is a bard's curse on the society that spurns him. Examples of true flyting are *The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie* (the poets William Dunbar and Walter Kennedy) and *Flyting betwixt Montgomerie and Polwart* (the poets Alexander Montgomerie and Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth).

Shakespeare's *dramtatic* exploration of royal "divine authority" and its "deposition" was to reach heady *historical* climax in January, 1649; when a much anticipated Scottish assistance failed to materialize, the somewhat ineffectual King Charles I was subjected—as were Essex and Southampton—to a highly "theatricalized," in the fashion of a Ben Jonson *masque,* public trial and execution[6] by the Puritans (victorious in a "republican" advocacy the "democratic" likes of which earlier brought down Essex and Southampton's *enterprise of great pitch and moment* as "treasonous"…)

Though Shakespeare was by then long gone, if he'd been around still he might have noted with his faint smile of irony that King Charles, in his dungeon, awaiting his bloody beheading, abandoned his well-marked and read Holy Bible for the works of Jonson and Shakespeare—much to the expressed disapproval of the attending Puritans (who were immediately to close the "public" theaters as "chapels of Satan"), who took it as a sure sign of his *eternal damnation to come!*

This political intriguing—and "that Scottish play," *MacBeth*—gives us insights into Claudio's pondering on the punishments of "purgatory":

> "…But, O, what form of prayer
> Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder'?
> That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
> Of those effects for which I did the murder,
> My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.

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[6] Kelsey, Sean, *History Today Magazine*,, January 1999—Charles was tried as the "principal actor" *trespassing against the peace of God;* that "spectacle was carefully orchestrated and thoughtfully theatricalized."

May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence…" (3.3.51-64)

Not only does one hear "MacBeth"—*If it were done when 'tis done*—and his fear of *the life to come,* which echoes of "the undiscovered country" in Hamlet's (Act 3, Scene 1) masterpiece soliloquy ("to be or not to be," addressed *post*), legal allusions of "*the law's delay*" arise. *Shuffling* connotes the "legalisms" deployed by what were known as "barrators" (not barristers) whose temporal legal shenanigans often "cozzened" a client out of expected proceeds—most popular were the pirating of maritime goods or the defrauding of "suits at court." (Either matter then enforced by hired thugs, whose activities could be exonerated through bribery with some of *Fortuna's* "windfall." (Shakespeare oft examines, dramatically, the plight of one defrauded of his "patrimony"—one of the Greene/Nashe early criticisms bombasted his way—as in the moody romantic Orlando, *As You Like It*[7])

Though not unique to the Elizabethans, these barrators historically wound up classified as one of the (mercantile) society's "worst offenders"—due not in

[7] "Besides this [his *dunghills*] nothing that he so plentifully gives me, the something that nature gave me his countenance seems to take from me: he lets me feed with his hinds, bars me the place of a brother, and, as much as in him lies, mines my gentility with my education. This is it, Adam, that grieves me; and the spirit of my father, which I think is within me, begins to mutiny against this servitude: I will no longer endure it, though yet I know no wise remedy how to avoid it." (Act 1, Scene 1)

small part to the shamefully opprobrious corruption of, say, Francis Bacon while the "Chief Prosecutor" (his perk for the *dog and pony show-trial* of Essex and Southampton, among other matters).[8]

"Virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock
but we shall relish of it." (III.i.118-20)

The "virtuous" Lord Burghley, whose adopted "son," Sir Robert Cecil, was to take his place as the secret "arbiter" of "Justice"—*e.g.,* the "gimpy" *Richard III* for Shakespeare, *made lame by Fortune's dearest spite* (*Sonnet* 37)—for Elizabeth and then James, pointed out to Essex (a pre-downfall "kiss of death") a quote from "The Book of Common Prayer": "Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days."

[8] In this country, "these days," Bacon's abuses of law and authority would probably escape notice—as independently-minded lawyers like Gerry Spense have decried, the practice of law here has degenerated into "words, words, words," of "redefining" matters into torturous legalisms bordering on "moral turpitude" per se. This demonstrable and unequivocal willingness to deploy "shuffling(s)" could be seen as more important than an actual "bar card" in terms of having a successful legal career now…
—"Those we have selected to become our warriors for justice, our zealous advocates for the people, are those who possess the ability to play word games, who can ensnare, entangle, becloud, confound, confuse and obfuscate better than their rivals..." Gerry Spense, *Give Me Liberty* (St. Martin's, 1998), p. 296
— "Satan was being expelled from Heaven. As he passed through the Gates, he paused a moment in thought, turned to God and said, *I hear a new creature called Man is soon to be created. This is true*, God replied. *He will need laws*, said the Demon slyly, prompting God to indignantly exclaim, *What! You, his appointed Enemy for all Time! You ask for the right to make his laws? Oh, no!* Satan replied, *I ask only that he be allowed to make his own.* It was so granted." - Ambrose Bierce

[*Confer*] HAMLET: (Act 5, Sc. 1):

"…There's another: why may not that be the skull of a / lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he/ suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of/ his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes,/ his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and/ the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt?…

O'Connor sees a parallel/double to Burghley in *Hamlet's* Polonius, with his penchant for Machiavellian advice: *"See you now,/ Your bait of falsehood, takes this carp of truth…*" (O,Connor, at 93-94).

A.L. Rowse[9] finds a "patriarchal" conflict in this comparison as well: "There is an element of the tutorial in Shakespeare's attitude [in the sonnets concerning the "fair youth"], almost as if he spoke *in loco parentis."* (Rowse noting that not only was Shakespeare ten years older than his patron but too that Southhampton had no father, and "disliked his guardian, the great Lord Burghley. (All the young nobles who were his wards turned against this prosy old Polonius...[and] sided with Essex.)"

"How brief's the sport /of all those goods that are in Fortune's care,/for which the tribe of men contend and brawl;" (*Inferno,* Canto VII, 61-63). Too, Dante's "Ante-Inferno," (Canto III) replete with the "shades" of those who lived "without blame and without praise," those whose life was a "great refusal" (*gran rifiuto), i.e.,* "not to be."

The *Inferno's* further "Circles of Hell" depict character flaws forming the makeup of not only the Polonius/Burghley/Topcliff/Walsingham's: Canto XI, "treacherous fraud," XII "tyrants and murderers," XVII those "violent against Nature and Art," XXIV, "hypocrites," XXVI, "fraudulent counselors," XXX, "counterfeiters of other persons"—the absolute stock and trade of Elizabethan

[9] *The Poems of Shakespeare's Dark Lady*, (Emilia Lanier), an interesting compilation of poems, one long beautiful ode to the Christ and "Eve's Apology for Women," plus ones written to her "Ladies of the Circle," at 5).

intelligence'rs, but too the *false friends* "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern." Though seemingly innocuous and "lawful" for the time's protocols, the actions of Hamlet's former high-school chums—having done "espials" for Claudius leading to Hamlet's almost being killed-in-exile—might be seen as *monstrous sized Ingratitude* meriting them the *Inferno's* Ninth Circle, where, frozen in Cocytus, the last river of Hell, might be found *Judas Iscariot*/Dis/Cerberus, the "emporer of the Traitors against their benefactors," whose three heads are each afflicted with a karmic punishment—the beady eyes burning red with hate—and whose great leathery wings beat furiously (as, though its claws are frozen fast, in perpetual delusion it thinks itself a falcon, able to soar away) in a "vain" attempt at escape, only stirring the *shrewdly biting* air to sting at karmically-inflicted wounds and running sores.

A foul and pestilent contagion of vapours, indeed, as Hamlet remarks (II.ii.287-8).[10]

And foreshadowing another traditionally "Christian" concept of "Luciferean ego," the *hubric* "pride" of "Satan the Ape's Folly" cleverly dissembling as "the will [or work] of God": (III.ii.35, Hamlet instructing the players) "…have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's *journeymen* had made men and *not made them well*, *they imitated humanity so abominably*." *(emp. add).*

[10] The *Arden* edition of *Hamlet* notes for these lines an Elizabethan source describing this traditional, medieval view of Hell, Timothy Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholy* (London, 1586): "..the darkness of melancholy obscurteth the sun and moon…more than half eclipsed of this mist of blackness, rising from the hideous lake."

For performances of the "piece of work" (2.2. 271-292) soliloquy, again, far too often, the subtle irony here is *scambled o'er,* as too many seem afraid to touch the "theological connotations." Without this "brave o'er-hanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire," the ancient Hebrew, Old Testament conception of *to be* meaning a life righteous as Job's fails to resonate—as basely–forged metal, when struck, dully *thunks…*

HAMLET

That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

ROSENCRANTZ

[Aside to GUILDENSTERN] What say you?

HAMLET

[Aside] Nay, then, I have an eye of you.--If you love me, hold not off.

GUILDENSTERN

My lord, we were sent for.

HAMLET

I will tell you why; *so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather*. ..

[military strategy of "anticipation," with the added "legal' usage of "discovery" masterfully wrapped up with the *intelligencer's* "secrecy" and their use of carrier *pidgeons;* Hamlet's thus encoded "antic-speak" foreshadowing his countering both "judas's"]

[HAMLET] " I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth,
forgone all custom…

["custom" gives rise to much wordplay for Shakespeare: Hamlet would "wring" Gertrude's heart (III.iv.37-8) "If damned *custom* have not brass'd it so"; and at lines 163-7, "That monster custom, who all sense, doth eat/Of habits evil, is angel yet in this…"(Arden's *Longer Notes [LN]* citing Samuel Johnson, 1765, calling custom the *devil* of "evil genius" in habits in general); the irony here is that Hamlet knows he must keep to his regimen of daily fencing to challenge this "monster custom" having reduced him and his future to insignificance, still, he finds the whole matter infinitely wearisome. *Cf.* Tibetan Buddhism, wherein "custom" as a "habit of ego" is one of the chief tools deployed by the "Three Lords of Materialism" in dissembling "desires" as "Realm of Mara" illusions that ensnare the unwary and impediment the paths of those spiritually aware…] [11]

"…of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a ***piece of work*** is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this *quintessence of dust*?" [12]

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[11] Though the stale "virtues" of Elizabethan "justice" tyrannically prohibited said matter; Shakespeare can be said to be "anticipating" the American "Discover(ies)" of civil rights—*e.g.,* 42 USCA Section 1983, addresses abuses under "color of law" (as in an Elizabethan "edict") wherein the illegalities are allegedly justified by "custom" as "policy." The magnitude of this seemingly minor point becomes apparent with a cursory glance at the hundred-year or so history of the "Deep South" in this country before the Sixties "civil rights movement" ushered in these new federal laws addressing problematic "local" pockets of ignorance operating out of *stale custom,* if you will. Besides the notorious "Black Codes" *brassing it so* for African-Americans—as the Elizabethans did to Jews. What is interesting as well, for consideration of the difficulties a Shakespeare had to endure is how one can easily find historical examples of so-called "liberal" whites adversely treated: *e.g.,* as our Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor has noted in her opinions, the now infamous "miscegenation" laws, which were declared unconstitutional upon being challenged, *Loving v. South Carolina* setting the precedent, had origin not in the fearful paranoid "phantasies" of "inadequate" white people, rather, as a means of "riding herd" on the "straying" white males who, having been allegedly "contagioned" by Northerner contact , were dating and marrying African-American females. As the poet Ishmael Reed has noted, people of Celtic ancestry in particular were prone to this "enlightened" behavior, thus now a large number of "Celtic-Afro's" …
As for how difficult "bucking" the "all too solid" inertia of "custom" can be, *cf.* the conflict in the 1967 film *Cool Hand Luke,* between the Deep South Sheriff—*What we have here is a failure to communicate*—and the "chain-ganged" Paul Newman…

[12]*Cf.* mine own take on the subject: " HAPPENSTANCE—*"Truth and understanding are not such wares as to be monopolized and traded in by tickets and statutes and standards."*--Milton

"I remember one cold clear night…I was sitting in a large open window of a high-rise dormitory, listening to the crystalline stillness, outside, of winter in suburbia. Nothing but the sound of distant streetlights crackling

As the "Arden Shakespeare" text notes with regard to this "negatively capable" passage of complexity and yet straightforward guilelessness:

"…on the other hand, *express* is appropriate for 'form' (as in the 'express image' of *Hebrews i.3*) and shows indeed a turn of thought characteristic of Shakespeare, who joins 'form' and 'pressure' at I.V.100 and III.ii.24. From L. *exprimo, expressus,* to press out, the word refers to the clear impression made by a die or seal and so to the faithful reproduction of an original. Hence it describes a man as not only well-designed but well executed, and so sustains the idea of a 'piece of work,' which can inspire the wonder that leads on to 'admirable'… Characteristically [of Hamlet] when he thinks of man as like a god in some way he laments how unlike a god he is in others; and the present *panegyric* is no exception…*quintessence* lit. the fifth essence [an "alchemical" term all the materialist rage at that time as the fix-all "elixir" waiting to be discovered], distinguished from the four elements composing matter but held to be extractable from them. Hence the *quintessence of dust* is dust (1) in its utmost refinement, (2) in its most essential character. Any recognition of man's superiority as (1) goes with the bathos of his being (2)." (*Arden,* at 308).

The *Quatro* 2 edition has *like an angel in apprehension*—of which Wilson Knight *(Wheel of Fire,* 1949, pp. 338-9), says is an *intuitive* faculty which can "apprehend more than cool reason ever comprehends."

Arden relates an earlier usage (I.ii.150, Hamlet regarding his mother), *a beast that wants discourse of Reason* :

"The faculty of reason was traditionally recognized as the crucial difference between man and the beasts, for the classical statement of which we see Cicero, *De Officiis* I.iv.II…It was through his reason that man could percieve the relation of cause and effect and thus connects past with future, whereas the beast, precisely because it lacks reason, must live largely in the moment." (at 439)

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through the chill…And the realization, as Rilke once said, that *You must change your life…*

"I'd been reading Marx and Hegel, about the misappropriation of one's labor, how the hard-won victories wrested from Hera's earth are inevitably taken from one, palmed off by another, and then "compensated" by some pittance…How the senses of touch, taste, smell, sight, sound—all once divine, pure, ringing and clear, shimmering like some eternal prodigy (*you and your labors, one and the same)* slipped away…Adam Smith's "invisible hand" turned some thief of the night…"

When sorrows come they come not single spies,
But in battalions… (As Claudius remarks
to Gertrude*, Act IV, Scene 5, re: Ophelia)*

The conflict betwixt the Essex/Hamlet's most "noble" intentions and the machiavellian "realities" of the Bacon/Claudius's is explored most poetically in the "Player King" scene. Though "bewildering" to many modern critics, as Harry Levin has noted,[13] some very powerful *mythos* is at play here:

"In shifting his attention from Priam to Hecuba, and his source from Vergil to Ovid, Shakespeare turns form the sphere of the epic to the lyric, and from events to emotions. It is Ovid, too, who inspires his final appeal to the gods themselves: '… *illus fortuna deos quoque moveret omnes.'*...

"The tone of [the Player's speech is that of the *nuntius,* the Senecan messenger who enters to make a morbidly protracted recital of bad news…Among the disheveled heroines of Seneca's tragedies, Hecuba looms particularly large as the archetype of maternal woe and queenly suffering…

"The sable arms of Pyrrhus resemble his funereal purpose, and also the night—which is not a generic right, but the particular, portentous, claustral night that he and his companions have just spent in the wooden horse. The repeated adjective: 'black' (I.414,416) is an elementary manifestation of evil, like the 'Thoughts black' of the poisoner in the play-within-the-play; yet it hints at that 'power of blackness' which Melville discerned more fully in Shakespeare's works than anywhere else. But the scene does not appear in its true color until the dark surfaces are o'ersized' (423), covered with sizing dripping with redness. Red, unrelieved by quartering, is 'total gules' in the unfeeling jargon of heraldry, which Shakespeare deliberately invokes to describe the clotted gore of others shed by Pyrrhus—of parents and children whose family relationships are feelingly specified by way of contrast (419), a contrast which ultimately juxtaposes esthetic and ethical values. He is tricked out, dressed in the unnatural colors of Marlowe's Tamburlaine—in black and red and in a carbuncular brightness which flickers

[13] The Question of Hamlet (Oxford U. Press, 1959), "An Explication of the Player's Speech,"pp. 141-62, appearing in the "Norton Critical Edition" of *Hamlet.*

against the darkness, as opposed to the hues of nature, the blues and browns and greens that Shakespeare has more constantly in mind." (Levin, *Norton*, at 208-210, *passim*).

The *carbuncular* red and black favored by Marlowe was in part due to the colorings of allegedly "refined essences" of "alchemy," most influential as the physical "science" of those times. Shakespeare, who'd termed this dubious matter a *sullen art,* and his preferred artistic use of "raw Nature's" colors were critically explained as his being a "natural" *idiot savant. Confer* Dante: who reserves the "Eight Circle of Hell' for alchemists, "falsifiers of metals," those "whose alchemy could counterfeit fine metals" (as one laments to the pilgrims) "How apt I was at *aping nature*" (*Canto IX,* 137-139); there, too we find the "counterfeiters of others' persons" and the "sowers of scandal and schism…*foul tyrants* [of] treachery"(XXX).

—"'Black magic,' wrote Eliphas Levi in his *History of Magic,* 'may be defined as the art of inducing artificial mania in ourselves and in others, but it is, also, and above all else, the science of *poisoning'*." (*emp.add*.)
Dame Edith Sitwell, *The Queen and the Hive* (Atlantic Monthly Press, 1962), p. 486.

Remember the "Ghost" of Hamlet's father (Act 1, Scene 5): "that… *beast,/With witchcraft of his wits…With juice of cursed hebona in a vila…The leperous distilment…swift as quicksilver* [an alchemical term] *Most lazer-like…"*[i.e.,"devilish" with "sullen pride"]

Levin notes, as well, that Marlowe is often attributed to be the "author" of this Player King/Pyrrhus scene; again—my point-of-view always having been that the man Will Shakespeare (the one raised in Stratford) was the "true author"[14]—I think that Shakespeare somehow is being dogged still by his "rival poet" Marlowe's hold on "opinion," even though the latter was allegedly dead some seven years at this point … "Trick'd out" (play of both a heraldic "coat of arms" and "dressed up" as a satirical comment), "sable arms" (black as death), "gules" (the blood-red of heraldry) all bring the master-dissembler and "counterfeiter" Marlowe to mind—in all his *shrewdly biting cold* cruelty:[15] *"We'll lead you to the*

[14] I've been astounded to hear myself termed an "Oxfordian" on the happenstance of my oft arguing that Shakespeare was what Thomas Jefferson was to systematically study as a "natural aristocrat,' *i.e.,* a "man of the people" who made himself "noble in reason". My favorite "conspiracy theorist" has the 'true author" being Queen Elizabeth, who allegedly commented at one time (along the lines) that *this Stratford man Shaxpere is such an oaf, always jiggling his "Sir Adam Prickshaft" at women fevered with delusion* [the jibe at him from Dekker's play "Satiromastix"], *why the knave can't even perform simple arithmetic, how could he be the author of mine own Works?* [explaining the inordinate number of times wordplay is made upon "sums" and the like in the plays…]. A.L. Rowse concedes that she indeed wrote "poetry," but it was of such "frigid" [*sterile promontory*] technique as not to merit his further comment. Others have documented the attempts, as well, of moderns to prove that not only did Elizabeth write under the nom de plume "W. Shakespeare" but that the portraits of Shakespeare are her wearing a beard! (One anthropologist uses a computer to "prove" the matter*). See, e.g.,* the Oxford (U.) historian Ian Wilson's compendium of various theories and what basis, *Shakespeare the Evidence* (St. Martin's Press, 1993).

[15] The decade prior to the writing of Hamlet had seen not only the plague but too economic difficulties had resulted in such measures as new and harsh "public policies" against Catholics. Excluded even more from this "New Empire Order" generating immense wealth (for that time) out of trade imbalances—for which "monopolies" to milk the matter were highly *priz'd* and hotley disputed, on which the "privateers" cloaked with various governmental authorities preyed—were, of course, the Jews. Not escaping "blame" were the Dutch, Belgian and French Protestant immigrants escaping Catholic persecution at home. Wilson, (*fn#7, supra,*) relates the posting of "inflammatory doggerel," some signed "Tamburlaine," and bearing other modus operandi's of Marlowe as these lines: "Like the Jews you eat us up as bread" and *"We'll cut your throats, in your temples praying."*
[13 continued] [Shakespeare distinguishing himself through Hamlet's "conscience"?]

(Wilson continues):"On the pretext that some aficionado of the theatre was behind the notices, the government began to question dramatists. The first of these, probably because he was immediately available, was Thomas Kyd, author of *The Spanish Tragedy*.
[a Senecan "revenge drama" studied deeply by Shakespeare for *Hamlet*]

Kyd was ruthlessly tortured and his belongings seized [before being killed]."

Marlowe, Wilson notes, at that time was staying at the house of Walsingham's son--successor as well to the chief of the secret police. "As modern investigators such as Leslie Hotson, and Charles Nicholl, [the award-winning, *The Reckoning*] have discovered, all four men in that Deptford room [the similarly timed attempt of Marlowe to murder

stately tent of war/Where you shall hear the Scythian Tamburlaine/Threaten the world in High astounding terms…" (Marlowe's 1587 appeal to snobbery countered by the Queen's Men's *The Troublesome Reign of King John*, c. 1588, in Two-parts, as in Tamburlaine):

"You that with friendly grace of smooth`ed brow/ Have entertained the Scythian Tamburlaine/ And given applause unto an Infidel/ Vouchsafe to welcome, with like courtesy,/ A warlike Christian and your countryman"

In Plutarch's *Life of Pyrrhus* he relates his story of Neoptolemus, "Pyrrhus the Fair," to Euripides *The Phoenician Women.* Condemned in the process is the matter of "seeking to outdo," *pleoneklein.* (Pyrrhus, avenging his father, Achilleus, is said to have killed, during the last year of the Trojan War, Priam while he was praying at an alter).

Here is Plutarch's philosophical colleague Dio doing the same:

"*Pleonexia* is the greatest evil to a person himself, and it also harms those near him. And no-one feels pity at all for the *pleonectic* man (*ton pleonekten*) and no-one sees fit to teach him, but all are repelled and consider him to be their enemy ...

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one Frizer only to have the matter backfire and wind up himself murdered of the improbably described "dagger wound to the right eye" when he "misses" Frizer] were in the upper echelons of the murky world of the spy, the *agent provacateur*, and the 'dirty trickster'." (at 157).
A popular theory has it that Marlowe's death was "faked" and he went to a foreign base of operations—Malta is a popular conjecture—from where he worked as part of the Elizabethan/Jacobin "eye-spy" network…

Note that Frizer was a double agent for the Earl of Essex's intelligence network, call to mind how Marlowe oft boasted openly of his "dirty tricks" performed in conjunction with his coterie of male admirers known as the "Sons of Swords" (one in particular their favorite--the donning of maskes, then the kidnapping and savaging of ladies and young lords on Elizabeths's list "being taught a lesson of respect for the Crown's authority," *see,e.g.,* Marlowe's *Edward III.* for these types of "nasty piece of work."

Wilson relates as well the very real dangers ascribed to Catholics then: in 1583, a relative of Shakespeare's mother, Mary Arden, of the Catholic Ardens of Park Hall, allegedly set out to "shoot the Queen...Such was the efficiency of the Elizabethan informer network that Somerville [the relative] got little further south than Banbury before being arrested and hauled to the Tower, ultimately to be found mysteriously strangled in his cell at Newgate...(fn. cit. Mark Eccles, "Shakespeare in Warwickshire," p. 79). (at p. 53). And "local council clerk Thomas Wilkes reported precisely this activity [re: "papists"] to government chief spymaster Sir Francis Walsingham."

And indeed Euripides, second to none of the other poets in reputation, brings Jocasta on stage, addressing Eteocles and advising him to desist from seeking to outdo (*pleonektein*) his brother - more or less as follows:

'Why do you desire the worst of deities, *Pleonexia*, son? Do not. The goddess is unjust. She enters many houses and cities prosperous and leaves to the destruction of her followers. For her is your craze! This is best for mortals, equality to honour and friends to be to friends, to bind cities with cities, allies with allies. For the equal is proper for mortals by nature, the perpetual enmity of greater and lesser brings a time of hatred.'

"I have quoted the iambic verses at length. For a sensible man should use statements that have been finely made. So in these verses occurs all that follows from *pleonexia* - that it neither privately nor publicly brings advantage, but on the contrary it subverts and destroys the prosperity of houses and of cities, and again, how it is proper for men to honour equality (to *ison*) and that this brings common friendship and makes mutual peace for all, and that disputes and civil hatreds and foreign wars occur for no other reason than because of the desire for more (*tou pleionos*) and in consequence each side loses even the sufficient that it has. Indeed, what is more necessary than life? What do all men hold more important than this? But nevertheless they destroy even this for possessions, while some have even destabilized their own countries." (*Dio Chrysostom* 17.7-11).

Noble words about the matter being neither "fine" nor "expedient" in a world not awaiting the "times to be set right," not awash in a [stormy] *sea of troubles…*

Yet look us upon Dante's "City of Dis" in the lower part of Hell: past ramparts of *glowing iron* are "the mosques that gleam within the valley, as *crimson* as if they had just been drawn out of the fire" (*Canto VIII,* 70-73). "This *insolence* [of their houses of sorrow] is nothing new" (120-124). *Canto* IX has the "arch-heretics…sigh[ing] in agony [*Machiavellians* like Marlowe and his *coterie*] "ensulpulchered" in "*monuments*" glowing *red-hot*…The next "city of men," Malebolge, is no better: "stone the color of *crude iron*." Inside the "pimps" and

"panderers" are scourged by horned demons, the "flatterers" are awash in an effluvial of feces. Here might be found, as well, those of "magic fraud," the *misuse of augury.* (*Cantos* XVIII, XX).

Briefly, look at Hamlet's first great soliloquy (Act 1,Scene 2): as in Dante's *Inferno* the sense of stagnation, decay—something *rotten in Denmark,* a sense, too, of *murder most foul*—the lines, "How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable/Seem to me the uses of this world!" Too, the image of "Niobe, all tears" counterpoints the feint at blaming his mother (If Zeus turns a woman, stricken to grief at the loss of her children, to stone to weep tears for all time, why then what can a mere mortal woman do by comparison)…

Now, as Hamlet urged, "on to Hecuba"—as Levin described, *supra, the archetype of maternal woe and queenly suffering*.[16] First Dante (*Purgatory,* XXX, Musa trans.): "Hecuba sad, in misery, a slave…now gone quite mad, went barking like a dog—it was the weight of grief that snapped her mind.//but never in Thebes or Troy wre madmen seen, driven to acts of such ferocity against their victims,

[16]Shakespeare works a great ocean of *mythos* here: From The Great Mother, by Erich Neumann (Bollingen Series XLVII,1991 ed.): "...the Terrible Female is a symbol for the unconscious. And the dark side of the Terrible Mother takes the form of monsters, whether in Egypt of India, Mexico or Etruria, Bali or Rome. In the myths and tales of all peoples, ages, and countries--and even in the nightmares of our own nights--witches and vampires, ghouls and specters, assail us, all terrifyingly alike...Thus the womb of the earth becomes the deadly devouring maw of the underworld, and beside the fecundated womb and the protecting cave of earth and mountain gapes the abyss of hell, the dark note of the depths, the devouring womb of the grave and of death, of darkness without light, of nothingness." (p. 148-9)

"It is in India that the experience of the Terrible Mother has been given its most grandiose form as Kali, 'dark, devouring time, the bone-wreathed Lady of the place of skulls.'...But all this--and it should not be forgotten--is an image not only of the Feminine but particularly and specifically of the Maternal. For in a profound way life and birth are always bound up with death and destruction. That is why this Terrible Mother is 'Great,' and this name is also given to Ta-urt, the gravid monster, which is hippopotamus and crocodile, lioness and woman, in one. She too is deadly and protective. There is a frightening likeness to Hathor, the good cow goddess..."(Ibid, at 150).

animal or human,// as two shades I saw, snapping crazily at things in sight,/like pigs, directionless, broken from their pen." [supposedly the Florentine duo of Gianni Schiacchi and Simone Donati, the latter bribing the former to impersonat his just-deceased father and forge a will to benefit both with (that Shakespearean theme, as well, of) *Fortuna's windfall*]

In Hamlet, both the "ennobling" and the "fettering" nature of not only "motherhood" but too that of "womanhood" is given explorative staging. Gertrude he allows to adopt—as a "default mode"— the "courtly *custom*" of what we moderns call *narcissism, e.g.,* as Hamlet says (an aside to Horatio) of a *popingay* of a "courtier," *Dost thou know this water-fly?* Besides the accompanying association of "little boy" theatre having become hugely popular—to Shakespeare's implied chagrin, seeing his "mature" and deeply "human" art of theatre displaced by the "surface flotsam" of Jonson's extravagantly "special-effected" (or *affected*) farces-as-*masques*—we have the critic Samuel Johnson's: "A water-fly skips up and down upon the surface of the water, without any apparent purpose or reason, and is thence the proper emblem of a busy trifler"(*Arden, Longer Notes,* 558). Too, the baubles of "brightly flapping wings," the curmudgeon Thersites, "how this poor world is pest'red with such waterflies" (*Troilus & Cressida,* V.i.28-31), the "flies" as "fashion-mongers" (as in a "fish-monger"?) in *Romeo & Juliet,* a foreshadowing dig at Indigo Jones' *et al* "over-praise" as "costume-designers."

The other pole of "womanly" consideration is one as gentle and delicate of sensibility as Ophelia, who only becomes *an universal prey* in this degraded world —perhaps in the same way as Octavia, of whom Antony remarked that she's "the swan's down-feather, / That stands upon the swell at full of tide,/ And neither way inclines" (Act 3, Sc. 2).

As Dante, with Shakespeare one gets the impression that—despite or even *in spite* of "impediments" bricking up like walls between—his "faith of love" was never truly shaken. Hence Ophelia, *re:* Hamlet: "And with his head over his shoulder turned/He seem'd to find his way without his eyes./For out o'doors he went without their helps./ *And to the last bended their light on me.*" (*emp. add.)*

Arden notes that this passage echoes: "Ovid's description of Orpheus, *flexit amans oculos (Met. x57)* at the moment of losing Euridice when coming back from hell (*Modern Language Notes,* XC III, 982-9). This is Hamlet's despairing farewell to Ophelia, and emblematically to his hopes of love and marriage…"(*Longer Notes,* 462).

Cf. Dante: (*Paradiso,* as Virgil leads Dante into a wall of flames): "As at Thisbe's name Pyramus opened his eyes at the point of death…*Her* [beatific] *eyes I seem to see already* " (*Canto* 27.37-42).

Hamlet's urging her to a nunnery is for her own good. No other portrays as deftly, I believe, as does Shakespeare the archetypal "male responsibility" of protection of the "woman" of him—in the realm of the machiavellian this whole

matter, of course, becomes not just the "cuckolding" of a rival by victimizing the woman but as well the notion of "value added" to a woman by a male's affections inadvertently contributing to her "savaging." (Another interesting Celtic parallel here has a dying King Arthur—in a Breton version—urging the same matter for his Queen Gueneviere, who'd been kidnapped prior to their "royal marriage" by a savage Pict warlord for precisely these "utilitarian" motives). *Confer* love-doomed Juliet, musing on the "fickleness of fortune," wishful thinking that perhaps *Fortuna* won't have any of one "renowned for faith," her Romeo (Act 3, Sc.5).

Upon news of Ophelia's suicide, the first words from Claudius, with his "strength" as "lord of imbecility," are to vow: "This grave shall have a living monument" (5.1.304). Again, Shakespeare's use of satire here is subtle, and harks back to the *Sonnets* and his "true love," supposedly *forfeit[ed] to a confined doom* :

81, *"Your monument shall be my gentle verse"*; 107, *"Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,/ While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes:/And thou in this shalt find thy monument,/ When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent."* [17]

In the traditional Catholic view Shakespeare was heir to, suicide was a "sin" denying one salvation. (Dante has those having done this "violence to oneself" enduring a purgatorial cleansing). The Priest at Ophelia's funeral laments that she almost "lodged" in "ground unsanctified…Till the last trumpet," a reference to *Corin-thians* 15.52 in that time's "Geneva Bible" edition: the dead's "Day of

[17] Too, Pericles and the elaborate monument—with "epitaphs/In glittering golden characters"—to his alive still daughter; Cleopatra hiding in her monument from Octavius, etc.

Reckoning" arriving with the blast of *the last trumpet…*Shakespeare has this grief and inability to avert her disaster weigh heavily on Hamlet, in his "antic disposition" offering an outrageous list of "atonements" (*i.e.,* drinking vinegar as the Christ) before ending: *Let Hercules himself do what he may,/ The cat will mew and dog will have his day* (5.i.298).

This clarity is very much "Zen," *e.g.,* " the meaning of life is: *chop wood, carry water.*" Too what used to be known as the *duty* of *yukoku no shi*: "The samurai is 'one who serves'—the first to suffer anxiety for human society, the last to seek personal pleasure." (Old Bushido proverb re: these "noble guardians")

As A.C. Bradley (*f.n.1, supra*) noted in his essay, the interpretation of Hamlet as one "incapable of action or making up his mind," though common, is ill-founded; he cites a long list of "action" undertaken by an oft "alone" Hamlet. His mention to Horatio of his daily fencing practice we are meant to take seriously, as well. Yet, as in the ancient Zen warrior strategy of *wu-wei* (literally "no action") sometimes indeed *discretion is the better part of valour,* as "no thing" has potential of being successfully done:

HAMLET **(5.2.213):** " Not a whit, we defy augury: there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all*: since no man has aught of what he*
leaves, what is't to leave betimes?" (emp. add.)

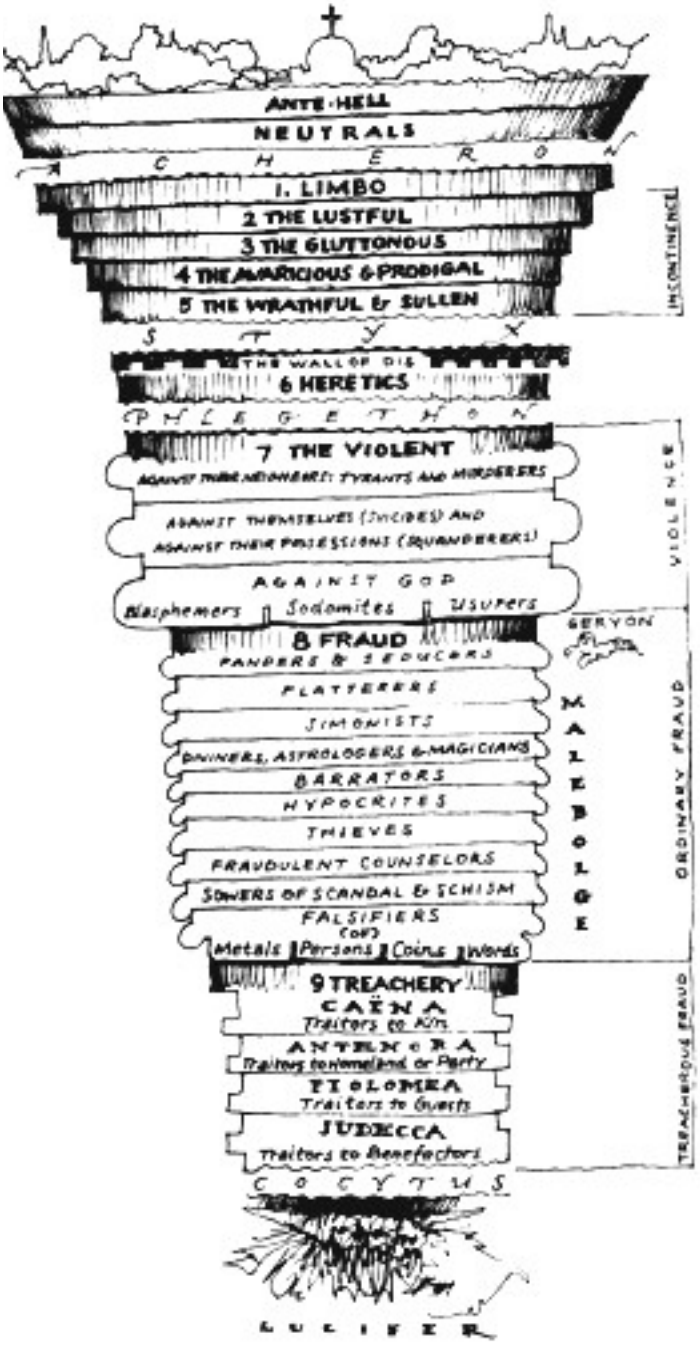
Though the pangs of dispriz'd love have figured highly in Shakespeare's works 'till now, in this foul realm, the matter has no place. *Confer Troilus & Cressida,(Ulysses):*

What honey is expected? Degree being vizarded,/ The unworthiest shows as fairly in the mask… O, when degree is shaked,/Which is the ladder to all high designs,/Then enterprise is sick![18]

So, instead of the Old Testament metaphor of a "Jacob's ladder" offering a "stairway to Heaven," complete, in the "Renaissance" view, with "Music of the Spheres" and other amenities, by Act V of *Hamlet,* we've transversed—as did Dante the Pilgrim—a rather *rough-hewn* vortex:

- *"It was no place hall, the place where we found ourselves, but with its rough-hewn floor and scanty light, a dungeon built by nature… (Inferno, end of the Ninth Circle, Canto XXXII,* 97-100)
- *"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,/rough-hew them how we will…"* (Hamlet to Horiatio), *Hamlet,* 5.2.11)

[18] " …Take but degree away, untune that string,/And, hark, what disco
In mere oppugnancy: the bounded waters/Should lift their bosoms higher t
And make a sop of all this solid globe: /Strength should be lord of imbecil
And the rude son should strike his father dead:/Force should be right; or ra
Between whose endless jar justice resides,/Should lose their names, and sc
Then every thing includes itself in power,/ Power into will, will into appet
And appetite, an universal wolf,/So doubly seconded with will and power,
Must make perforce an universal prey,
And last eat up himself…" (at 1.3.84)


ANTE-HELL
NEUTRALS
ACHERON
1. LIMBO
2 THE LUSTFUL
3 THE GLUTTONOUS
4 THE AVARICIOUS & PRODIGAL
5 THE WRATHFUL & SULLEN
INCONTINENCE
STYX
THE WALL OF DIS
6 HERETICS
PHLEGETHON
7 THE VIOLENT
AGAINST THEIR NEIGHBORS: TYRANTS AND MURDERERS
AGAINST THEMSELVES (SUICIDES) AND AGAINST THEIR POSSESSIONS (SQUANDERERS)
AGAINST GOD
Blasphemers
Sodomites
Usurers
VIOLENCE
GERYON
8 FRAUD
PANDERS & SEDUCERS
FLATTERERS
SIMONISTS
DIVINERS, ASTROLOGERS & MAGICIANS
BARRATORS
HYPOCRITES
THIEVES
FRAUDULENT COUNSELORS
SOWERS OF SCANDAL & SCHISM
FALSIFIERS (OF)
Metals
Persons
Coins
Words
MALEBOLGE
ORDINARY FRAUD
9 TREACHERY
CAÏNA
Traitors to Kin
ANTENORA
Traitors to Homeland or Party
PTOLOMEA
Traitors to Guests
JUDECCA
Traitors to Benefactors
TREACHEROUS FRAUD
COCYTUS
LUCIFER

Still our will's "puzzle" with the question, *Well, what is to be done?* To not "outdo," to maintain the "natural order of affairs," yes, important. Though as "Time the Chorus" announces, as prelude to Act IV of *The Winter's Tale* : *Since it is in my power/To o'erthrow law, and in one self-born hour/ To plant and o'erwhelm custom…/ make stale/ The glistering of this present…"*

These "Late Romances" as we've come to call them—with the dreamlike weaving of Time, Place and Action—play more fully with these conflicts "resolved," as in *Hamlet,* through tragic *catharsis.*

—"The Renaissance meant…the rebirth of classical antiquity under the aspect of beauty. It was a rebirth of new life of art, emancipated from its subordination to religion. The experience of all these great artists was there discover of beauty, beauty of bodies, living, breathing, desiring bodies…They cast off world weariness and felt themselves again in the prime of mankind's youth…They effected a kind of reconciliation between divine aspirations and the senses. This was to usher in an era of delight and a rebirth of both politics and love."

Allan Bloom, *Shakespeare, supra,* at 127.

For now, though, we are as "limited" as Hamlet to "Tradition." Going it "alone,' against what others might seem reasonable, was the *name of action* for the "warrior hero" in *Coriolanus* (Act 5, Scene 3):

"…*But, out, affection!*
All bond and privilege of nature, break!
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.
What is that curt'sy worth? or *those doves' eyes*,
Which can make gods forsworn? I melt, and am not
Of stronger earth than others. *My mother bows;*
As if Olympus to a molehill should
In supplication nod…
… I'll never
Be *such a gosling* to obey instinct, *but stand,*
As if a man were author of himself
And knew no other kin…

Like a dull actor now,
I have forgot my part, and I am out,
Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,
Forgive my tyranny; but do not say
For that 'Forgive our Romans.' O, a kiss
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!"
(*emphasis added* where similar to Hamlet's usages)

Shakespeare was familiar with Welsh nobles from the Pembroke circle. One classic Welsh tale has to do (again) with the legendary King Arthur and the ancient Celtic vow that a *dux bellorum* type of "king" as he was required to swear: *If need be, Truth against the world*

As wondrously told over time, at one dark point—the *augurs dislimning* dismally—our hero Arthur is allegedly standing upon a high cliff, looking (hand to furrowed-brow) out over a *sea of troubles,* where at anchor are too many Saxon

warships to believe had happened. As his other knights are otherwise engaged in defending "the matter of Britain" from the usual difficulties of Vikings, Picts and even some Irish, Arthur, alone on his recon mission, makes haste to outfit himself for war—smearing a deep, "midnight blue" type of plant dye on his bared chest, adding an earthen *ochre* to this coloring for his face. The hair stands up in lime-green "dreadlocks" (as the "punks" like to do now). When the first exploratory small craft row ashore, he summons forth the deep gutteral fierceness of his worst war bellow: *You down there! Trespassing upon our Sovereignty without her permission. Leave now or stand and have at it!*

(as the startled occupants unloading from the boats freeze amid the tiding sea)

Well? What's it to be: we don't have all day, you know.

As Shakespeare makes use of a similar anecdote in *Cymbeline,* (Act 5, Scene 3), where an "ancient" and his two boys save a strategic pass by repelling a multitude of *full-hearted enemy*: "with this word 'Stand, stand,'/Accommodated by the place, more charming/With their own nobleness…"[19]

[19] William Butler Yeats compared the Irish folk historian/bard William Carleton's use of "historical romance" to Shakespeare's in Henry Glassie, ed. *Irish Folktales* (Pantheon, 1987 ed.), pp. 16-17. Too, we have: "Storytellers have always been popular with the people of Ireland—the *seanshais, ollares, files* and *bards* of the olden days—who were dedicated to satisfying audiences ranging from princes of the realm to ordinary men and women. Indeed, in order to meet the demand for this kind of entertainment, explained the historian P.W. Joyce in his authoritative study, *Old Celtic Romances* (1894), these ingenious men had to compose stories that caught the popular fancy and so they often took legends or great events as their themes. 'In the course of time,' Joyce wrote, a body of romantic literature grew up consisting chiefly of prose tales which were classified according to subject into Gods and Heroes, Voyages and Expeditions, Tragedies and Courtships, Adventures, Visions & etc. Source of these tales were historical, *i.e.,* founded on historical events and corresponded closely with what is now called the historical romance; while others were altogether fictitious—pure creations of the imagination. But it is to be observed that even in the fictitious tales, the main characters are always historical. Or, such as were considered so. The old ollaves wove their fictions around the legends of Cucualin, Oisin, Balor, Angus, the lovers Midir and Etain and the voyager Maildum, just like the Welsh legends of Arthur and his Round Table or the Arabain romances of Haroun-al-Raschid and his Court'." Peter Haines, ed., *Great Irish Tales of Fantasy and Myth* (Barnes and Noble, 1994), p. 12.

Let's close with a look at the *To be or Not to be* soliloquy as having framed this all too well-done tragedy of Shakespeare's.

[Jenny, I'm afraid that I'll have to email you this matter; my notes indicate another coupla pages…Tom Noonan]

To Close, let's bring this wealth of knowledge to bear on Hamlet—arguably Shakespeare's most complex character—in his soliloquies leading to *To Be or Not To Be:*

Scatach war-chariot (later with Cuchulainn)

Barrators/ships of enterprise/Dante

"For, wondrous though the gift of knowledge is, it has little moving power over the happening..."
Arthur Koestler, *The Gladiators* (Macmillan, 1939, 1965 Danube ed., trans. Edith Simon), p. 232

B: brief look at preceding monologues:

HAMLET (2.2. 319—to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern):

I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation
prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king
and queen moult no feather. I have of late--but
wherefore I know not--lost all my mirth, forgone all
custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily
with my disposition that this goodly frame, the
earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most
excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave
o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted
with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to
me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.
What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason!
how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how
express and admirable! in action how like an angel!
in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the
world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me,
what is this quintessence of dust?

(Julius Caesar) **BRUTUS**

A piece of work that will make sick men whole.

II.ii.506-562: "O what a rogue and peasant slave I am" into

"The play's the thing/Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king"

HAMLET (Act 3, scene 1)

Exeunt KING CLAUDIUS and POLONIUS

Enter HAMLET

HAMLET

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?

[Though too often the conflict here is described in "psychoanalytic" terms of *he's suicidal!,* more to the point is this conflict between "to be" in what Kabbalah mysticism and the ancient's called living an "authentic life." Not "to be" becomes being physically present in a wasteland of anomie.

One of Shakespeare's sources, according to the Arden Edition, was Golding's *Caesar's Gallic Wars* (1565). Cited is the Roman attack of Celtic Britain "with slings, shots of arrows…"

Cuchulainn [Cucualin] and his "warrior trembling" (he was termed the "Irish Achilleus") made him a favorite. *I was a hero, I was a leader,/I was the charioteer of a great chariot;/ I was gentle to the gentle,/ But against dishonor I wrought vengeance (Song of Cuchulainn).* A man of the people like Shakespeare must have heard these tales from one storyteller or another along the way. Hamlet's *take arms against a sea of troubles* is the tale of "Cuchulainn Fighting the Waves"; the Irish champion has wearied with "battle fatigue" to the point of "delusion" yet bravely fights each wave rolling in—not for "fame" or "glory" but out of *friendship,* the matter in the "Fenian" warrior scheme of things an "eternal verity."

Another Celt of importance from the "Caesar's Gallic Wars" was Vercingetorix, who fought a great battle but ultimately fell to Caesar when his "Captain of the Horse" Mark Antony arrived with reinforcements. Rather than have the dozens of Celtic tribes under his command slaughtered this Vercingetorix offered himself in surrender (Caesar's Romans considered him and the Celtic Druids possessed with "supernatural powers"). He was then kept in a cage for the next six years of Roman "Circus" amusement in captivity ; when Caesar was declared *dictator* by the Senate, Vercingetorix was strangled and disemboweled (like the Elizabethan sentence) for public entertainment at Caesar's first *triumphus…*]

To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;

Here is the first big transition in the soliloquy. Popular in the Elizabethan belief system was the notion was a deep sleep past the wan cares of the body—with no "awareness."

To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;

But with this “to sleep…to dream” a deeper meaning as “obstacle” or “impediment” arises.

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action…

[draft] Here, truly, “the time is out of joint.” Though not is a manner that should “puzzle the will” too much as a “modern.” On the one hand we may no longer have the “unities” of being once available to those seeking to enable a broader understanding of “the human condition” [get Allan Bloom quote!] but, on the other hand, Westerners have been witness to “the swans coming to the lake,” the availability of [Tibetan] Buddhism philosophy and methods. [get Trungpa quote]/kensho/samurai

As Horatio foreshadowed (Act 1, Scene 1, about “the Ghost”):

In what particular thought to work I know not;
But in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

[thought*: “anxiety, grief /So 'to take thought' is to give way to grief” (MIT Internet site*

---Here we have the crux of the connundrum. The Morrigu is the emblem of sterility!. Her interest in Cu Chu Lainn, the Irish Heracles (Pride of Hera, the Brown Silken Doe-Eyes Misting with Tears), is merely predatory. Another encounter with Cu Chu Lainn has her posing as an old hag milking a magical three-teated cow to offer the dusty and wearied warrior milk, knowing that for the "simple act of kindness" he will bless her--which he does, healing her blindness, one of the unfortunate side effects of power-mongering sorcery--her hoping further for his Light of Foresight! a deceit which came to naught. Morrigu is thus like what Neumann depicts as "the Monster wielding the Terrible Knife," from the Papyrus of Nu, Egypt, akin, in my interpretation, to the female equivalent of Cerberus the Three-Headed Yet No-Brained Hangdog of what may be seen as the Hell Bardo. She guards the Underworld Gates with her long snake-tongue rigidly clamped in a crocodile snout face frozen with a Cheshire Cat! like *grin*, her breasts dangling like missle torpedos, most useless, from the body all furry, Kundrie-like with clunky, dinosaur thighs.

---Whereas in the Native American myth the hero's challenge is to "break the teeth" from the vagina of such a one existing in spiritual degradation, and thereby make her whole as a woman again whose wisdom has earned respect, in this case nothing will do.

--One might add Lamia, daughter of Belus, allegedly of Zeus, the Libyan "Neith," Love-and-Battle goddess, to this pantheon. Instead of the noble Athene, shining forth with wisdom, one gets lamyros ("gluttonous") and laimos ("gullet"), a creature reduced to an ugly, Gorgon countenance by her sadomasochistic delight in the sodomistic suffering of others (akin to Boudicea and her Count Dracula-like, "Vlad the Gay Impaler," use of wooden staves to slowly kill her female enemies), especially children, for being of youth and

innocence. Allegedly part of the Empusae, a female cult that seduced men and sucked their blood as they slept, these females, like the Amazons of the Libyan Gulf of Sirte and their "sisters" now being found as remains in Eurasia, really existed. As Plutarch and others have noted, they were indeed really dangerous,too, for the Taurian Artemis of Crimea and her Black Sea Kult of Hecate, armed priestesses formed to "avenge" that Mummer-no-king Agememnon's sacrificing of his own daughter as "penance" for his own "mish-takes," became the buccanneering terrors of the high seas for a period of time, the savage throat-slitting and drinking of male blood--especially that of exceptionally handsome boys of noble birth, they tossed the females to their dirty tricks male minions--frightening even no-nonsence types like the Roman Consul Pompey (50 or so B.C.), taking the path of Theseus his forebearer, who ended the cults of ritual sodomizing and prostitution of virgin girls at Crete with Phonos hekonsios, "justifiable homicide."

---To return to the opening image of Cu Chu Lainn, propped against the stone, metaphorically laid low...And the statue, in Paris, I believe, whose image might be seen in the way W.B. Yeats described the presence of Cu Chu Lainn's statue in the Post Office, prior to the Easter Rebellions...

Whom regarded who, Fenians or stone?...Myth or reality?

---As Joseph Campbell commented of Cu Chu Lainn on this metaphysical plain(Hero with a Thousand Faces, Bollingen Series XVII, 1973 ed.):"To a man not led astray from himself by sentiments stemming from the surfaces of what he sees, but courageously responding to the dynamics of his own nature--to a man who is, as Nietzsche phrases it, 'a wheel rolling of itself'--difficulties melt and the unpredictable highway opens as he goes." (p. 345)

.....To close I'll give you the vision of Cu Chu Lainn triumphant even when, dying of too many wounds, he strapped himself upright to yet another stone (as before) to remain eternally vigilant, not noticing, beyond care even, when the Morrigu indeed returned to gorge on his gaping shoulder and croak in his face...

To those not addicted to the "lust of terrorism"--in the way that , why yes, The Iliad is about wrath, as announced in plain words right in the

beginning, but one must mine deeper to see that the Greek phrase of "put an end to one's wrath" is the true metaphor--the notion of war does nothing but weary one. Calling to mind this greater paradeigmata , view then the vision at the stone our temporarily immobilized Cu Chu Lainn finally receives for his troubles of seeking the War Chariot of Vision, as Scathach told him he must do: From the fiery prison of his physical body, wracked with a mysterious fever wasting his energy, a fiercely shining star-gazer1 of a black steed, the right one of his battle chariot, breaks free and takes flight...the flames fading into cool heavenly expanse...where a light horse, mottled with grey, his left warhorse, is met and joined into service by Loeg, the charioteer...As the view of a world beset with fiery red and yellow flareups curves below, a young Cu Chu Lainn, in his dream trace seeing the emptiness of black space all around, feels the pangs of fear in his stomach and does not want to get into the chariot as the toughened-with-Time Druid Loeg, impatient, scorn forming in displeasure at his mouth, insists he do...Yet he does, all becoming a bolt of Heavenly Lightening, descending in deep peace to the chaos, once again...