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THE UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT

A TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH  
OF THE  
DE TRAGOEDIAE CONSTITUTIONE  
OF  
DANIEL HEINSIUS

A THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
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## PREFACE

The name of Daniel Heinsius, the author of De Tragoediae Constitutione, is well known to students of the history of English literary criticism. Generally, however, it is by name and reputation only that Heinsius is known, for the De Tragoediae Constitutione, first published at Leyden in 1611, has never been translated from the Latin into English and has had no publication since 1643; it is available only in the rare book rooms of a few libraries. It would appear that a work which is considered to be a workmanlike exposition of neo-classic ideals is deserving of study both upon historical and absolute grounds.

Daniel Heinsius was born at Ghent in 1580. The affairs of his father took the family to England and finally to Holland where they took residence at the Hague. Daniel was given a solid classical education at the Hague and at the University of Leyden where he was a student for a time of Joseph Scaliger. At the age of twenty Daniel was made a lecturer on the Latin and Greek authors at the University of Leyden and the authorities of that University later appointed him Professor of Politics and History. In later life Heinsius was involved occasionally and for short periods of time in

politics, but in the main he devoted himself during his whole life to his work at the University of Leyden chiefly in poetry, literary criticism, and literary scholarship. He died in 1655. His chief works were commentaries on Silius Italicus; on the New Testament; on editions of Horace, Seneca's tragedies, Hesiod, and other classical writers; some translations from the Greek; a considerable body of Latin poems; a Latin tragedy, Herodes Infanticida; an edition of Aristotle's Poetics with a commentary; and the De Tragoediae Constitutione.<sup>1</sup> Daniel Heinsius must be distinguished from his son Nicholas Heinsius (1620-1681), also a famous scholar who published critical editions of the Roman poets.

The De Tragoediae Constitutione has been described as "the succinctest and best argued statement of the neo- and to a great extent pseudo-Aristotelian view of drama."<sup>2</sup> To a certain extent the work might be described as a paraphrase of those portions of Aristotle's Poetics which deal specifically with the drama; but the work is more than a mere paraphrase for Heinsius makes interpretations, amplifies, illustrates from the Greek and Roman drama to the point that the work can be properly considered as

1. John Aikin, General Biography, or Lives Critical and Historical of the most eminent persons of all times, etc. (London, 1799-1815), V, 99-100. See also Encyclopedia Britannica, (14th edition), XI, 390.

2. George Saintsbury, History of Criticism, (London, 1928), II, 356.

Heinsius' own original composition. There is no doubt that Heinsius has steeped himself in his subject, has equipped himself for the task, and can speak with well-founded authority. The work can fairly be taken to represent the best traditions of continental thought on Aristotle's Poetics of Heinsius' age.

Shortly after its publication, the De Tragoediae Constitutione became known in England.<sup>3</sup> Ben Jonson approved of it, and it is through him that Heinsius enters into the stream of English literary criticism. Jonson's Discoveries contains large borrowings from the De Tragoediae Constitutione.<sup>4</sup> Later in the century, Dryden indicates his knowledge and approval of Heinsius.<sup>5</sup> The influence of Heinsius on the French neo-classic critics was great and so it may be concluded that, both directly and indirectly, the Heinsius influence on English neo-classic literary theory and literary criticism was considerable.

For the purpose of this translation the Elzevir edition of 1643 was used because this edition is the one most easily available. For purposes of convenient reference to the Elzevir edition, the pagination of this

3. George Saintsbury, op. cit., II, 356.

4. J. E. Spingarn, editor, Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, (Oxford, 1908), I, 226-230.

5. John Dryden, Essays of John Dryden, edited by W. P. Ker, (Oxford, 1926), I, 143, 235; II, 44.

Elzevir edition is indicated in the following translation by Arabic numerals on the right margin. The pagination of the Index of Chapter (pp. 5-7) accords with that of the Elzevir edition. Also for the convenience of the reader, translations of the passages from Greek and Latin authors have been taken, wherever feasible, from editions in the Loeb Classical Library; where these were not readily available, the translator has ventured his own renderings. For uniformity's sake, all references to the Aristotelian corpus or translations from it were taken from the eleven volume Oxford Translation of Aristotle, edited by J. A. Smith and W. D. Ross. Notes have been placed in back of the text.

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Daniel Heinsius

THE STRUCTURE OF TRAGEDY

A treatise clarifying and explaining the Aristotelian position on Tragedy in its entirety, together with the kindred topics arising therefrom.

Enlarged Edition

Supplemented by the text of Aristotle's Poetics with the author's own commentary and translation.

Leyden, Holland

The Elzevir Press

1643

DEDICATION

Daniel Heinsius sends greetings  
to the noble and illustrious  
Rochus Honerdius, worthy member  
of Holland's highest legislative  
body.

\*2

It seems opportune, most noble sir, to present to you my work on the Structure of Tragedy which, either by your order or earnest entreaty, I mentioned in my recent letter to you on another topic. You asked that my comments be cast in epistolary form. As you see, I have done so without adornment and, although I go beyond the limits of a letter, I keep to its simple style.

Furthermore, at the very beginning of my introduction<sup>1</sup> I confess to this starkness of statement. Because the nobility of your name would brook no refusal, I undertook this task and, I assure you, it stays within its promised scope. I have, it is true, separated my subject into chapters, and this for the sake of order. For in a treatise, this is of primary importance.

My hope is that I have not been overly solicitous in striving for order nor careless in observing its injunctions. The two pit-falls I would avoid are, first, any striving for praise as a preceptor, and secondly, an eloquent but confused presentation of my matter. I have, therefore, eschewed any excessive ornament of language, although I am ready to resume such a style on the exigencies of occasion.

But my present subject would scarcely warrant artificiality. If I had been disposed to pursue the question at length and to weigh down each point with examples and citations (the ambition of our contemporary philologists!), my task would have failed before it was begun. For I must suit your convenience and, as a rule, you dabble in literature only at your leisure. I must be especially careful to be brief since I know how busy you are and because I ought not, in an unimportant matter, ascribe to you the leisure that is mine. \*3

One thought makes me reluctant to send this work to you. I am afraid that, forgetting your high position, you may interpret my action as gratitude rather than compliance with duty. If I, who am obliged to show obedience, be merely grateful, my obligation will not be settled.

Another factor is the weighty burden you have recently placed on my shoulders. Other outstanding persons and men of rank, to whom I was obligated, at least left me the opportunity to make public acknowledgment of how deeply I was in their debt by the sort of small gift they could expect of me. But you have all but deprived me of the opportunity to do so inasmuch as, not long ago, you were kind enough to dedicate to me a drama from your skillful pen. Whereas my work shows no promise of undying fame, yours has

already attained it. The methods of the ungrateful I have never learned. Yet you do not allow to my thankful heart even the opportunity for ingratitude, a vice which, as you know, is most grievous and burdensome to an educated gentleman.

Nature has endowed me with reasonably adequate mental powers. This mind is, as a rule, neither burdensome nor distressing to any man. It neither disturbs the rest of kings or potentates nor forces its words in an offensive manner on the unwilling. Since it seeks nothing of any man save friendship, I count it a disaster if I cannot guard this friendship. Yours, Honerdius, I have always valued highly and counted my admission to it as no ordinary blessing, although I sought in it no further boon than that of being your friend.

Your countless kindnesses to me I count as so many shackles and fetters. I can scarcely expect to loose myself from these bonds by any means, much less by this work I have written, to which one might properly attribute the centurions' phrase: "Your orders, my general, have been carried out." But I was especially delighted and it seemed in keeping with the other manifestations of your charming character that, after fulfilling the rules for Tragedy, you should command me to write about its structure. Farewell, most noble sir, and continue to hold me in the high regard you do.

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Daniel Heinsius  
ON THE STRUCTURE OF TRAGEDY  
CHAPTER I

1

Introduction: Discussion of the  
usefulness of this subject.

Noble sir, you ask that I present to you in brief  
brochure my observations on the structure of Tragedy  
as Aristotle conceived it. It gives me pleasure to  
follow your suggestion, not however, as your instruc-  
tor in new fields, but as one ready to reaffirm, either  
by personal judgment or on Aristotle's authority, many  
principles which, I daresay, you have yourself evolved.  
The present treatise, whatever its worth, will be  
entirely devoted to an exposition of these principles.

2

That the poet's freedom must be confined to the  
narrow limits imposed by grammarians or philosophers  
is an opinion to which I do not subscribe--especially  
since the greatest writers of Tragedy lived prior to  
the formulation of these norms. After they had been  
formulated, no tragedian, at least in my opinion,  
paralleled the greatness of Sophocles, whose death,  
on sufficiently reliable evidence, antedates that of  
Aristotle, prince of philosophers, by several years.<sup>1</sup>

Practice preceded principle in other fields of  
skill as well. Did any Greek teacher of oratory ever

match Demosthenes in the forcefulness of that divinely inspired eloquence which was his destiny? Yet Demosthenes<sup>2</sup> lived and died long before the rank and file of the rhetoricians. Before Demosthenes' day, Pericles, whom people called "the Olympian" because he seemed to thunder and lightning as he spoke,<sup>3</sup> and Alcibiades<sup>4</sup> and the others, who in the Athenian Republic of an earlier day won fame for their eloquence, followed nature as their guide in preference to any teacher.

3

But whatever it is (the Latins, with sufficient accuracy, perhaps, have called it an acquired perfection)<sup>5</sup> that nature bestows on the fortunate, or unflagging practice grants to the energetic, the wise and learned man converts to an art. Consequently he has an understanding of the causes of things, and, what other men do as a result of practice or habit, he does in accordance with reason. Not only does he not stray far from his path but he has even a short cut for his journey.

Aristophanes<sup>6</sup> has held up much of Euripides' work to ridicule, not so much on artistic grounds as on the basis of truth. Often enough Euripides treats inaccurately in one place what he has given full and accurate treatment in another, and the reason for such discrepancy lies in the fact that even the best judgment is incomplete unless a theoretical knowledge has been annexed to it.

Aristotle was the first to point out faults, which is the duty of a careful critic, and, in the rôle of a true philosopher, evolved from the good qualities of many writers the rules for a single art. At the same time he made both faults and rules subjects of his lectures, pointing out what standards must be established for criticizing others' work and what norms we must follow in our own writings.

Yet a writer's efforts are foredoomed if he lacks natural ability, and that, primarily, of a poetical bent. Mere knowledge of principles will not write a Tragedy, but theoretical knowledge built on natural talent will produce a perfect play.<sup>7</sup>

Bear in mind, too, that many other elements are involved. The writer needs eloquence in its fullest scope and no rule established by the Rhetoricians fails of application in Tragedy. What art demands more statesmanship? The tragedian needs it not only for his maxims and epigrams but, as you have shown us more than once that we recall, when his subject involves civil deliberation. For you did not approach the tragic treatment of civil topics after a life spent in obscurity, but after you had engaged in public life, which is the school of great men. Not only were you competent therein, but even considered the state too narrow a field for your rich talents, which preferred

learned leisure to listless inactivity.

This bent of yours is far different from the inclination of those who ostentatiously pride themselves on their lack of learning. Unless they win universal belief in their own literary ignorance, they all but consider their position in jeopardy. Their fear is that they do not appear boorish enough or that they would accomplish less by devoting themselves to literature than by spending their time at the gaming board, or over their cups, or in some other way.<sup>8</sup>

5

The man who comes to the defense of letters is duty bound to hold such sluggards in contempt. All admit that you have done so in a manner befitting a gentleman; your obligations to learning you have discharged as becomes a scholar.

What you wish of me I shall fulfill since I have all my material at hand. Granting this slight request to you, in the hope of whose favor I may expect to accomplish something is, perhaps, more for my own sake than yours.

## CHAPTER II

All poetry is imitation. For Plato Tragedy is particularly so. His opinion on this imitation. Tragedy is distinct from other poetic types. The means, subjects, and manner in which Tragedy is imitation. The tragic Catharsis and its purpose. What this Catharsis is. The conflicting opinions of Plato and Aristotle on the emotions. Does Tragedy cleanse them or increase them? Again the conflicting opinions of these two philosophers. The definition of Tragedy which is the subject of this entire chapter.

Both Aristotle and Plato maintained that all poetry was some kind of imitation. In the second book of the Republic<sup>1</sup>, Plato, in a specific manner, asserts that imitation is a species of poetry rather than the universal genus,--if indeed Socrates<sup>2</sup> had in mind not poetry as a whole, but as a form of utterance which is distinct from its matter.

6

According to Socrates all poetic narrative is achieved by simple narration, by imitation alone, or by a combination of the two. We have a Greek example of simple narration in Aratus' Phaenomena, and Lucretius' De Rerum Natura provides an example of the same thing in Latin. Narrative is imitative when intermediate passages are omitted and only the actors are left to carry on the

dialogue. This is necessarily the case both in Comedy and Tragedy and hence Plato calls them imitative in the proper sense of the word.<sup>3</sup> Epic poetry, such as Homer's or Vergil's, is a combination of the two, for along with the dialogue, we have the poet's own intermediate passages.

Plato (and not in one isolated passage)<sup>4</sup> has called all poetry in general an imitation. For example in the Timaeus<sup>5</sup>, Socrates, with his usual down-to-earth charm, calls poets a tribe of imitators. And, again, in the second book of the Republic<sup>6</sup>, he says that the poets are concerned only with imitation and not with the truth. He establishes two agents in an action, God and the artificer. The poet is one who imitates an object as a painter does. Thus, if we follow Plato, when a carpenter makes a table, he receives the idea of the table from God, Who is the Prime Artificer. The man who makes the table, according to this line of reasoning, is second. The one who imitates the table (and the poet is such), is thrice removed from the Prime Artificer. So it is that Plato said that Homer was thrice removed from truth.<sup>7</sup>

But Aristotle, who tried in many places<sup>8</sup> and especially in the first book of the Ethics<sup>9</sup> to disprove the whole theory of ideas as empty fancy, failed of his purpose. He did not, as was usual with him, refute Plato, but reduced poetry to an art. He did not support the

cause of poets in opposition to his teacher<sup>10</sup>, but was careful to set in order a skill that had hitherto been a hodge-podge.<sup>11</sup> Thus he showed that poetry, like all other sciences, stood in need of his extraordinary talent.

And since all poetry is imitation, it necessarily follows that each type of poetry is imitative. The various types differ inasmuch as they imitate different actions by different media or in a different manner.<sup>12</sup> The different media by which Tragedy imitates are, for example, language, rhythm, and harmony; the actions are, for instance, weighty and serious; the difference of manner we see in the unending line of characters who are introduced on the stage. These characters Tragedy imitates by means of action rather than narrative.

These three accurately define the differences in Tragic imitation and serve to separate Tragedy from the rest of poetry. A correct name for the first would be the adornment; for the second, the material; and for the last, the method.

First, the adornment. Whereas some types of poetry, to be sure, use only one or two of the aforementioned means, and others use all (I mean language, rhythm, and harmony) while still others use all, but not at the same time or spot, Tragedy imitates by all these means, although not at the same time and in the same manner. Since its essence is discourse, Tragedy uses language.

It also makes use of harmony and rhythm, inasmuch as certain parts, especially the choral passages, were sung and, on Plato's testimony,<sup>13</sup> the harmony and rhythm depend upon the type of song. Some there are who attribute the dialogue to the actors, rhythm to the dancers, and harmony to the singers. It is quite sure that all these elements were formerly common in Tragedy, but Aristotle makes no mention of it. By these means, therefore, Tragedy imitates but not by all at the same time, or in the same spot. By these means, dialogue is built up and rendered appealing without monotony, inasmuch as it is partly recitative and partly sung. These, therefore, are the adornments.

Action provides the material. This action, unlike Comedy, must be serious; nor may it be short and abrupt as was the case in the early days of Tragedy, but must be complete in itself. 10

Lastly, the method is such as excludes a narrative account of what takes place, in the style of the Epic poet, but portrays the entire story by action. This is the duty of a dramatic poet and by this one means can he defend his right to the name.

Next, a word on the benefit and purpose of Tragedy.<sup>14</sup> Since the tragic Muse is especially busy about stirring up the emotions, Aristotle thinks that the purpose of Tragedy is to regulate and again to tranquillize these emotions. The passions proper to Tragedy are pity and

fear.<sup>15</sup> They are first aroused in the heart; as they gradually emerge, they are repressed and are brought into their proper sphere.<sup>16</sup>

Accordingly, Aristotle called this process a purification, or if one prefer, a purging of the emotions or passions.<sup>17</sup> The term comes from Pythagoras and the Italian school and was later appropriated, along with many other things, by the Platonists.

The term calls for some discussion. In order that he might bring into being that life which most closely approximates divine immortality, and which has its essence in the mental activity of contemplation, Pythagoras,<sup>18</sup> as doctors do, usually set down, by way of preliminary condition, a sort of purgation. By this process of cleansing, the emotions, being passions and disturbances of the soul, would gradually be removed, and the sensations, which wage war with the intellect, could be either separated from mental operations, or regulated and tranquillized. His contention was that if a man were deprived of sense life and intellect, he would be only a plant; if he lacked intellect only, he would be a beast; but if he were free from emotions and passions, those arch-opponents of the mind, he was like to God.

11

For Aristotle, the emotions were neither virtues nor vices.<sup>19</sup> In his opinion, the wise man had the power to acquire a kind of intellectual habit, directing, on reason's mandate, the time and extent within which joy,

sorrow, pity and the rest of the emotions were permissible. This habit acquired under emotional stimulus, he maintained, was a virtue and, therefore, the emotions should feel reason's restraining hand in order that they might bear a resemblance to the virtue they produce.

The representation of Tragedy produces this kind of habit. Just as any skill reaches a suitable point of perfection in the hands of one who has acquired a habit in its sphere by constantly exercising that skill, so, too, Aristotle maintains, habit produces a moderate response to those objects which generally stir the soul to emotion. He who sees a man wounded in battle shrinks back in fear, feels pity for the victim, loses his self-control. The doctor comes up and, in the line of duty, tends the wounded man. But he feels no extraordinary upset because of his long association with pain and disease. 12

When a doctor approaches his first patient, he is deeply moved--until habit restrains emotion, and feelings make way for skill. The raw recruit shrinks back in terror from the foe; when he has been seasoned, he fights back with courage and a will. So it is that the man who often comes face to face with misery, feels pity in proper proportion; he who often sees fearful sights at length feels less fear of them, and his reaction is quite proper.

By this same norm we must measure the dramas portrayed on the stage, which is, so to speak, the school of our emotions. Since these emotions are not only useful in life but even indispensable, it is fitting that they be stirred up and satisfied in the theatre.

13

There are many examples which show that the emotions can be reduced to a habit such as has been described. Plutarch's story of Aeschylus at the Isthmian games is well known.<sup>20</sup> When the poet saw a boxer stand mute under a heavy blow while the crowd groaned, he said, "What a remarkable influence practice and habit have! The spectators shout, whereas the one who is struck remains silent." Now Aristotle, in the eighth book of his Politics<sup>21</sup> contends that, of sensible objects, only the visible and audible represent character. Objects of touch and taste do not have this power.

Thus if any person is pleased with seeing a statue of anyone on no other account but its beauty, it follows that the sight of the original from whence it was taken would also be pleasing. So, too, the man who looks with pleasure on the imitative representation of the best character, actions, and emotions must also find delight in them and act in a manner befitting them. Hence it is that attention must be given to this imitative representation, and this for the sake of the character portrayed by the dramatic poet.

14

Such was Aristotle's opinion and up to the present it has been explained in every possible manner. Aristotle himself had more to say on this purgative process; a few remarks in the Politics<sup>22</sup> and more in parts of the Poetics which have not come down to us, wherein, if I am correct, he treated the melody proper to drama. This melody he established as a part of Tragedy, albeit not an essential part. And he certainly attributed a purgative function to music, especially the music then employed in the theatres.<sup>23</sup>

Yet, as Proclus<sup>24</sup> has said, to cleanse the emotions is to bring them to a higher point of perfection. When these emotions have approached the point where they respond in moderation and remain within fitting bounds, they are a great factor not only in comprehending virtue, but also in coming to a knowledge of the sciences.

But Plato conceived Tragedy in a different light. His praise of poets was such as excluded them from his Ideal State; least of all was he for admitting that sort of poetry which is mimetic, namely, drama. 15

His first argument<sup>25</sup> for this position is that he considered all imitative representation to contain an element of variety and diversity, whereas virtue, like truth itself, is an indivisible unity. He is right in this because Tragedy does imitate all types of character-- Atreus or Thyestes no less than Tiresias or Ajax<sup>26</sup>--and we derive equal pleasure from all alike.

What we see, just as in a picture, is a likeness and in this respect, if Thersites<sup>27</sup> be a likeness, he affords no less pleasure to the spectator than does Nireus<sup>28</sup>. But the spectator, by this very pleasure, is withdrawn from his duty, and the immature must especially be on their guard. For, while it is beauty that influences us most in a character, artistically portrayed vices give the pleasure proper to virtues.

In the second place, since passions are emotions, the greatest factors in stimulating these emotions must, above all things, be shunned. The tears stirred by Tragedy and the laughter of Comedy are examples. Whereas these dramatic forms stir up similar emotions in all spectators, their effect is greater on persons suffering an ill like the one portrayed on the stage, just as the partially blind are more deeply moved by the portrayal of weak eyes than those whose sight is sound. To be sure, when the man who naturally inclines to tears or laughter is driven along the path of his inclination, he begins to lose his self-control.

So, when Epicurus denominated poetry the stronghold of the emotions and called poets their trainers, he chose his words well. To read Alcaeus<sup>29</sup> or Anacreon<sup>30</sup> makes the drunkard more prone to his weakness, and Hipponax<sup>31</sup> has the same effect on the hot-headed. But Plato demonstrated that nothing was more inconsistent than that a good man be at the beck of his emotions;

at a later date the Stoics declared that this was true of all mankind. Plato came to this same belief, inasmuch as, in the Republic,<sup>32</sup> he proclaimed Homer guilty of profanation because he portrayed gods who wept and laughed. The scatter-brained laugh and the mentally depressed shed tears, but the wise man, acting on reason, must ever maintain the same mental state.

Still, he goes on to say, laughter is even less admissible inasmuch as it is a sign and proof of a mind which possesses more humanity and acts by the mandates of the senses rather than reason. In the same vein the Church Fathers notice that Our Savior never laughed, but that He wept and shunned particularly any unseemly excess of pleasure and joy. And so they left Comedy for the common people in the same fashion that Plato classed laughter among those emotions which preclude moderation.

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The opinions of Plato and Aristotle vary on Tragedy just as their theories on emotion were different. Plato considered Tragedy a fan for the emotions; Aristotle thought it was a measure by which the emotions could be brought within their proper sphere. This, he said, was the function and benefit of Tragedy and included it in his definition. The exact sense in which Aristotle called Tragedy a cleansing or a purging has occasioned difficulty for many learned minds up to the present day. Since this is so, let me formulate the definition now, with your

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permission. Unless I am mistaken, the various terms of the definition have been given the careful consideration they deserve.

Aristotle's definition is as follows: "Tragedy is the imitation of an action that is weighty and complete and of just magnitude, embellished with language, harmony, and rythm in such a manner that the several kinds are found in the separate parts of a play; the action produces, not by narrative but through pity and fear, a cleansing of these aforesaid emotions."<sup>33</sup> That is, Tragedy is an imitation, as all poetry is. Its subject is action; not joyous and pleasant as in Comedy, but serious and weighty; not abrupt or truncated, but complete.

To render it more appealing, this action is equipped with language, harmony, and rhythm, and the imitation is produced by these three embellishments. Yet they are not all employed in the same place, but each in its own place, inasmuch as some parts are recitative, while others (the choral passages, for example,) are composed for the singing voice. Such was the practice in ancient times, but the usage does not prevail today.

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But events are not, as is often the epic style, presented by bare recital; Tragedy is achieved by a continuous imitative representation of characters in action. Their actions stir up fear no less than pity

and the corresponding emotions in the human soul are soothed or quelled. If the Tragic passions are put to proper use, any lack or excess of these emotions in the individual is cleansed and purified without (and this is of prime importance) destroying proper proportions. Such is Aristotle's view of the matter.

In this definition, the generic quality common to all poetry is imitation. The medium is language, harmony, and rhythm. The object is an action that is weighty and complete, that is, comprised of a beginning, middle, and end. The manner is imitation of events not by exposition or narration, but through the agency of the actors to whom the dialogue is assigned. Its purpose is that it adjusts fear and pity in the soul and teaches these two emotions a fitting subservience to reason. There shall be a fuller consideration of these elements in the course of our examination into Tragedy's essential parts.

## CHAPTER III

The essential parts of Tragedy.  
 Its first and principal part,  
 which embraces tragic skill  
 almost in its entirety. The  
 various manners in which  
 Aristotle employs the tragic  
 plot. Why this is the prin-  
 cipal part and, so to speak,  
 the soul of Tragedy.

Thus far the definition has been considered.

Since a definition gives the essence of a thing which is a whole (and not in part), and since a whole is composed of parts, a discussion of the individual parts is necessary for an understanding of the definition. Since parts are of two kinds, formal and material, Aristotle is justified in treating the formal first, since they have a bearing on the essence. He then considers the material parts. Inasmuch as Aristotle's plan differs in no wise from the plan of this work, we shall, in passing, elucidate his doctrine when the obscurity of a passage makes this necessary.

Since arrangement is the fitting and uninterrupted ordering of separables, no one arranges a whole without parts, nor does he arrange things that are not divided. The formal or essential parts, moreover, are of two kinds--first, parts essential of themselves; and second, parts which become essential by reason of dependence on parts that are essential of themselves. The first, or

internally essential, are plot, character, thought, and diction; the second, or externally essential are spectacular equipment and song. These will be discussed in order, beginning with the first, or plot.

The very term employed by Aristotle in discussing this topic meant for Homer, oldest of writers, unadorned speech or language.<sup>1</sup> Other authors construed it as such fictitious narratives which maintained an appearance of truth as one finds in the stories told by the poets. Inasmuch as these stories, during Aristotle's day, as for many years before, were the subject matter of the tragic poets whose entire concern and diligence had to do with the adaptation of these tales, it seems that Aristotle understood plot in a two-fold sense: according to the matter of Tragedy, which is an action usually probable but in few cases true; then, according to the arrangements of this action, which he called the structure of the incidents.<sup>2</sup> In this way both Seneca and Euripides treat the same matter in their Hippolytus, but their structure of incidents is different, yet both matter and structure are correctly termed plot.

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Because plot presents an action, Aristotle called it the imitation of an action;<sup>3</sup> by its plot-arrangement, it imitates an action that is true to life, although not actually true. Therefore, he points out that the poet has a more weighty function than the historian who portrays actual events, whereas the poet presents things

as they are.<sup>4</sup>

Not only does he portray individual characters as often as he presents them with suitable character and feelings, but he does so (and this is a propos) by the credible structure and skill of the whole action portrayed in the drama. The Philoctetes of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides differed a good deal on the same subject; so, too, the Medea of Euripides, Ovid and Seneca showed the same action cast in different plot-structures.

Aristotle affords many proofs that plot is by far the principal part of Tragedy. First,<sup>5</sup> Tragedy, unlike a painting, is not an imitation of men, but of actions and human lives. This imitation, to be sure, concerns not men as men, but as individuals who act, and by their actions they are said to be happy or the reverse. To imitate this happy or unhappy state is Tragedy's end, which, as in everything, is of prime importance. It is for this end that everything is done and to it everything, as a rule, is referred. Hence, the plot is the principal part and, so to speak, the soul of the whole drama. By means of plot the actions are a source of happiness or unhappiness, which is the end of Tragedy and, as in everything, of prime importance inasmuch as the end provides us our first motive for action. Therefore plot is first in order of parts.

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But that part which is essential to the employment

of the remaining parts is more necessary than they. Such a part is action, since it is by means of action, and not without it, that one imitates human character and feelings.

Therefore imitation of character properly depends on action, not action on character. Proper character comes with the action.

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Furthermore,<sup>6</sup> without character there can be action; but without action there can be no character. Hence a Tragedy without character imitation is possible, and Aristotle notices that some writers did this before the art was fully evolved. But nobody ever wrote an actionless Tragedy.

From this it follows that Tragedy is the imitation of an action, not of a quality,<sup>7</sup> inasmuch as character is determined by the qualities of an action. But if the imitation of qualities were the highest end of the tragic poet, the ability to imitate men inasmuch as they are good or bad, just or unjust, would be his purpose; but that is neither proper to Tragedy, nor its purpose. To be sure, the proper completion of tragic action is achieved by happiness or unhappiness, but Tragedy differs from the other literary types in this very kind of action. From this action arise the passions and emotions which, as I shall presently prove, must be derived from the very imitation of the action.

Hence the purpose of the tragic poet is not character imitation, but the actions on which character

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depends. To imitate character is not the tragic poet's primary business but stands in second place, next to the first, and, although it is intimately connected with the first, it is, nevertheless, not his primary purpose.

The proof of this is self-evident. If a tragic author should, in his play, employ language properly expressive of character and provided with the best words and phrases (which are also parts of a Tragedy), carefully arranged according to the rules of art, he would, in doing this, by no means have attained the particular skill of the tragic poet. On the other hand, if he pays no great attention to character, diction, or phrases, but if he carefully and artistically arranges the necessary action, builds up the incidents, fashions his plot with fitting complications and solution, he has already completed the task of a tragic poet. Writers of Epic and Tragedy both portray character, both often show the same care in choice of word and phrase, but they differ greatly in the manner, magnitude and arrangement of the action. 26

It is sufficiently obvious, now, that the reversal of the situation (such is the name given to a sudden change of good or bad fortune to the opposite) and the recognition are the most powerful--almost all-powerful--elements in Tragedy. That they are parts of the plot is beyond all doubt, and hence the poet should see to it that his plot possess these before all else. But the

truth is that men, despite long and careful practice, attain that element last which is first in merit and excellence.

That the structure of Tragedy accords with this axiom is clear from the fact that, while the early writers gave a neat and skillful portrayal of character and were at no loss for word or phrase, still they were not yet able to fit incidents together, nor to build up their subject nor to fashion a fitting plot.

Plot, therefore, is indisputably the first principle and particularly proper task of Tragedy, and, as Aristotle liked to call it, the soul of Tragedy.<sup>8</sup> Just as the soul is the body's form, so plot too, the fitting structure of the actions, is the form of Tragedy. And just as the body, although it possess an external form, needs the soul for life, so there can be no true Tragedy without its form, plot, even if the play possesses character, diction and phrases. 27

Furthermore, if the structure in a Tragedy is, as it should be, complete and of the sort proper to Tragedy alone, and not the kind found in an Epic or other poem, this structure would be its principal differentiating mark, just as the possession of reason is the form of man and serves to differentiate him from brutes. If taken together with poetry, its genus, plot-structure alone will almost fulfill the definition. Hence the other parts are subservient to plot and, as was stated elsewhere, can easily

be reduced to it. It is therefore, not only first, but, after the whole, next in importance.

## CHAPTER IV

The scope and extent of Tragedy.  
 Action inasmuch as it is whole  
 and complete. The various ways  
 in which it is said to be one.  
 How Tragedy demands one action.

28

Aristotle has done in the matter of tragic structure, which we are now considering, just what a builder does who is planning a building. The usual procedure is to choose a site for the building and then to mark it off within a fixed area and circumference.

Tragedy has to do with action. Just as the site is adapted to the building, so the action is fitted to the Tragedy in extent, scope, and proportion, and just as a palace or castle calls for an area different from a private dwelling, so Tragedy demands an action different from the Epic. Although both literary forms require action, just as both types of building require sites, there is a vast difference in both cases; action in the one, and site in the other.

From the definition we have learned that Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is both complete and a whole, just as the building requires a site that is complete and a whole. The complete or perfect is that which lacks nothing. As regards the building, in site, that which is built is perfect; in Tragedy, as regards the action, that which is fashioned is perfect. Just as the

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site for a building is perfect, not in proportion to a palace or castle, which demand a more extensive site, but in proportion to the building itself, so we do not demand a vast action of Epic proportions but one that is perfect as measured by the drama itself.

A whole is that which has a beginning, middle, and end.<sup>1</sup> Thus the site of a building is a whole, although less extensive than a castle's, just as the action of a Tragedy must be a whole, although it be less extensive than Epic action. A lion is a perfect animal even if smaller than an elephant. A lion's head is a whole, although smaller than the head of an ox or a bull. They differ in species and each is complete in its own; each has its own parts and is, therefore, a whole.

Therefore,<sup>2</sup> just as in every body there must be a fixed extent, neither too large nor too small, there must be a fixed extent in any action which is subject matter for a true poem. On contemplating an action, the same thing comes to the memory as meets the eye when we view a body. While delaying on the several parts of a huge body, the eye cannot encompass in its view the whole body which is built up of these very parts. No one embraces with comprehensive knowledge the whole action of a play if it be too extensive.

On the other hand the sight of too small an object produces no pleasure, since the person viewing it (as one who looks upon an ant) has no opportunity to linger on

the sight which is no sooner seen than gone. When the parts are microscopic, the whole is practically nothing. The same applies to action for, just as body is the object of the eyes in the example just cited, here, the object of the memory is action. Furthermore, oversized objects exceed our faculty of remembering just as they exceed our sight. Objects that are too minute scarcely permit the operation of these faculties.

In every body which is beautiful two elements are found: magnitude and ordering of part to part. This is true of the human body, too. Therefore, Aristotle maintains that small men, because they lack magnitude, may be comely but not beautiful, even if their parts possess suitable order and proportion. The same applies to action. Unless the whole is suitably large, it is not enough for a Tragedy to possess all the parts in suitable arrangement. Excessive magnitude must also be avoided. Just as a beautiful body should have size that the eye can easily encompass, the memory should be able to grasp the tragic action without trouble or difficulty.<sup>3</sup> 31

Suitable limits for this magnitude is a question that demands some discussion. Magnitude, furthermore, is always the relation of one object to another or to itself. This latter relationship is found in the nature of the object and requires art, whereas the former has its limit outside itself, independent of any skill. For example, among the ancient Greeks the orators of a bygone day composed and 32

delivered their speeches with one eye on the water-clock;<sup>4</sup> the Romans, according to the terms of the Pompeian law, allowed the prosecutor two hours, while the counsel for defense was permitted three. The purpose was that the length of the speeches would not exceed the judge's range of attention, and that the speakers would have a limit fixed by an external norm rather than one proper to their art.

This appears to have been customary in ancient Tragedy, but Aristotle gave no thought to this magnitude although, when discussing episodes,<sup>5</sup> he alludes to it. These episodes are not of the essence of drama, and hence, can have their limit independent of the dramatic art.

But the magnitude proper to and found in the nature of Tragedy he leaves, within fixed bounds, to the authors' judgment. First, he thought, this magnitude could grow and increase within due proportions until, in accordance with the sequence of events, a change is required by the laws of necessity or probability.<sup>6</sup> This is the ultimate limit, namely, when there is a change from good fortune to bad or from bad fortune to good.

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Hence, as is the case with bodies, the action of Tragedy cannot be beautiful if it is devoid of magnitude. Just as that natural limit which has grown to its maximum proportions is always considered superior to all, so tragic action should grow to that point where it must necessarily stop. In this matter the poet is to observe two cautions:

first, the action must be completed within the span of one day, and secondly, it must allow opportunity for artistic digression. Digressions and episodes are to a Tragedy what furniture and the other decorations are to a home.

Thus far we have considered the extent of the tragic plot and action. Their unity must also be discussed. A thing is termed a unity in only two ways. Either, at the outset, it is unique, apart, and uncompounded, or, subsequent to a coalition of its many elements, a compound becomes a unity.

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No man of learning would maintain that plot should be an uncompounded unity. In fact, as has been pointed out, tragic action demands two elements: the proper magnitude, and a right proportion of part to part. Neither of these elements would be possible if the action were a unity not compounded of parts tending to the same end and arranged with a fitting and proper proportion of part to part. Many writers, both ancient and contemporary have been deceived on this point. Not a few ancient authors thought unity meant the action of one man such as Hercules, Theseus, Achilles, Ulysses, and others.<sup>7</sup> But this is false and absurd, since one and the same person can perform many actions which cannot be knitted together with probability nor referred to the same end.

Not only the outstanding tragic poets but also the epic poets, Homer and Virgil alike, were aware of this.

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Although the subject matter of an epic is far more vast and extensive than that of a Tragedy, Virgil left much of Aeneas' tale untold. He omits his birth, education, his combat with Achilles, and his rescue by Venus, and, as everyone knows, treats in his twelve books this one point, namely, how Aeneas came to Italy. The remaining details such as the journey,<sup>8</sup> the sack of Troy,<sup>9</sup> and others are set forth not as the subject matter of the poem but as episodes connected with the subject matter. Homer, too, makes omissions in Ulysses' story and weaves into his plot only those details which aim at and look to the same end.<sup>10</sup>

On the other hand, Aristotle finds fault with those poets whose foolishness led one to include every action of Theseus in his Theseid, and another, every toil of Heracles in his Herecleid.<sup>11</sup> This is the only intelligible explanation of Juvenal's mention of Codrus, whom he calls hoarse from reading aloud (with the greatest trouble for himself and his hearers) his endless poem wherein Theseus' every action is recounted.<sup>12</sup> Many of these actions were necessarily unconnected and, hence, the subject matter of the poem was concerned not with one action or plot, but with the actions of one man.

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Just as a house is a unity although it consists of many parts, so the tragic action, which has many parts, is, nevertheless, one. For many parts to become a unity it is of primary importance that the parts be such as fit and can be properly joined one to the other. This is also

true in the case of action, and in the same manner. All sorts of unconnected actions do not produce a unified action, since unity comes only from those actions which cling together in such a way that, if one is granted, another follows either necessarily or according to the laws of probability.

This is obvious in any well-constructed Tragedy, as for example, Sophocles' Ajax. Ajax is deprived of Achilles' weapons and is dishonored. Unable to endure indignity, he becomes a raving maniac. As is natural for one in his state, he acts without reason or reflection, and finally, in his madness, slays the cattle, mistaking them for Ulysses. Returning to himself, and the sickening realization of his disgrace, he takes his own life and is denied burial. These actions--not the various exploits of Ajax during his lifetime--fit and stay together. Still not any one of them, of itself, would suffice, but all, woven together, make the one action of which they are parts.

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It was also stated that the action must be whole and complete. But just as a whole consists of parts and without parts there can be no whole, so a complete or perfect whole needs true parts. A part is a true part if, on its removal, either the whole is moved, or it is no longer a whole. A part whose absence or presence leaves the whole completely unaffected, cannot be called a part in the proper sense of the term. Episodes, which will be treated

later, and wholly unconnected actions of the same man are such non-essential parts. For example, the single combat of Ajax and Hector, which Homer<sup>13</sup> treats at length, has 38 nothing to do with Sophocles' Ajax.

## CHAPTER V

The kind of plot and subject matter a Tragedy should have. Tragic and historical imitation are distinct. The tragedian's office is more philosophic and difficult. Can the tragic poet deal with a true as well as a probable subject?

Having dealt, in the preceding chapter, with the proper scope of plot or tragic action, now let us consider the plot itself. This discussion will cover the usual subject of tragic imitation and the manner in which Tragedy imitates it. All poetry is imitative but of poetry, especially the dramatic, of dramatic, especially Tragedy, and of Tragedy, especially the plot is mimetic.

Arguing from the distinction between imitation and the subject imitated, many have considered that there was a distinction between poetry and the truth, just as there is a distinction between an image of Hector and Hector himself. But if a person will duly analyze the imitative office of the poet, he will easily perceive the vast gulf separating poet from historian.

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It is foolish to base the distinction between them on metre alone since the poet is styled such not by reason

of metre but on the basis of imitation. If the entire Greek histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, or Livy's work in Latin are rewritten in verse, they will still be histories.<sup>1</sup> Many refuse to admit that Lucan's Pharsalia is poetry, not only because he chose his subject-matter from the field of fact, but also because he failed to imitate in the true poetic style.<sup>2</sup>

It is imitation and not metre which distinguishes the different classes of poets, since the iambic verse does not make Tragedy, nor hexameter an Epic, but imitation and the different purpose with which it is arranged. There is nothing to stop one from writing the Medea<sup>3</sup> in heroic metre, or the Iliad in iambic verse, but this change will not make the Tragedy an Epic nor the Epic a Tragedy.

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Nevertheless it is clear that more than a slight distinction separates the poet and historian. It is also clear that the distinction is one of kind and not degree, for the historian portrays actual happenings, while the poet paints the sort of events that often do happen.<sup>4</sup> This latter task, as Aristotle correctly maintains, is more difficult and worthy of the philosopher, and he did not hesitate to put the office of a tragic poet on a higher plane than the historian's, because the poet expresses the universal, whereas history deals more with the particular.<sup>5</sup>

The poet generally looks for the manner in which a certain type of person will on occasion act or speak according to the law of probability or necessity, while the historian merely shows what somebody did or what happened to some individual. Sophocles' portrayal of Ajax, for example, differs from Thucydides' portrayal of Pericles or Alcibiades, because the poet does not portray Ajax' actual words and deeds, but what such a character would say or do according to the laws of probability or necessity. 41

Ajax was both a hero and a madman. Therefore the poet must have knowledge of madmen, and this is primarily a task for the philosopher. He must also know the kinds of madness and the character of individual madmen as well as the character of a great-souled hero such as the Ajax portrayed by the poets. The madness, as Aristotle elsewhere assures us, of great and lofty souls like Alcmaeon and Ajax is not the madness of the common people.

The three poets Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles in their Philoctetes each portrayed the crafty and sagacious Ulysses as he conceived him. To do so, each had to know the nature of sagacity and that is the task either of the philosopher alone or of the sagacious. The situation and reason itself demand that the poet--especially the tragic poet--be such. To portray a wise individual, he must have knowledge of all wise men; to paint a vir-

tucous man, he must clearly understand the nature and properties of characteristic virtue.

The historian has no concern with this, unless he imitate Xenophon who imitated the poets, and, in his Cyropaedia, created an ex voto potentate. That is the poet's office. But when Herodotus describes Xerxes, when Salust describes Catiline, and when Tacitus portrays Tiberius, they do not set forth wickedness of which, in general, there are many kinds, but they set forth with all truth the words and deeds of their subjects as they have heard them, not excluding their virtues, if such exist.

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From such sources Aristotle gathers the genus of wickedness, and therefore, comes to a stop with singulars. But the office of the tragic poet surpasses the historian's in nobility just as much as genus and species surpass individuals, inasmuch as their infinite number rules out the possibility of any sure knowledge of singulars. For this reason, Plato used to maintain that the philosopher must stop when he arrived at the singulars because, being without number, they could not come within the scope of knowledge.

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But Aristotle more than once tells us that because the ancient philosophers saw that the singulars were infinite and subject to a constant process of destruction and becoming, and because they considered that exact knowledge concerned itself only and always with indestructible unchanging things, they turned from a consideration of singulars to a

study of universals. Therefore, Aristotle says, the philosopher comes to know man in general, not some one individual of a group, such as Alcibiades or Socrates; he does not know dogs, but dog, not horses, but horse--that is, he comes to know the species of man, dog, and horse.

The same is true of the poet; when he has a generic knowledge of man, then he fashions his action according to a set of circumstances. For example, he fashions not the actual Ajax, for no one knows what he actually was, but Ajax the madman and magnanimous hero; Oedipus, he depicts not in terms of truth but in terms of probability--a task the poet well understands.

Aristotle was particularly anxious to make this truth evident by drawing an argument from ancient Comedy,<sup>6</sup> for here the poet first constructed the entire action on the lines not of truth, but of a just probability, and then gave to his actors fictitious names characteristic 44 of the action he had created.

This is not quite the case with the tragic poet, because he has received the action from the ancient poets. Although he often makes changes in the action, for the most part he keeps the traditional names of the characters. It does happen now and then that some or all of the characters' names are fictitious.

This gives rise to a famous controversy which we cannot ignore. Is the tragic poet obliged to deal with factual

subject-matter, or is it possible for him to do so, inasmuch as the imitation of poetry is achieved by means of a plot which is itself not true, but only probable, both in itself and as regards the poet whose imitation deals with events which may happen, rather than with actual occurrences.

Some, for example, have taken their subject-matter from Holy Scripture, and there is more than one reason why this can be done. First, although the poet derives his subject-matter from history, it is from his own resources, generally, that he contributes his arrangement of plot. Although, secondly, his actors are historical, 45 he assigns them their characters for the most part. Finally, when history has supplied some of the actors, he often adds others, such as the Nurse, the Messenger, the Old Man, and others of this sort.

Furthermore, in the first book of his Rhetoric,<sup>7</sup> Aristotle says (although in a slightly different connection) that it belongs to the same faculty to see the true and the probable, just as it is the same faculty which treats of probability and truth. Since probability is required in action, and since the foundation of this probability is true rather than false, it follows that a true action is just as admissible, especially since true action can also be probable. This is always the case except when true

occurrences are miraculous, wonderful, or are, in one way or another, beyond nature's ordinary powers of operation.

A well-known example from Sacred Scripture<sup>8</sup> will bring this home to you. It is no less probable than true that Amnon loved his sister and, because of his love, violated her whom he loved, and that she bore the loss of her virginity with the greatest grief. Even if this were not true it would, because it is probable, seem to be true. Hence Aristotle is right in allowing subject-matter derived from fact.

## CHAPTER VI

Division of the first part.  
Both plot and actions are  
twofold. The simple and com-  
plex with a discussion of both.  
The reversal and recognition,  
parts of the plot, with ex-  
amples of each. How these dif-  
fer and coincide.

Let us now consider the division of plot or tragic action, which, in common with our former conclusions, must be envolved from the definition. In our formulation of the definition we maintained not only that Tragedy is the imitation of an action which is complete and of just magnitude, but also that it must arouse pity and fear as the emotions proper to Tragedy. Furthermore, it was essential that these emotions or passions be stirred primarily by the very arrangement of the action, rather than 47 by words or unadorned narrative.

Since plot is the first part, it follows that these emotions have a necessary bearing on the first part, which was discussed in the previous chapter, namely, the plot. Up to this point more than one proof has been given that plot is the principal part of Tragedy and most essential to it. Therefore, just as the parts of Tragedy must be so combined that the loss of any one part represents an equal loss to the whole, so must the passions and emotions be

sought only in and from the plot itself. To prove this let us discuss first, the two types of plot wherein the passions or emotions are contained; then let us consider the emotions themselves.

Plot, therefore, which is the accurate imitation of a true or probable action, is twofold, for the same reason that the actions may be termed twofold. For one is simple, the other is involved. A plot which progresses and arrives at a conclusion with no clear reversal or recognition is called simple.<sup>1</sup>

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We find an example of this type of plot in Sophocles' Ajax, in Seneca's Hercules Furens and in countless other dramas. In these nothing happens that is not expected. Ajax, courageous and too proud to let himself be despised, immediately becomes a raving maniac. When he returns to his senses, he is overwhelmed with his disgrace and dies a suicide. Hercules acts in almost the same manner, but he survives. Neither shows anything new or remarkable in his character, inasmuch as neither shows that sudden or unexpected change from bad to good fortune which Aristotle calls the reversal.<sup>2</sup> Both first go mad, then one commits suicide and the other threatens to do so, as in the case in the generality of plots. Possessing little artistic skill, they are especially true to life; they merit less praise because they are less effective in moving and stirring the emotions.

The ancient poets found something to flavor the simple plot. Complex plots provided sufficient subject-matter on their own strength, but the simple, being rather weak, called for greater application and ability and needed the amplification which being neither essential nor irrelevant to the action, Aristotle neatly termed Episode.<sup>3</sup>

Later,<sup>4</sup> in the course of our discussion of qualitative parts, we shall see that Aristotle apparently employs this term in two senses: first, meaning a fixed part, and secondly, indicating any kind of amplification, although action generally grows and is amplified in a fixed spot, and, no doubt, Aristotle had this in mind. But he defines the Episode as whatever the poet introduces fittingly into the subject for the sake of the subject, but which lies outside the subject-material. The prolix description of the underworld in the Hercules Furens,<sup>5</sup> and other such descriptions offer examples. In the Ajax,<sup>6</sup> the quarrel of Teucer with Agamemnon and Menelaus about burying the dead hero is an episode which not only fits the subject, although outside the subject-material, but is inserted by the author for purposes of amplification.

The simple plot, which needs some such flavoring, employs both kinds of episode, which even in contemporary drama have their value. In these episodes, two points are

particularly noteworthy: first, the episodes must be consistent both with the subject-matter and with themselves in a probable or necessary sequence; secondly, Aristotle<sup>7</sup> calls "episodic" those plots which fail in this consistency, and warns that both good and bad poets are prone to compose such pieces. Unskilled poets commit this fault through ignorance; good poets do so to stretch out the story either in an effort to please the spectators or in trying to equal in both praise and length the rival poets with whom they happened to be vying in the customary tragic competitions of the day. Hence, the poets often employed episodes that were rather unsuitable or even farfetched.

The involved or complex plot proceeds to its end accompanied by reversal, recognition, or both.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, 51 the complex plot has the two parts we have mentioned, namely, reversal and recognition. Aristotle calls the reversal the Peripetia. For the most part calamitous and tragic changes from good to bad fortune are called by this name, and we conjecture that Nicander had this meaning in mind when he wrote his Peripetiae. Still it is clear that, in Tragedy, all unexpected changes, either from good fortune to bad or from bad to good, were called reversals.

Aristotle, a most reliable authority, in his Historia Animalium,<sup>9</sup> calls an unexpected outcome by this same term; he, the best of teachers, defines it<sup>10</sup> as a change by which the series of incidents or train of action veers around to its opposite. We find a splendid example in the Oedipus of

Seneca, who has taken the whole scene bodily from Sophocles' play. When the old Corinthians had proclaimed him king, 52 and, for that reason, though he was bringing good tidings, brought about the contrary effect. For, little by little, Oedipus realizes that he had had his mother to wife. This is an obvious example of a change or reversal such as we have discussed.

Aristotle brings forward a like example from the Lynceus (this was the name of the Tragedy).<sup>11</sup> When Danaus was going along with Lynceus, meaning to slay him, and when everybody was convinced this would happen, just the opposite occurred, for Lynceus was saved, and Danaus was slain. This is clearly a change which veers around to the opposite. In the Oedipus the change is from happiness to grief; in the Lynceus, the change is twofold: Lynceus' grief is changed to joy, while Danaus' happiness is unexpectedly changed to grief.

The purpose of this reversal is that either friendship or animosity be produced by the recognition, since these emotions produce happiness and grief. Sometimes it happens 53 that the reversal and recognition coincide, and Aristotle judges the plot where this occurs the most perfect of all.<sup>12</sup> We have this coincidence of reversal and recognition in the Oedipus of Sophocles and Seneca. The reversal comes when Oedipus suddenly and unexpectedly becomes wretched; when he realizes Jocasta is his mother, we have the recognition.

Another example of practical coincidence of reversal and recognition is found in the Iphigenia in Tauris.

The story of Joseph<sup>13</sup> combines the two so perfectly that it surpasses all the plays of the tragedians, for the emotions it stirs are wonderfully powerful. Joseph's brethren start home with their grain. A search for Joseph's cup, about which they know nothing, is made on the condition that he in whose possession it is found will become Joseph's slave. It is found at last in the sack of the youngest, Benjamin, who alone (since Joseph's loss) is the breath of life for his father, Jacob. This being the case his brothers accompany him back into slavery where they suddenly and unexpectedly find the greatest joy--a reversal in the truest sense of the word. The other part is skillfully fitted to this as cause and effect. They realize Joseph is their brother and therein lies the recognition. 54

Reversal without recognition is possible, but recognition without reversal is not. In the story of Joseph, the recognition stirs my pity so deeply that I have often wept at it despite myself. The plot is not simple, but perfectly complex since in it reversal and recognition coincide; it would be impossible to find any action more suited to Tragedy.

It is of primary importance to notice that in this story, as in the Tauric Iphigenia, the change tends from sadness to joy. In Homer's Odyssey we find another ex-

ample of reversal and recognition coinciding. Penelope is unhappy and mourns her husband, but presently, as soon as she recognizes him, she enjoys a most unexpected happiness.

In such cases of coincidence it is important to note that not any sort of reversal can coincide with any sort of recognition. A joyful recognition must not be united 55 to a sad reversal nor a joyful reversal to a sad recognition--unless it happen to different characters. In the story of Joseph, for example, the recognition moves toward joy and hence it demands a joyful reversal. In both Sophocles' and Seneca's Oedipus, reversal and recognition tend to sadness. This principle also finds application in Euripides' Iphigenia, where both characters, Iphigenia and Orestes, attain happiness both by the reversal and the recognition.

Such is not the case when different characters are involved, as, for example, in Homer's Odyssey. There both Penelope and those who stand on Ulysses' side derive joy no less from the reversal than from the recognition; both these elements bring grief to the suitors. Their fortune is unexpectedly changed for the worse and, in recognizing Ulysses, each suitor recognizes woe for himself. The same is true in Sophocles' Electra where the greatest joy follows on the mutual recognition of Orestes and Electra. But other characters are affected differently.

Which of the two, simple or double, is preferable 56  
we shall see presently. Now it remains to discuss the  
types of recognition.

## CHAPTER VII

The kinds of recognition. Those proper to Tragedy and those that are not. The simple and double recognition. The five manners of recognition. The principal one, employed by Sophocles, Seneca, and Euripides.

The following teaching on the five kinds of recognition, Aristotle, in his usual manner of research, gathered most carefully from a study of many writers. It finds some application today, just as it did in ancient times. In his day, the plays of many authors were still extant, the loss of which gives us just cause for grief. Working from these, Aristotle sets forth a certain fixed norm. In the course of his discussion,<sup>1</sup> as well as establishing a critical basis for individual plays, he shows how some authors followed this rule.

But there is a reversal proper to Tragedy and one that is not. Since reversal and recognition in combination will arouse the emotions,<sup>2</sup> those which stir passions other than pity and fear cannot be proper to Tragedy, as, for example, when someone recognizes an inanimate object<sup>3</sup> such as a city, a wall, or a place. Such a recognition effects no (tragic) change although in Plautus' Comedies the whole crisis of a play arises from a recognition achieved by rattles, boxes, or rings. Another ex-

ample is found when we recognize that someone, casually and without affecting the play, has or has not done something.<sup>4</sup>

Such recognitions, however, do not as a rule stir up pity and fear in Tragedies, whereas Tragedy generally imitates the kind of actions which will. Hence those recognitions have no place in Tragedy since neither happiness nor unhappiness follow from them. As we said, the reversal must produce either happiness or its opposite.

Let us now consider the kind proper to Tragedy. It is sure that any recognition is so called on the basis of a relationship, as that which is currently called the "relative recognition" in the schools. He who recognizes must 58 recognize someone and that person must be recognized, just as the lover must love some one, who, in turn, must be loved.

According to this relationship the recognition is either single or double. The single is the recognition by one person of another, and takes place when the one knows while the other does not. For example, in Sophocles' Electra, the heroine, who before this had not known that Orestes was her brother, recognizes him. Orestes, who had been aware of the relationship fails to recognize Electra. Again, in Homer's Odyssey, the Nurse recognizes Ulysses who, although he knew her in former days, failed to recognize her at that time. In the story of Joseph, too, his brothers recognize Joseph; he knew that they were his brothers.

These are the kinds of simple recognition.

The double recognition comes when neither person knows the other, and, as a rule, gives rise to a stronger emotional response. Euripides' Iphigenia in Tauris<sup>5</sup> affords an example: Iphigenia, who must presently put Orestes to the sword, does not know he is her brother, nor does he know she is his sister. First Orestes recognizes his sister from a letter she would have him deliver, then she recognizes him when he describes a garment she had woven. Their recognition of each other is certainly of this double kind. 59

The following kinds are also called species of recognitions by Aristotle (if the passage be not corrupt) but seem to be merely modes which change as the events out of which the recognition arises change. Aristotle added them to please those critics who wished either to bestow on posterity the devices of the tragic poets or to compare the authors one with the other.

The first manner or mode is one which the oldest writers employed to clear up uncertainty by attributing to certain characters certain fixed marks whereby others might recognize them. Then a recognition might easily arise from these signs. The marks are of two kinds: those with which we are born or those acquired after birth. For example, although the Thebans were sprung from the Spartans of an earlier day, the ancients believed that they had suddenly emerged, lances and all, out of the earth from the teeth 60

of the dragon slain by Cadmus. These Thebans were said to have carried on their bodies the mark of the lance with which they were born. So too, unless I am mistaken, in a work entitled de fera numinis vindicta, Plutarch, a careful writer, mentions that a lance was found on the body of a certain man whose true and ancient Theban origin was in doubt. Carcinus, too, an ancient Tragic poet, in his Thyestes builds a recognition from a mark of this sort.<sup>6</sup>

Other marks are not congenital but are acquired after birth by some mischance or other. These likewise are of two kinds: either on the body or outside of it. An example of an acquired mark on the body is the scar of Ulysses by which the Nurse recognizes him in the Odyssey. In Plautus the scar of Amphitryo resulting from a wound inflicted by Pterelas is another example, although no recognition arises from it in the play. Plautus' necklaces, rings, rattles, gaming-boards, and little boxes from which 61 the plays get their names are examples of extra-corporal signs.

If we put our trust in Aristotle, it makes a good deal of difference how the poet employs these marks, for, he says, this use of signs had much to do with dramatic artistry.<sup>7</sup> The recognition which moves the emotions and produces a sudden change is far superior to the simple. Homer, to be sure, used one and the same mark in two ways. First, while the Nurse, Euryclea, at her mistress' command is wash-

ing the feet of Ulysses, she suddenly recognizes him from the scar, and a great reversal arises from the recognition. Secondly, Homer employs the scar in another way when Ulysses is recognized by Eumaeus and the others to whom he shows it as a means of winning their belief. This second recognition is neither artistic nor does it produce a reversal.

The second mode of recognition depends on skill.<sup>8</sup> It differs from the first mode just discussed inasmuch as, in the first, the poet does not search out the marks but correctly uses or refrains from using those that are of themselves part of the subject. In the second mode the poet creates the signs as, in the Tauric Iphigenia, Euripides does the letter which reveals Iphigenia's identity to Orestes,<sup>9</sup> or the garment whereby she recognizes him.<sup>10</sup> The poet's judgment is on trial when he uses such signs since people will not put up with everything nor excuse it as they would something that was unavoidable.

A third mode is recognition through memory,<sup>11</sup> when a person's consciousness is awakened by the sight of something. For example Homer's Demodocus in the palace of Alcinous sings of the sack of Troy and many exploits of Ulysses (whom the bard did not know) in the hero's own presence.<sup>12</sup> His song recalls to Ulysses all that had taken place, stirs up deep emotions in his heart and by his tears he is recognized. Again, in the first book of the Aeneid,

Aeneas sees in Dido's palace<sup>13</sup> paintings of Trojan exploits, his own among them. A reversal arises from this recognition, for he begins to hope for a change in his ill fortunes.<sup>14</sup>

A fourth mode, which was of rather frequent occurrence in ancient drama, is recognition through reasoning. This 63 arises from some mark or from a likeness in character, appearance, stature or disposition. For example, Electra, in Aeschylus' Choephoroe,<sup>15</sup> derives a proof from a lock of hair: 'One like me is here; there is no one like me but Orestes; he, therefore, must be here.' And here reasoning was true. When Electra had come to the tomb of Agamemnon to offer libations to her departed father's spirit, she found the lock and recognized it as Orestes'. From this sign arose a proof and from the proof, recognition.

The fifth is recognition through fallacious reasoning, which finds no application--but the passage in which Aristotle treats of it is obviously corrupt and, up to the present, no commentator has put it to sufficient investigation.

The sixth mode of discovery is, on Aristotle's testimony, the best of all. This arises not from marks or signs sought from an external source, but little by little from the situation and subject itself. Sophocles in the Oedipus Tyrannus has given us a splendid example of this type and Seneca follows him in it.

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## CHAPTER VIII

Suffering, the third part of a complex plot. This must be derived from the action or the plot, not supplied by the actors. An example of this kind of plot. Sometimes monstrosities take the place of sufferings. Sufferings are natural, monstrosities are not. The pleasure sought in Tragedy, its kind and source. Imitation is pleasant, also sad.

It is quite clear both from its two essential parts and from other proofs that the complex, as opposed to the simple, is by far the better kind of plot. By the two essential parts I mean those we have been discussing, namely recognition and what Aristotle has called the reversal or peripety. Hence it is natural that our discussion of the complex Plot should be more extensive and our investigation of its constituent parts more careful than our treatment of the simple plot. 66

It has already been stated that plot portrays or imitates men not inasmuch as they are men, but inasmuch as they are agents in an action. This is true because happiness or its opposite necessarily arise from men's lives and actions. If every plot should imitate men's lives and actions, it follows that the more perfect plot (which links recognition with reversal) should do so in a higher degree.

The primary purpose of a plot is to arouse the emotions and particularly, as we have said, the two emotions of pity and fear. This purpose must be achieved by the very structure of the events and actions and independent of external aid or skillful acting. Hence Aristotle enunciates suffering as the third part of a complex plot.

The reason for this assertion is not that the simple plot is entirely devoid of suffering or emotion, or that any plot should or does arouse pity or fear (the specific emotions of Tragedy) without some reasonable basis found in the dialogue or the outcome of events, but because these emotions necessarily emerge, without external aid, from the two parts of a complex plot which we have mentioned. It is a characteristic of the complex plot to imitate the kind of actions which, by their outcome, stir up pity and fear.

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Emotions which arise from the plot itself are preferable to those from an external source, just as recognition growing out of the sequence of events is superior to an unconnected discovery. Aristotle gives us a further parallel in his Rhetoric when he sets arguments intrinsic to the art of rhetoric above the extrinsic type.<sup>1</sup> Just as unskilled orators, finding no help in their art, generally had recourse to laws, witnesses, written contracts and so on, so, too, unskilled poets, ignorant of their own art, made a practice of

trying to stir up pity and fear with the aid of skillful acting.

Euripides, in Aristophanes' comedy,<sup>2</sup> wittily lays this charge to Aeschylus (in whose day neither the rever- 68 sal nor artistic recognition were practiced). The critics, too, note that Aeschylus stirred up the passions and emotions through the skill of his actors rather than by any artistic device. This is the case when the actors portray for the spectators scenes calculated to stir pity and fear, such as murders, woundings, tortures and other events of this sort, which are extrinsic to tragic skill. We have another instance when the poet seeks from spectacular equipment an effect which should have emerged from the structure of the action and events. The Greeks call such scenic representations "spectacles", and unskilled poets, ignorant of the principles of plot-structure, employed them beyond all limits and bounds.<sup>3</sup>

It was with this in view that a Greek critic wrote as follows about Aeschylus:

Therefore Aristophanes makes fun of his bombastic characters. In the Niobe of Aeschylus the heroine (who gives the play its name) sits speechless before her children's tomb, with veiled head for three days. In the Redemption of Hector (that was the name of the play), Achilles sits with veiled head in like manner, saying nothing but a few words in answer to Hermes.

Later the same critic goes on to say:

And so he (Aeschylus) used spectacles and plots of this sort more to produce amazement at the marvellous than skillful deception.

Other poets lacking in skill habitually portrayed on the stage actions which should have been recounted in veiled narrative, and events that were miraculous and beyond all belief. For example, they would show Hippolytus being torn to pieces, Medea slaying her children, Thyestes devouring his, the metamorphosis of Prognis into a bird and Cadmus into a snake. Their reason for so doing was partly because they did not understand tragic structure and partly because they misconceived the emotions proper to Tragedy and the pleasure to be derived from them. These we shall discuss in their proper place. 70

There is no doubt that the critic (whoever he was), who passed the above-quoted judgment on Aeschylus, had in mind Gorgias, who maintained that Tragedy was some sort of fraud and that no one had the right to be deceived or to deceive by it. This undoubtedly has bearing on the question of structure.

But Aristotle's advice is excellent when he demands that the Plot be constructed in such a way that, without any artifice or help from the actor, one who merely hears or reads the play be deeply moved by pity and fear. He goes on to point out that this is true in the Oedipus and

there can be no doubt that he has reference to Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannus.<sup>4</sup> Who would not be moved by pity and fear when Oedipus, by a single stroke, is dashed from his happy state to a realization that he has slain his father, married his mother and begotten children of her. And this 71 situation grows out of the arrangement of the subject-material, whether it be read at home or seen on the stage. But authors who stir only an audience in the theatre are dependent rather on the actor than themselves and rely more on spectacular equipment than on their skill as tragedians.

Furthermore, while striving to stir up pity and fear, these writers (as was the case with Aeschylus and the others we mentioned before) arouse only a feeling of amazement at their marvels and monstrosities. Aristotle holds that this is not the purpose of Tragedy,<sup>5</sup> especially since tragic sufferings should arise naturally, whereas marvels and monstrosities are unnatural.

Another point Aristotle makes is that not every kind of pleasure should be required of a Tragedy, but only its own proper pleasure. This tragic pleasure is that of pity or fear or both, and the poet must produce it by a just and probable imitation of actions.<sup>6</sup> Just as these emotions in actual life produce a specific sorrow, so their imitation produces a specific pleasure.

Hence it is that in the Rhetoric,<sup>7</sup> Aristotle judicious-

ly holds that there is pleasure in grief and sorrow. For example, when we mourn for one who is dead, there is grief at his loss, but pleasure in remembering him and, as it were, seeing him before us in his deeds and in his words. À propos, too, is the incident in the inspired Homer when Andromache, weeping for her husband, says that the greatest pleasure had been taken from her because she did not hear his last words and commands. If she had, she could cherish them in memory night and day. Lucan's wife Polla continually mourned her husband, but ever had his face before her eyes.<sup>8</sup>

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The reason is that every imitation is a source of pleasure--even imitations of things we shun and hate, as, for example, the sight of Thersites<sup>9</sup> well portrayed. Since, therefore, tragic pleasure is of a specific kind and arises from tragic imitation and since the plot imitates it above all else, this pleasure must be contained in the plot. Hence the sufferings must be skillfully interwoven with the plot and arrangement of the actions, and must not be sought from some other source. They are not excluded, however, from the thought-element or expression, but these do not pertain to this part of our discussion. We leave thought and expression to the writers on Rhetoric.

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## CHAPTER IX

By whom, among whom, and how the passions or emotions are aroused. What is meant by a fault committed through want of knowledge (which is the source of pity) or by a person who does not realize his crime. The principal mode of arousing emotion. Application of this doctrine.

Now let us consider the passions themselves, namely, fear and pity, and how they are aroused. This involves the consideration of three points: the persons by whom, the persons among whom, and the manner in which these passions are stirred.

Every change sought by the emotions terminates in unhappiness after happiness, or in happiness after unhappiness. All men are good, bad, or in between. Hence the possible protagonists will be either good men whose happiness is changed to adversity, or bad men whose misery passes to happiness or, perhaps, the extremely wicked whose happiness is turned to disaster, or finally the intermediate kind of person, a man neither preeminently wicked nor outstanding for virtue. 74

The first situation, where the poet depicts a good man passing from happiness to misery, is not fear-inspiring or piteous, but simply odious. Aristotle gives an account of such a situation in his Rhetoric.<sup>1</sup> When some-

thing has happened to another which a man fears may happen to himself, it produces pity and fear in that man's heart. But no one trembles at the disaster of a virtuous man since no one thinks that such disaster will overtake himself because he is good and happiness is the reward of virtue.

Nor is it right for any poet to bring the wicked from misery to happiness. Such a situation is as untragic as can be since tragic disaster is denied to those whose downfall stirs no pity. But a scoundrel's ruin never stirs our pity and, hence, his disaster is untragic. Much less does it make us afraid. 75

The situation wherein an extremely bad man falls from happiness into misery is also inartistic, since no one feels pity for an evil character. He is considered to have gotten his just deserts. Nor does his downfall arouse fear, because no one thinks that a like disaster will befall himself. Everybody, to be sure, holds his own probity in the highest regard, and there is no doubt that the majority of mankind is more or less good.

But it is the unhappy man who did not deserve his misery that arouses our pity and someone like ourselves who moves us to fear. For example, the criminal rightly fears when he sees a criminal punished, and the ungodly, when he sees another of his kind pay the penalty. Therefore, since a good man passing from happiness to misery,

or a bad man from misery to happiness, or the unhappiness of an extremely bad man cannot stir either pity or fear in human hearts, there remains the in-between man whom we must now consider.

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Aristotle in the third book of his Moralia<sup>2</sup> has defined the kind of person that lies midway between good and bad. Although he sins inadvertently, this intermediate person does not deserve the name of a good man, because he has overstepped the bounds of duty. Nor does he deserve to be called bad since, to borrow the language of the schools, he sinned without sufficient reflection.

From this it is clear how splendid Aristotle's teaching is, for the poet, in the complete structure of a play, has the same end in view as a legislator in local or national government. Both necessarily treat of punishment or pardon and both draw a distinction between crimes willingly perpetrated and those that are not. Deliberation or lack of it, to be sure, constitutes a canon, so to speak, and norm for human actions. Some actions we judge deserving of praise, some of pardon; others are blameworthy and should be punished.

We praise good actions when they are free and, to use a popular term, voluntary. We condemn and punish bad actions when they are free and voluntary. If the bad act was invol- 77  
untary we do not find it blameworthy and if an involuntary error was committed through want of knowledge, we judge it deserving of pity.

There is a distinction between a fault committed through want of knowledge and a person committing a crime while he is ignorant. If a person acts while he is ignorant, he obviously does not know what he ought to do, as for example, if he is drunk and overpowered by wine, and commits a crime while his reason is sunk in slumber and, so to speak, temporarily dead.

He sins through want of knowledge who, while knowing what is right, goes ahead and commits the act. For example, Oedipus knew that to slay one's father was the worst of crimes and yet, poor man, through want of knowledge, he went ahead and slew Laius. This arouses our pity.

The first characteristic<sup>3</sup> of the tragic hero is that he be neither preeminently good nor preeminently bad. Oedipus, as we know, was such. His virtues and vices were not so outstanding as to produce an undesirable emotional effect on the audience. Secondly, his unhappy condition must not befall him as a result of sinfulness. Disaster befalls Oedipus because, as we said, his sin was committed through lack of foresight and want of knowledge and, so to speak, by a species of mistake. Finally, the tragic hero should have been, before his fall, in a position of highest honor, in order that his disaster (which is rendered greater by his former greatness) may increase both fear and pity together.

The most exact tragic action arises from the circum-

stances just enumerated, because the emotions specific to Tragedy will well pu of their own accord when a hero such as the one described undergoes a change of fortune. This model hero is rarely realized by the ancient tragedians, but Aristotle always points the ideal.

Up to this point we have considered the persons by whom tragic emotions are stirred. Now let us see among whom tragic action is possible.<sup>4</sup> Of necessity, all such actions must take place among enemies, friends, or persons who are neither friends nor enemies.

But if an enemy, for example, slays or threatens his foe, his action will not arouse our pity, except inasmuch as the deed moves us when we recall that we and the victim possess human nature in common. The reason we feel no pity is because violence and invective generally give rise to a deep feeling of hatred. Since all men are born with the desire for revenge, they readily excuse in another what they see they themselves would do.

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Furthermore, inasmuch as we have an innate yearning to hurt our foes, the audience is far from pitying the victim because they consider and judge such action most just. Again, men hate the causes which generally bring into being hatred and enmity, whether these feelings exist between two or more people. For example, we hate the thief for his thieving, the pirate for his piracy and the adulterer for the passion he has so basely satis-

fied. Hating all these crimes, therefore, pity is the last thing we feel when such sins give rise to hate and hate gives rise to murder or some other heinous act.

Finally, since everybody knows that life is sweet but that vengeance is sweeter, men look with un pitying eyes on a sight which they feel would be most gratifying to them if applicable to their own lives. No situation is more opposed to pity. Homer's lines are well-known wherein he says that anger is sweeter to men than honey,<sup>5</sup> and the saying that "vengeance is sweeter than life itself"<sup>6</sup> is another example in point.

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The same is true if misfortune arises between those who feel neither hatred nor love for each other. Their deeds, done without feeling, stir no emotion, as for example, if someone should kill a man whom he has never seen before or with whom he has nothing in common. Except that the deed affects us as human beings, it stirs no tragic emotion in the soul.

There is only one class left, namely, when these misfortunes arise between friends or those bound by blood. We have examples when murder or some such crime or threats to commit it arise between brothers, between son and father, between mother and son, or between son and mother. If friend suffers at the hand of friend, our pity is stirred, but if such crimes arise among relatives, they fill us with fright, as when Orestes slays Clytem-

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nestra<sup>7</sup> and Alcmaeon does away with Euriphyle.<sup>8</sup> Look, for example, at Sophocles' Electra and the Choerhoroe of Aeschylus. One feels these emotions when Clytemnestra is destroyed by her son, Orestes, at the end of both plays. So dreadful is the deed that the emotions drive the mind forth from its abode.

Now to discuss the manner and means by which these emotions are stirred. This calls for no ordinary powers of adaptation for it is hardly within the poet's power to alter the facts of a traditional story; he often does change the manner in which they occur. For example, the traditional story is that Medea, that is, a mother, slays her children. But how she does so makes a world of difference and the poets vary the tale for emotional effect. The oldest writers said that Medea's children had been slain 82 by the Corinthians and some tragedians recount that their mother sent them away. In Euripides, the mother, with full knowledge and consent, slays them. Seneca and the other tragedians of a later day follow Euripides' version.

The modes in which the tragic emotions are stirred are as follows: the hero either commits a crime or refrains from doing so; if he does commit it, he does so either knowingly or unknowingly; if knowing it not, he commits his crime in such a way that he recognizes his deed either before or after its commission. He commits a crime: for example, Orestes slays his mother. Know-

ingly: as Medea slaying her children. Unknowingly, but in such a way that he recognizes his deed after its commission: as Oedipus kills his father and marries his mother.

Sometimes the crime and its recognition occur in the same play, as in that of Astydamas, the ancient Tragedian,<sup>9</sup> Alcmaeon both slays his mother and later recognizes his deed. Telegonus, in the same manner, recognizes that 83 he has killed his father.<sup>10</sup> At other times, as in the play of Sophocles mentioned above, either the crime or the recognition occurs. Laius' murder and Oedipus' recognition of the crime, the beginning of his marriage to Jocasta and his realization that she is his mother do not happen in the same play, because the intervening span of time was greater than that permissible in a single drama.

The last possibility is that a man realize the nature of the deed but in such a way that he change his mind before he commits it or repents. Thus Haemon, in Sophocles' Antigone, pursues his father with drawn sword but does nothing.<sup>11</sup> This last situation is also the worst because such a character is not pitiable but odious.<sup>12</sup>

The next in merit is the situation where the deed is actually perpetrated in one way or another. This, by reason of the deed itself, has pitiable qualities, for man pities man as man. Aristotle calls this the law of human nature and it comes quite close to true pity. A better situation

than that, however, is for the deed to be done in ignorance, and the relationship discovered afterwards, since there is nothing odious in it and the discovery will serve to astound us. The best situation of all is 84 where a person on the very point of committing a crime recognizes a friend before harming him, just as Iphigenia among the Taurians recognizes her brother when she was on the point of slaying him.

Since there are restrictions on the poet's choice of characters and since he may not alter his subject-matter at will, Aristotle is correct in noting that the ancient tragedians restricted themselves to a small number of families when dealing with a subject from past history.<sup>13</sup> From these families they would, with no difficulty, build a complex plot and would judiciously and carefully exercise that artistic skill which practice and exercise gradually brought to perfection. They found their best material in the family sagas of Alcmaeon, Oedipus, Orestes, Meleager, Thyestes, Telephus or any others who were involved as either sufferers or agents in the kind of horrible deed which admits of the most correct tragic treatment.

From this it is clear how careful an account must be taken of the subject-matter and that the entire question 85 is one of judgment and choice, especially if the topic be

chosen from actual life or Sacred Scripture. Extensive alteration of Scriptural stories is a matter of conscience, but greater freedom is allowed in the family sagas. Hence, it is to these latter that the majority of my remarks applies.

## CHAPTER X

The change of action. Can it be twofold, and if so, in the same Tragedy? Is the single or double change preferable? Is the action which terminates in disaster after happiness better than its opposite?

We have discussed at length the persons by whom, and among whom, and the manner in which pity and fear are stirred. Three points must now be considered concerning the change from which these circumstances arise and on which practically the entire action depends. The first question is whether the change is single or double, and we have discussed that already while treating of other topics. The second question is: if the change is double, can it be so in the same play? Finally: is the change from misery to happiness preferable to the change from happiness to misery?

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That a double change does exist is clear from the plays of the ancient tragedians. Euripides' work establishes the possibility of a happy ending, although, as Aristotle mentions,<sup>1</sup> almost all his plays terminate in tragic circumstances. What ending is more joyful than in Alcestis, when the once dead wife is restored to her husband? The same is true of the Tauric Iphigenia when brother and sister recognize each other and both escape. There is no need to

mention further examples.

The possibility of a tragic ending has never been called into question and almost all changes are portrayed with an eye to producing an ending of this type. As we said before, it is quite sure that a tragic change is a rich source of emotion. It is also sure that both types of change can exist in the same play as, for instance, when the ill-fortune of the good is changed to happiness and the evil pass from happiness to misery.

There are many examples of this. In the Electra of Sophocles, the misery of Orestes and Electra is changed to joy while the happiness of Clytemnestra and Aegysthus is turned to disaster. Such, too, is the case in the Choephoroe of Aeschylus and Aristotle correctly notes<sup>2</sup> a parallel in Homer's Odyssey. Ulysses undergoes a change different from that of the suitors; he passes from misery to joy, and their happiness terminates in ruin.

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This double change meets with higher popular approval, but Aristotle and the student find it less tragic than a single change. The ordinary spectator does not look for the pity and fear which emerge from a single change. When he sees the good prosper after they were unhappy, and the happiness of the evil turned to misery, he derives the greatest pleasure from such a change which is a sort of just vengeance sent by heaven. But the spectator who is also a student realizes that such pleasure belongs to

Comedy rather than to Tragedy. He understands that such a change necessarily involves the destruction of that which is of primary importance to an action or plot--I mean any circumstance that produces fear or stirs our pity. Hence it is that the single change is preferable to the double.

The final question is whether in a play involving a single change, the change from happiness to misery is superior to one where misery terminates in happiness. The answer is clear from preceding arguments. Every complex plot is superior to a simple plot. But a complex plot is that which joins recognition and reversal. Reversal, as was pointed out at length, is a sudden change from one state to its opposite. But pity and fear serve to set off the recognition and reversal to particular advantage. But nothing is calculated to combat pity and fear more than happiness. Hence there can be no doubt which of the two kinds of change is the more tragic.

Aristotle praises Euripides for this very reason.<sup>3</sup> Although the structure of his plots often showed faulty workmanship, he is outstanding for his care in observing this change which is particularly specific to Tragedy. His plays usually involved a tragic ending, as was said before, although this does not appear to be altogether true in the few plays of his which are still extant.

## CHAPTER XI

Conclusion of the first and most important part. How the poet should arrange his action in accordance with the teaching explained above. When the poet should add characters. When he should add the episode. The meaning of complication and solution. Their artistic use. Plots classified according to complication and solution. The three kinds of simple plot.

Thus far we have considered the best and most perfect kind of plot. Now we must speak of the manner in which the poet should piece his plot together. Two points must be kept in view in the arrangement of any tragic plot: the plot and the episode. If the tragic poet fails to distinguish clearly between these two, the rest of his work is in vain.

Plot is the unadorned imitation of an action. Whatever the poet adds over and above this action is episode. As we maintained, the parts of a plot must fit together artistically. In like manner, it is of primary importance not only that the episodes fit the plot, but also that they be suitably and artistically interwoven with it.

Before he does anything, the poet who is bent on composing a worth-while Tragedy will arrange and map out the bare, simple action he intends to imitate--without adorn-

ment or episode. In this fashion he will best decide on the essential qualities. First, he asks himself whether his plot is simple or complex; then, if it is complex, whether it allows of recognition or reversal and (for this is important) what kind; next, whether pity or fear will arise from the situation; finally in what manner and by what means the change is rendered consistent with the antecedent action.

After he has determined this, he will give thought to his characters, mentally assuming their dispositions and feelings. If the poet proceeds in this manner, the spectators will recognize themselves in the poet's characters, whether they be luxury lovers, lustful or wrathful; old men, lads or in their prime; women or slaves. More will be said on this point later, when we discuss character. Once the plot has been placed together in this fashion, it will be time for the skillful insertion of the episodes to which we devoted a cursory treatment in an earlier section of this treatise. 91

Let us consider a model. The plot of Seneca's Troades is as follows: after the sack of Troy, the Greeks consult Calchas as to how they can return home in safety and how they can render the gods favorable to them on the eve of their departure; Calchas says that Polyxena and Astyanax must be slain, and they are put to death. That is the bare plot; not a complex plot, to be sure, but simple.

Everything else is episode. The episodes are then skillfully and proportionately inserted, as, for instance, the dialogue of Agamemnon and Pyrrhus<sup>1</sup> which grows out of the plan to slay Polyxena. The entire scene wherein Ulysses seeks and at last finds Astyanax is also episodic.<sup>2</sup> Like the previous example, it grows from the subject-matter, that is, the second of the two plans, which was concerned with hurling Astyanax to his death. One finds episodes in Homer and Vergil, too, but there is this difference. The Epic allows a more extended and diffuse kind of episode, whereas in Tragedy it must be short and more confined.<sup>3</sup>

After the plot has been constructed in this manner, 92 the poet will perceive that it has two parts. The one can be rightly termed complication and the other, solution. Complication embraces events both intrinsic and extrinsic to the plot, but the solution takes in only circumstances intrinsic to the plot and action.

I call those events intrinsic which have no bearing on the episodes and which are not included to lengthen out or adorn the play, but which are of such a nature that the action would not be a whole without them. The extrinsic are the episodes, which do not enter into the dénouement. In fact, episodes are excluded from the extrinsic events in a complex plot when these events embrace the reversal and recognition (which make the plot

complex) and in a simple plot when they contain the change.

Seneca's Oedipus offers examples of both kinds of extrinsic incidents. The Prologue,<sup>4</sup> wherein Oedipus speaks of the plague, has no bearing on the plot but is extrinsic to it. So, too, Oedipus' dialogue with Creon and Tiresias (except insofar as it treats of Laius' murder),<sup>5</sup> the prolix description of the underworld,<sup>6</sup> and the summoning of the shades are purely episodic. 93

The dialogue between Oedipus and the old man, as well as part of that between Oedipus and Phorbas, lead little by little to the change and have some bearing on the complication. In fact, the solution begins with these lines:

Yawn, earth! And do thou, king  
of the dark world, ruler of  
shades, to lowest Tartarus hurl  
this unnatural interchange 'twixt  
brood and stock.<sup>7</sup>

These lines contain both change and recognition. One finds in them nothing that does not arise from the action, nothing irrelevant to the plot, nothing that could or should be removed, nothing extrinsic. Just as in the speeches of the Messenger, Oedipus, and Jocasta, as is quite obvious to anyone, there is no trace of the episodic.

Both complication and solution demand a specific manner of artistic treatment. The complication must not be entirely episodic, nor may it embrace events entirely irrelevant, nor such as are prolix or superfluous to an extreme. The solution excludes the episodic, the irrelevant, the prolix 94

and the superfluous in any manner or form. Secondly, if the plot is simple, the ending must be skillful; if it is complex, the solution must contain a recognition and a fitting change, which, in turn must properly include grounds for the emotions or passions specific to Tragedy.

Both complication and solution are liable to incompetent handling. Aristotle has pointed out that many poets have built up a clever complication only to fail in the solution; others wrote plays which gave a clever solution to an inadequate complication.<sup>8</sup>

Since these two, complication and solution, are so important, it is proper to say that a Tragedy is the same or not the same as another on the grounds that its plot has the same or not the same complication and solution, rather than inasmuch as the story and subject-matter are the same or different.<sup>9</sup> For example, Aeschylus in his Choerhorce and Sophocles in his Electra have treated the same subject, but the two plays are distinct because, in each, the complication and solution are different. Each plot is complex and includes a recognition, although Aeschylus did not succeed as well as Sophocles in this respect. But such fine points of structure were hardly known in Aeschylus' day.

The Hippolytus of Euripides and Seneca's play of the same name offer another example. Many other plays, as well as these, could be compared and contrasted, but such

is not our present purpose. We are making haste in a matter that is altogether hasty and sudden. But we must note this well: difference of plot calls for difference in complication and solution; the different kinds of plot are simple and complex; the simple is of three types.

The first type of simple plot is the Tragedy of suffering, filled with emotion and feeling, such as the Hurcules Furens of Seneca, and Sophocles' Ajax. In these plays we find rage and madness which ultimately destroy the hero. The second is the Tragedy of character in which we either describe or mold for ourselves some man, excellent and good, who is a model of character. If a poet were to describe in tragic style the filial devotion of Aeneas during the sack of Troy,<sup>10</sup> we would have an example of this type of simple plot. Such a subject would offer a rich source of noble sentiments. The last type is the spectacular. Although, as with the Tragedy of character, we have no extant model of this last, a drama based on the adventures of Aeneas or Ulysses in the underworld<sup>11</sup> would provide an example.<sup>12</sup>

## CHAPTER XII

Dénouement by the Deus ex Machina. Two wrong uses of this stage artifice. Explanation of Aristotle's statement in the Metaphysics on the Deus ex Machina. Three uses of this device that are allowed. Extra-dramatic portions of a play. Explanation of a passage in Aristotle that has not been understood until the present day. The solution by the Deus ex Machina in the Hercules Oetaeus. Other examples.

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In the preceding chapter we discussed, among other topics, the question of complication and solution. These are mutually dependent, and the one can neither be discussed nor understood without the other. Aristotle spoke of both in witty style, using as an example those who first tie and presently untie a knot. It often happens that they can scarcely untie what they have tied, or, overcome by the difficulty of the problem, they are forced to give up the attempt altogether. In like manner, the poet often weaves a complication which is beyond all solution--at least any plausible one.

The writers of Tragedy found a solution to this problem which they called the Deus ex Machina, and which became quite common. Devoid of skill and, as a rule, contrary to art, it is the one escape for a poet when he cannot success-

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fully unravel the events he has complicated without foresight. Plato called it quite clearly the tragic poet's last recourse,<sup>1</sup> since nothing could be impossible to God. Hence, when the poets have woven an inextricable plot, Plato says, they give the play a miraculous end and, of necessity, seek from God the solution they could not find by themselves, since nothing is beyond God's powers of solution.

From this it becomes clear to what use the device could be put, although scholars seem to have misunderstood its applicability. This artifice assumes two forms, one of which employs a god, while the other does not. The first gave rise to the proverbial expression "Deus ex Machina"; Aristotle speaks of the second as "bringing up the engine".<sup>2</sup>

As to the first, nothing is more common than the employment of a divine agent with this device. The knot is loosed by Jupiter in Plautus' Amphitryo, by Apollo in Euripides' Orestes, by Minerva in his Ion and by Diana in the same poet's Hippolytus. When the action became badly tangled, a divinity unravelled it--the only possible cure 98 for a poorly constructed plot. This procedure is censured time and time again by Lucian and other writers who echo Plato's words in the Cratylus<sup>3</sup> about bringing on the divinity and having recourse to aid from on high.

As to the second form, this stage artifice presents a ready means of escape even without divine intervention. When a character is inescapably cornered, he glides offstage

on the "engine", as was the case with Medea in Euripides' play. When Jason was about to destroy her, the "engine" was brought on and she was carried off, as is hinted in the following lines:

Cease thy worry. If thou  
hast a request to make of me,  
speak thy mind. But never  
wilt thou lay hands on me.  
The Sun, sire of my sire,  
has given me a chariot as a  
defense against my foes.<sup>4</sup>

Seneca imitates this in his lines:

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What means that sudden noise?  
'Tis arms they are making  
ready, and they seek me for my  
slaying. To the lofty roof  
of our palace will I mount,  
now the bloody work hath been  
begun.<sup>5</sup>

But how could this be done save with some device that was brought onto the stage?

This leads to a famous passage in the first book of Aristotle's Metaphysics<sup>6</sup> which deserves an incidental explanation here, because it throws light on the problem under discussion. Hence we are not overreaching the scope of our treatise if we mention it.

It is common knowledge that Anaxagoras attributed the order of the universe to Mind and the rest of the philosophers mocked him by calling him "the Mind". But Anaxagoras' postulate is correct if one understands by "Mind" the Divine Intelligence. Aristotle, who admitted nothing without a rational explanation and even investigated divine matters

in the light of natural reason, according to his commentator Simplicius, differed from Plato and the ancients on the subject of Anaxagoras' "Mind". Aristotle maintained that Anaxagoras brought in his "Mind", like an "engine", and escaped by it when other escape was impossible.

The passage is as follows:

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But Anaxagoras used his Mind as a theatrical machine in treating of creation. When at a loss for the reason why creation was necessary he brought on the engine, although in all other things he brought forward any reason for their existence rather than attribute them to Mind.

Aristotle had in view the theatrical use of the device and by "bringing up the engine" he means "to escape and slip off." He does not mean that Anaxagoras (as Cicero and Plato say) had recourse to a god who was in the machine but that he had his "Mind" instead of a machine and used it in place of one so that, with its help, he escaped just as Medea did.

The learned coiner of proverbs failed to see this. Those who remembered Anaxagoras only with words of scorn failed too,--as if being first to compose so many thousand proverbs were less noteworthy than the fact that he passed over a few. If it were any concern of mine, I could assemble in a few days a just commentary which would easily prove how that great man, after the manner of men, failed in many ways. He often was incorrect in his inter-

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pretations of passages from the Greek authors, and often he classed as proverbs sayings which possessed merely a proverbial appearance. I could prove this if I did not consider that my time would be more profitably spent in admitting my own ignorance than in disparaging the ignorance of another--especially when his work is too great to be disparaged whether one consider his extreme toil, his laudable desire to win name for himself in literature, or his great erudition.

But to get back to the Deus ex Machina. Whether this artifice employs a divine agent or not, either use is condemned by Aristotle. The poet can avoid both these faulty uses of the device just as he can avoid the defect of complication which shows up in the solution. No one doubts that the first use (where a god unravels the knot) is wrong. As far as the second is concerned, the situation could have been developed in such a way that the device would have been unnecessary and Medea (to cite a concrete instance) could have gradually, in one way or another extricated herself and escaped. The entire plot of Euripides' play could have easily been freed from its defects.

Up to now we have discussed the two uses of the Deus ex Machina which must be avoided. Now let us examine the three ways in which it may be properly employed. Scholars have misunderstood no passage in Aristotle more than the one wherein he sets forth his teaching on this point.<sup>7</sup>

This passage, along with many others, has been subjected to the harshest criticism, standing as it does in the chapter on characters, whereas it belongs to the earlier chapter which treats of complication and solution.<sup>8</sup> The element of character has no bearing on the dénouement--the Deus ex Machina has even less on the character element. This device is occasioned by the complication but, as was stated above, belongs in the solution. Furthermore, both complication and solution belong to the first qualitative part of Tragedy, plot, while character constitutes the second.

After making it clear that the solution must arise from the plot, that is, the complication, and not from the Deus ex Machina, Aristotle points to three legitimate uses of this device. It must be reserved for matters external to the drama, or for past events beyond human knowledge, or for events yet to come which must be reported or foretold.<sup>9</sup> 103

No one has yet clearly enough comprehended what Aristotle meant by matters external to the drama and we shall essay an explanation without delay. He meant that events in the course of the play which belong to the episodes were extra-dramatic. The episode always lies outside the main action as was proved at some length in the preceding chapter, where we showed that the episode could be removed without disturbing the action and that it was employed for pur-

poses of adornment. But the episode belongs in the complication, not in the solution. If, therefore, he warns that the Deus ex Machina is to be used in matters external to the drama, and if nothing is external to the drama except episodic events, and if these events belong to the complication, Aristotle's warning is to employ the Deus ex Machina not in the solution, but in the complication. Even this use is restricted by two exceptions to the rule, 104 as we shall presently prove.

We find an example of the extra-dramatic use of this device in the prologue where its employment was quite common and held in high honor. Sophocles has Minerva speak in the prologue of his Ajax. Juno speaks in the Hercules Furens (of Seneca). Euripides has Mercury speak the prologue of the Ion and Venus that of the Hippolytus.

Euripides was fond of setting forth his subject in a prologue. But plot deals with future events, being compounded of present and future actions. Yet the power to know and foretell the future belongs to the gods alone and, hence, it is proper that a god foretell--from the machine--some future event in the play. In the Phoenissae, Jocasta, a mortal, foretells the future since it was a part of the play and not extra-dramatic.

In past events beyond human knowledge the question is whether the legitimate use of the Deus ex Machina is confined to the denouement or is admissible elsewhere in the play. It is used in both complication and solution. In

the solution of Euripides' Hippolytus, for example, Diana explains what had not been and could not have been known--namely, that Venus had imposed this punishment on Hippolytus. But it is in the complication of Sophocles' Ajax that Minerva tells Ulysses what Ajax had done when Ulysses could not otherwise learn of it. 105

The third use is for events yet to come and again there are instances of its employment in both solution and complication. In the solution of Euripides' Orestes, Apollo foretells what will presently come to pass and effects a reconciliation between Orestes and Menelaus which gives rise to the dénouement. Mercury in the same poet's Ion explains the plot in the course of the complication.

It would seem that Aristotle had the dénouement in mind when he treated this device and he allowed its occasional use in this part of the play. What follows would be a reconstruction of his opinion on the matter: the Deus ex Machina must always be used in the complication unless the situation forces the poet to employ it elsewhere and its use is unavoidable.

Sometimes events will occur or have occurred which are beyond the range of human knowledge. When the poet cannot avoid this, by all means let him use the Deus ex Machina in the solution. There are few such cases in Euripides since most of his situations were avoidable.

There are few past events beyond the scope of man's knowledge; future events of this sort are rarely necessary except in setting forth the subject-matter in the prologue. 106

Furthermore many unknowable events need never be known--as in the Hercules Oetaeus. In the Trachiniae, the inspired Sophocles did not even use the character of Alcmena, while the author of the Oetaeus wished her to know Hercules had been translated to heaven. But why? Was no other solution possible? Did this procedure loose the knot? It effected a change, to be sure, but since Hercules changed for the better, the play changed for the worse because it has a happy ending (foreign to Tragedy) when it could have ended in sorrow. Hence, the introduction of the Deus ex Machina is without reason and most inartistic. For, from the machine, the hero speaks the following lines:

Why, since I hold the realms  
of starry heaven and at last  
have attained the skies, dost  
by lamentation bid me taste  
of death? Give o'er; for now  
has my valour borne me to the  
stars and to the gods them-  
selves.<sup>10</sup>

Then the following:

The pools of pitiless Cocytus  
hold me not, nor has the dark  
skiff borne o'er my shade.<sup>11</sup>

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And he glides off on the "engine" to the point where Alcmena must speak the following lines:

Stay but a little!---he has  
vanished from my sight, is  
gone, to the stars faring.  
Am I deceived or do my eyes  
but deem they saw my son?<sup>12</sup>

The solution, therefore, is like that in Plautus'

Amphitryo, where Jupiter speaks from the machine:

Be of good cheer. I am here  
with aid, Amphitryon, for thee  
and thine. Thou hast naught  
to fear. Seers, soothsayers--  
have none of them. I will make  
known to thee future and past  
alike.<sup>13</sup>

But this was a much wiser use of the device than in Seneca's play because the crowd had to be placated, as in Euripides' Rhesus. There, when a strife had arisen over the slain hero and Hector stood under grave suspicion, the situation was explained from the machine and the tumult was quelled. This was a common remedy in such situations. Furthermore, Jupiter, in the Amphitryo says he will tell of events past and future. There were no such events in Seneca's Hercules Octaeus. Alcmena could have, indeed should have remained ignorant of what had occurred.

In both plays the ending is happy. Amphitryo says: 108

Thy will shall be done: and  
keep thy word with me, I beg  
thee. I'll in and see my wife!  
No more of old Tiresias!  
Now, spectators, for the sake  
of Jove Almighty, give us some  
loud applause.<sup>14</sup>

And in the Hercules Octaeus, Alcmena says:

But no! thou are divine, and  
deathless the heavens possess  
thee. In thy triumphant en-  
trance I believe. Now will I  
take me to the realm of Thebes  
and there proclaim the new god  
added to their temples.<sup>15</sup>

Seneca left out nothing except the "Give your applause" of the comic poet. And this the judicious writing of a schoolmaster!

No doubt he had in mind the dénouement in Sophocles' Philoctetes, where the knot is loosed by Hercules from the machine. Philoctetes could not be led by any human effort to betake himself to Troy. Hence all future events had to be foretold,--and by whom better than Hercules? Since Philoctetes had set his mind against leaving his desert isle it would take the weight of divine authority to force him to leave. But no parallel exists between this situation and the Hercules Oetaeus of Seneca.

The passage quoted below is the one from the Poetics 109 which treats of the complication and solution and which we said should be transferred to an earlier chapter:

From this one sees that the dénouement also should arise out of the plot itself and not depend on a stage-artifice, as in Medea or in the story of the (arrested) departure of the Greeks in the Iliad. The artifice must be reserved for matters outside the play--for past events beyond human knowledge, or events yet to come, which require to be foretold or announced; since it is the privilege of the gods to know everything.<sup>16</sup>

If one fails to see immediately that this passage is out of place, either his attention has wandered, or he never had it fixed on the matter at hand. This becomes particularly clear if the passage is excised, and if we link together the comments immediately preceding and immediately follow-

ing it. Both adjacent passages are concerned with the proper portraiture of character.

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I considered that this admonition should find a place in the course of our discussion because, along with other points, it escaped my careful attention in my commentary to Aristotle's treatise. Still the transposition of some passages which have been noticed in my commentary now seem so important that, unless they are transposed, we would be unable to find rhyme or reason in his teaching.

Yet how few there are today who see the usefulness of true and genuine criticism or who devote themselves to weighty problems? This criticism, however, can scarcely defend itself or operate unless aided by all the learning and every science known to the mind of man. But let us get on with our discussion.

## CHAPTER XIII

The gradual development of Tragedy. Characters and points to be noticed about them. Narration or exposition. Its use, scope and subject-matter. Its characteristics. Authors.

Two proofs combine to demonstrate that Tragedy gradually developed (just as Comedy did) until it arrived at the point of its highest perfection. Reason and practice prove this and Aristotle's comments on the subject substantiate our own observations.

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The same development is noticeable in all poetry in general, which falls into three classes: pure expository or narrative poetry; that which imitates by means of character; and finally, the type which combines the other two. Although Tragedy did not immediately emerge from pure narrative, at its fullest development it is a completely distinct form. In the beginning Tragedy allowed but one character, presently a few are found, and in its full flower a larger cast is introduced.

There can be no doubt that there were many examples of the monologue, such as Lycophron's tour de force of cryptic language wherein a single character, Cassandra, is brought on the stage.<sup>1</sup> Very few carry the action in Aeschylus' Seven Against Thebes: Eteocles, the Messenger, Ismene,

Antigone, the Herald and the Chorus. The same poet employs even fewer in his Persae, where there are, besides the Chorus, only four characters: Atossa, the Messenger, the Ghost of Darius, and Xerxes.

The following points may be noticed with regard to characters. The tragic poet either derives his subject from tradition (which happens in the majority of cases), or he creates it (which is of much less frequent occurrence). If he creates it, he creates his characters as well. Agathon did this and it was the common practice in Comedy. If the poet derives his subject, he either derives all his characters, or creates some or fashions a name for them. 112

Created characters are either such as are found in life or are pure products of the mind. Those from life are classified either by their age (such as the Old Man), or by their condition (such as the Slave), or by their duty or profession (such as the Messenger, the Shepherd, the Herald, the male or female Nurse), or by nation (as the Phrygian in Euripides' Orestes). Examples of characters existing only in the mind are Hunger, Sleep, Rumor, Luxury, and others of this sort.

Although two characters may not be altogether identical, a poet may suitably assign to one of his actors the name of a character in a kindred story--especially if the story is not too commonly known. In that way the poet avoids that disagreeable affectation which marks the private

tutors in rhetoric. Or the poet may designate a character or event by the meaning of a character's name. These may be Greek derivations, and they must be made with erudition but without display. This is usual in Comedy, where, for example, a character is called Pamphilus. Why?

This is how he lived: he fell  
in easily with the ways of all  
of his acquaintances, gave him-  
self up to his company, and join-  
ed heartily in their pursuits.<sup>2</sup>

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Almost the same thing that happens in the case of characters happens to the narrative. When the characters are few, they complete the action with almost sheer narrative. What is Aeschylus' Seven Against Thebes except a narrative which has received its adornment by the weight of its language?

Afterward, poets contrived the simple plot and gradually developed the complex. Both of these are completely distinct from sheer narrative inasmuch as plot can exist apart from words. For example, if a person can mentally contemplate the fate of Oedipus, he perceives the plot because the emotions are present.

What one speaker recounts in narration must be acted out by several characters when plot is employed. Hence it is that Aristotle excludes narrative form from his definition of Tragedy--not because Tragedy lacks all narrative, but because it does not derive its essence either through or from narrative. Tragedy employs the form of action,

not narration.

Narrative is neither essential to nor a part of Tragedy, but an aid to the action and staging of a play. For there are some scenes that are naturally impossible, whether they be obviously false or possess an appearance of truth. 114 Others are possible, such as Medea's murder of her children. Again, possible events are sometimes probable, such as Ajax' suicide--a probable action for a great-souled hero whose disgrace made him a madman. Other possible situations are apparently improbable, such as Oedipus' unwitting marriage with his mother. Some actions, such as scourgings, can be shown on the stage; others, like murders, can be represented only with difficulty; still others, such as Hippolytus being torn to bits, are altogether impossible of representation--unless some actor is willing to have himself dismembered. Such things did sometimes happen in the amphitheatre, under the Roman emperors, to provide pleasure for the mob.

Narration, supplying by verbal report what is lacking to the actual representation, comes to the rescue in all such situations and recounts what cannot be shown on the stage. We allow the poet broad license--not to deceive but to instruct--as the ancient philosophers and fables teach us. Scenes of the kind mentioned above either cannot be shown or, if they are, lose in credibility for that very reason, as Horace correctly points out.<sup>3</sup>

The same is true of situations that are apparently improbable, for narration gives an air of probability to any situation--even to events that have never occurred, and herein lies not the least virtue of the narrative form. In the same way, since language can exhibit all things, it recounts situations that could be represented only with great difficulty or not at all: for example, past events, as the death of Hippolytus, Astyanax, or Polyxena; present, such as the battle array in the Thebais or the presence and actions of the chiefs before the gates in Aeschylus' Seven Against Thebes; or future events either by means of the Deus ex Machina, (such as Hercules' prophecy in the Philoctetes and Apollo's in the Orestes as well as in other plays), or on the stage, as in the prophecy of Prometheus in Aeschylus' play or the utterances of Cassandra in both Aeschylus' and Seneca's versions of the Agamemnon. 115

Narratives of this kind are generally put in the mouths of gods, seers, or heroes who possess knowledge of the future and foretell it. Sometimes, however, another character, acting on their warning or advice, makes the prophecy. Thus in the Ajax, a Messenger forebodes the hero's death by the inspiration of the seer, Calchas.<sup>4</sup>

Hence those who hold to the opinion that narrative is confined to the Messenger character are greatly in error. In Aeschylus' Seven Against Thebes, the Scout, and in Sophocles' Orestes,<sup>5</sup> the Nurse become Messengers. On the stage 116

anyone can narrate an incident, as in the Hercules Furens Theseus tells of the hero's deeds in the underworld. The rhetoricians, Aristotle, and other authorities are at one in calling this process a narrative or recital. Homer's passages which unfold the story by sheer narration and Euripides' prologues belong to this kind of expository narrative.

A possible reason for the opinion mentioned at the beginning of the preceding paragraph is the fact that the Latin poets put their narratives into the mouths of Messengers. But all that the Romans lack almost entirely, even when striving to attain it, presents itself to the minds of the Greek tragedians in abundance although their efforts be directed elsewhere.

The Greeks has two kinds of narrative, one for true events, the other for events narrated as true. These had their names even when talking nonsense. When narrating present events, they even fashioned a kind of appearance of what was occurring not only as to time but also as to place. We have an example in Euripides' Phoenissae when the Tutor points out to Antigone the chiefs before the city gates. This is an imitation of Homer's Helen, who does the same thing in the third book of the Iliad, but in neither passage is it a true narrative. The speaker is interrupted and points out people; he does not merely narrate. Finally, they betray themselves on their own testimony because they

term this type of narrative a "pointing out" or "demonstration". The reason for the name is found in the fact that the view is more clearly defined.

Narration concerns itself with five subjects at the most. The first is the character about whom something is told. There may be only one character, such as Hippolytus in Seneca's play of that name, or there may be many, as Polyxena and Astyanax in the Troades.

The second subject consists in things done by or to a character. For example:

The dauntless maid did not shrink back, but, facing the stroke, stood there with stern look and courageous.<sup>6</sup>

The third subject is place. For example:

Its further side is gently lapped by Rheteum's waters; its front is surrounded by a plain, while a valley, sloping gently up in the manner of a theatre, hems in the middle space.<sup>7</sup>

The fourth is time which is sometimes merely described 118  
as in the following line:

Two portions of her course had kindly night well-nigh passed.<sup>8</sup>

At other times in the course of a narrative, the time is set by other circumstances, as in the following:

As a fugitive flees the city with unsafe step, making his swift way with speeding feet.

Sometimes the series and sequence of events is merely hinted,

especially when one action follows another as in the following example:

After the boy fell headlong  
from the lofty tower, and the  
throng of Greeks wept for the  
crime it wrought, that same  
host turned to a second crime.<sup>9</sup>

The fifth is manner. For example:

A spirit so bold strikes the  
hearts of all and--strange  
prodigy--Pyrrhus is slow to  
kill. When his hand, thrust  
forth, had buried deep the  
sword, with the death-stroke  
her blood leaped out in a  
sudden stream through the  
gaping wound.<sup>10</sup>

The manner is more obvious in the following lines from

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Seneca's Hippolytus:

Then, truly, the plunging  
horses, driven by mad fear,  
broke from control, struggled  
to wrench their necks from the  
yoke, and, rearing up, hurled  
their burden to the ground.  
Headlong on his face he plunged  
and, as he fell, entangled his  
body in the clinging reins; and  
the more he struggled, the tight-  
er he drew those firm-holding coils.<sup>11</sup>

The rhetorician usually adds the reason for a narrated action, whereas the tragic poet makes no mention of it, presupposing that the reason is already known by the audience. The five subjects mentioned above again allow of amplification and topics or elements, as they are called, have been found for this process. Some of these topics are applicable to Tragedy.

Thus a character is described by his appearance, deeds, moral nature, death, and what follows on his death. Examples of all these are found here and there in the different Tragedies. A deed is narrated as being sad, bold, cruel, calculated to inspire pity or fear. The other subjects admit of like topics for amplification which each one can discover for himself. The masters of oratory have shown the way. Inasmuch as they have overlooked no detail, we think there is no need to repeat their precepts.

The ancient rhetoricians established three principal characteristics for narration: it must be clear, brief, and convincing.<sup>12</sup> Clarity applies to all narratives, brevity to some and conviction to all, but more so to narratives which recount events that have not actually occurred. Although among the Latin poets, Lucius Seneca was an outstanding narrator as, for instance, he shows in his Hippolytus and Troades, I shall take my examples from the Greek drama.

Euripides' Hecuba provides a model for clear narrative, and Sophocles, in Electra, is quite convincing although his narrative is not factual. Every writer should keep this example from Sophocles before his eyes, because nothing is said in a false narrative that could not be said in a true one; time, place, manner and rivals, for whom a country and anything else can be invented.

Sophocles scorned clarity but gave to his narratives the magnificence which is characteristic of Tragedy. Atticism (the style of writing affected by Sophocles) also re-

jected unadorned clarity in narrative. Homer is a model of brevity; with Euripides brevity leads to confusion. Sophocles and Seneca before beginning a narrative passage sometimes disclose the situation with a word and presently go on with the story. The most perfect example of brevity we find in the words of Homer's Antilochus:

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Fallen is Patroclus, and they  
are fighting around his body,  
naked, for his armor is held  
by Hector of the glancing helm.<sup>13</sup>

The rhetoricians note this passage, because in two lines Homer has omitted nothing essential to the narrative.

Sophocles imitates this in his Electra when the Messenger says:

Orestes is dead. I speak, ex-  
pressing it concisely.<sup>14</sup>

and presently there follows that inspired and perfect narrative.<sup>15</sup> Seneca does the same in his Hippolytus, when the Messenger reports:

Hippolytus, woe is me, lies in  
lamentable death.<sup>16</sup>

Then he goes on to an accurate account of the details.<sup>17</sup>

This was called rapidity by the Greek rhetoricians and they were minded to make it a characteristic of every narration. Aristotle has given his opinion on the matter by citing a witty and homely example. He says:

Nowadays it is said, absurdly  
enough, that the narration  
should be rapid. Remember what  
the man said to the baker who  
asked whether he was to make the  
cake hard or soft: 'What, can't  
you make it right?' Just so here.  
...rightness does not consist

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either in rapidity or in conciseness, but in the happy mean.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, as beauty is a characteristic of the whole body but is most marked on the face, so pure Latin style is a quality of language but is outstanding in narrative and this, especially, must be taken into account. The most skilled and well-nigh inimitable master of narration is Thucydides, who possesses something of the tragic element in his style. He also, like Sophocles, has the magnificence of Atticism, even if he omits, alters, or brings in some incongruous detail. The inspired and heavenly felicity of Herodotus' style comes from his pleasantness, and this in a mode of expression which the Athenians, and much more the other Greeks, failed to match. And the Athenians were amazingly eloquent.

In Latin, Ovid is the master whether he narrates fiction plausibly, or intricate details with clarity, or both with elegance, or any kind of story naturally and directly. He treats fictional topics in the Metamorphoses, the Fasti are filled with astrology and obscure antiquarian problems, and his works deal with character, even when he writes in fun or jest. 123

He achieves this perfection of style with the vocabulary of ordinary speech, saying exactly what he means and in such a way that anybody can understand. So amazing is his felicity of style that it seems anyone could do the

same; but no one can. No one save a man of magnificent inspiration, would dare try, and even the wise despair of matching Ovid. His works are a treasure-house of pithy sayings and ordinary topics such as cowardice, the arts, the brevity of beauty, disdain for wealth.

Fiction is not his only subject. Even in the Fasti he tells many tales derived from history, such as the story of Lucretia.<sup>19</sup> What author's work deserves to be compared with his straightforward powers of expression-- a talent which the unschooled boor despises and the educated gentleman reverences, although he has no hope of equalling it? Here is rapidity:

'There is night enough left.  
Let us to saddle and away to  
the city'. They approve the  
plan. The steeds are bridled,  
and had carried their masters  
to their journey's end. Straight-  
way they seek the royal palace.  
No guard watched the door.<sup>20</sup>

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Human thought can scarcely match this rapidity. No steed could. The following passage gives another example of rapid narrative:

Thus she sat, this was the dress  
she wore, she held her wool so,  
her flowing hair lay this way on  
her shoulders, this was her ex-  
pression, these the words she  
spoke, such her complexion, her  
face, the beauty of her lips.<sup>21</sup>

Although we possess only the first half of the Fasti, the purity, simplicity and charm of his astrological lore must make us envious. But we do not understand, and the

great critics who make the charges themselves do not understand what they mean when they say certain changes could be made. At least they have not proved it by their own efforts at writing in a similar vein.

Ovid's Tristia and Epistulae ex Ponto should be recommended to young readers all the more because they are so free from literary conceit--a quality they possess in common with most of his other works. All of them are models of Latinity. So much so that Muretus,<sup>22</sup> the best exponent of fine writing without affectation since the Renaissance, thought that any critic who would disparage so great an author as Ovid deserved, like the portent of a sheep struck by lightning, to be purified with sulphur.<sup>23</sup> Joseph Scaliger<sup>24</sup> shared his opinion.

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I recall hearing more than once from his gifted son that Julius Scaliger,<sup>25</sup> in his Rhetorica (which has perished along with other books from his pen), had recommended Ovid's works as the perfect example of writing from every point of view, and he reaffirmed therein whatever Ovid said merely because he had said it.

But Ovid's natural brilliance, rapidity, simplicity--qualities that are especially outstanding in narrative discourse--exceed our fondest wish. The next thing, therefore, is to subject them to correct critical standards. The critics accuse him of redundancy. Granted that the charge is true. It is also true of the ocean, yet no one could impose a law limiting the ocean's ebb and flow. The same is the

case with rivers; the more magnificent they are, the less regard do they have for banks and bridges, whereas fountains and pools stay within their bounds. Just as beggars, who have practically nothing, envy those who have life's goods in abundance, so these starved and famished critics, when they look askance at the riches of others have the boldness to systematize the art of writing.

Still the tragic poet must use moderation inasmuch as his literary genre is more severe. Then, too, as we shall explain later in discussing elocution, the idea requires distinction. At present we must say that men who were hardly Ovid's equals bestow true praise on his Medea, which, being a Tragedy, has application here. In the eighth book of his Institutiones Oratoriae, Quintilian, who was just as sharp a critic as Seneca of other people's writing praises a passage from this Ovidian Tragedy in the following words:

But they acquire greater force by a change in the figure employed, as in the following:

"Is it so bitter, then, to die?" For this is more vigorous than the simple statement, "Death is not bitter." A similar effect may be produced by transference of the statement from the general to the particular. For example, although the direct statement would be, "To hurt is easy, but to do good is hard". Ovid gives this reflection increased force when he makes Medea say,

"I had the power to save, and ask you then if I have the power to ruin?"<sup>26</sup>

At this point, I must mention the author of the book de causis corruptae eloquentiae, who seems to exhibit Quintilian's talents--in fact, many scholars attribute this book to Quintilian's pen.<sup>27</sup> This author maintains that no work of Asinius or Messalla is as brilliant as Ovid's Medea or the Thyestes of Varius.

Everyone knows that the ancients judged Varius' play worthy of Virgil and many considered that Virgil had written it. But I could never bring myself to agree with them since the extant fragments display neither consistency nor faultless style. They lack Vergil's emotional power and often show a tendency toward the ostentatious manner which marks the rhetorical declaimer. But I have always felt that the chorus which begins "At long last the noble palace", was deserving of praise, and I have ever appreciated the excellence of its ending:

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Let whatever prince who will  
 take his stand on the slippery  
 summit of power. Let me be  
 content with the sweetness of  
 a life at peace. In some hid-  
 den nook may I enjoy my hours of  
 gentle leisure; may my life flow  
 on in silence far from the public  
 eye. When my undisturbed days are  
 done, let me die in old age the  
 death of a common man. Death  
 weighs heavy on him who dies well-  
 known to all, while himself he did  
 not know.

## CHAPTER XIV

Characters, the second essential part of Tragedy. What character dialogue is and some examples thereof. Four precepts for character-drawing. How good, appropriate and consistent a character should be.

Now we have passed over the rough portions of the road (and they were truly rough), and go on to the second part of Tragedy, namely, character. Character deservedly takes the second place immediately after plot. Plot is the imitation of action, and just as we are termed happy or the reverse according to our actions, so, according to our characters we are called this kind or that kind of person. 129

What the Greeks called ethos, the Latins, since they had no other way of expressing it, termed mores. The reason is, as Fabius has correctly stated,<sup>1</sup> that the word mores means not so much a complex of customs as a quality of character which differs with the individual according to his habits, emotion, country, age, good or bad fortune: according to habit, when a poet paints a character as just, mild, or self-restrained; according to emotion, when a poet creates a lover or an irascible person; according to nation, as Greek or Latin; according to age, as when the poet assigns a role in his play to a boy, a youth, a man in his prime or in his old age; according to good fortune, when he depicts a victor;

according to adverse fortune, when the vanquished speaks the part. That is the way Horace employed the word when he says:

You must mark well the manners of every age.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps Aristotle was the first to point out what manner of character is proper to the different ages of a man's life. His excellent account is found in the second book of the Rhetoric,<sup>3</sup> and the tragic poet and orator alike must seek their information from this same source. The treatment of character is common to the tragedian, to other poets, and to the man of eloquence, but the tragic and comic poets require this ability in a special way.

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Aristotle defined character in the dramatic sense as:

....that which reveals the moral purpose of the agents, that is, the sort of thing they seek or avoid, where that is not obvious.<sup>4</sup>

His definition is a learned one, but rather obscure. What he means is that the discourse which reveals character is that wherein we come to grasp the speaker's moral purpose, not from any revelation on his part but from the very quality of his character.

I think my meaning is obvious enough. If, for example, the poet creates a tyrant, and this character, like Euripides' tyrant, confesses that he will violate justice to win the throne, his discourse is not properly indicative of character in the Aristotelian sense. The reason is that

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the actor, by his own revelation and with no skill on the part of the poet, shows forth and admits his moral purpose. Such is the following passage from Plautus:

I am angered now with no mean  
anger but with that wherewith  
I learned to sack cities.<sup>5</sup>

In Virgil we have another example of the same:

Anna--for I will own it--since  
the death of my hapless lord  
Sychaeus, and the shattering of  
our home by a brother's murder,  
he (Aeneas) alone has swayed my  
will.<sup>6</sup>

They do not, in their discourse, display the characteristics of a tyrant, a man in anger, or a love-lorn woman; they make, rather, an open confession of their feelings.

On the other hand, the following speech is truly indicative of character by reason of the love of despairing Queen Dido:

If I have had strength to for-  
see this great sorrow, I shall  
also, sister, have strength to  
endure it. Yet this one ser-  
vice, Anna, do for me--for thee  
alone that traitor made his  
friend, to thee he confided even  
his secret thoughts, alone thou  
knowest the hour for easy access  
to him--go, sister, and humbly  
address our haughty foe. I nev-  
er conspired with the Danaans at  
Aulis to root out the Trojan race.<sup>7</sup>

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From her words we come to know the every feeling of a woman who, although she has lost all hope, still tries every means to win back Aeneas' love.

The speech of King Latinus to Turnus at the beginning

of the twelfth book of the Aeneid, and some of Turnus' remarks in the course of the same book are also indicative of character. Nothing is more revealing than the words of the aged Anchises in the sixth book of the same poem when he recognizes his son. In the Greek Epic, some of Achilles' inspired speeches reveal his character, and especially in the book telling of the embassy from Agamemnon<sup>8</sup> can we recognize the hero from his words.

In this respect, the older writers excell the two Senecas, especially Marcus (Seneca the Elder), and much more the other writers whose works are published in that volume which goes under Seneca's name.<sup>9</sup> Hence, our examples will, for the most part, be taken from the older authors. We do not possess a corpus of Latin Tragedy that is dramatic in the proper sense of the word. With few exceptions, the extant plays smack of the declaimer's base conceits, and have corrupted, in a particular manner, the discourse which is indicative of character.

We could take our examples from Sophocles, unless we prefer to draw them from the Latins inasmuch as we have begun to follow this procedure. Terence is by far the leader in this field, and we cannot read or recall to mind his character discourse without experiencing the deepest pleasure. Certainly he, above all the rest, understood the nature of charm and has given excellent expression to the principles on character outlined by Aristotle in the second

book of his Rhetorica.<sup>10</sup> Terence is truly the darling of the Muses and the delight of the stage. The further a writer falls short of Terentian elegance, grace, wit, and charm, the smaller is his share of refinement in writing.

Horace, a critic of keen discernment, everywhere insists on this. Nowadays the younger Scaliger, before him, Erasmus, and Varro before both of them, understood Terence's peculiar excellence. Varro had reason for his statement<sup>11</sup> that Caecilius' strong point was plot, Terence's was character, and Plautus' was dialogue. And he states these characteristics in their Aristotelian order: plot is first and most important, then character which is next in importance, and finally dialogue which is the least important of the three. We have noted elsewhere the reasons for Varro's preference for Plautine dialogue. Varro, as the ancient writers have mentioned, was excessively devoted to the archaic language of an earlier day. Those who read "emotions" instead of "plots" in Varro's statement do so because Charisius attributes to Caecilius great emotional power. They did not, however, understand the meaning of plot, or the possibility that one author could possess skill in both fields.

Here are some examples from Terence. First, a mild character:

By heaven, I believe. For I know your character is one befitting a freeman. But I am afraid you will become too careless.<sup>12</sup>

An irascible man:

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Woe is me! What shall I do? What shall I achieve? What shall I shout out? What complaint shall I make? O heaven, earth and Neptune's seas!<sup>13</sup>

A lad in good fortune:

Mayn't I now break out into ecstasy? O heavens! this is a moment when I could bear dissolution for fear life pollute this exultation with some distress.<sup>14</sup>

An old man in distress:

What the plague does this ill luck mean? I can't account for it, only I believe that's what I was born for, enduring distresses. I'm the first to become aware of our troubles, the first to find everything out, the first too to give the bad news. Any trouble and I alone bear the annoyance.<sup>15</sup>

A woman of honor who finds her husband guilty of adultery:

Was there ever any more monstrous wickedness? And when it's their wives, their youth is past!<sup>16</sup>

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Here is the speech of an old man who justly and characteristically describes and upbraids his son:

I am ready that you should be called my son just so far as you do what befits you; if you act otherwise you will see me find the fitting way to deal with you.

Ay, all this comes merely from such a want of employment. When I was young I didn't busy myself with love. No, Sir, I was off to Asia because of my lack of means, and there on a service, active service, Sir, got both money and glory.<sup>17</sup>

Here is the same old man, now repentant with true fatherly affection because his son is gone, banished with undue severity as the father himself admits. After mentioning the good services of his slaves, he goes on to say:

The sight set me thinking. 'What? are all these men to be so solicitous on my account only, for my sole satisfaction? All these maids to look to my clothes? All this vast household expenditure to be for me only, while my only son, who should have shared the enjoyment equally, no, had more of it, since youth is the time for enjoyment,--I have driven the poor boy out by my injustice.<sup>18</sup>

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Because Terence's language always gives a fitting characterization, it is always most life-like and, as a result, touches our inmost feelings. Countless examples could be adduced; hence I pass them by. This quality of his never enters the minds of those who are only eager for a laugh--the arch-enemy of all that is seemly. Indeed, if one is not careful, the quality of propriety becomes an occasion for comic treatment.

It is important to note the fact that language will differ according to the different types of character, and that Tragedy employs the more serious of these types. In

some of his works, the elder Seneca's abundance of pithy remarks has impaired his characterization a good deal.

Of the two, although there is no comparison, the younger Seneca comes closer to the writers of antiquity. Still some splendid examples of character discourse can be found in the works of both father and son.

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Aristotle points out that four principles must be adhered to in the delineation of character.<sup>19</sup> First, the character must be good--which calls for further explanation. Among the faults which Plato found with Tragedy was the fact that its imitation changes and is inconsistent.<sup>20</sup> It imitates, as occasion offers, good and bad alike, and sometimes it imitates the bad alone. As we warned before, the mind of man is easily deceived by this representation. Whereas he seeks only what is seemly, man often fails to distinguish between the good and bad which is presented to him and, like the tragic poet, he imitates both kinds of character.

There is no more pernicious principle than this in the Republic, because, by this token, the theatre becomes a school for vice rather than virtue--indeed all the more so because we are all more inclined to do the wrong thing in preference to what is right. When Plato's commentators explain the types and formulae laid down in the Republic by the law-giver, they say that no poet is to be allowed into the ideal state except the one who, stripped of all inconsistency, imitates God and the actions of good men.

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The rest give pleasure but teach nothing; often they infect and corrupt character and, hence, they do more harm than good.

To meet this charge Aristotle wished this to be his primary precept regarding character, namely, that it be good. In the face of Plato's denial he maintained not only that the characters of a Tragedy could be good but that they should be good insofar as the plan of the play would allow. He proved his point by examples from the tragic poets, who followed this rule even though it had not yet been formulated.

The later critics who have branded some of the old plays with the accusation that all or most of the characters are bad hold the same view. Euripides' Orestes affords an example in which the characters of all the principal actors are bad except in the case of Pylades. 140

Aristotle's intention was not that only the morally best characters be shown on the stage, or, if other characters are shown who are obviously evil, that they must be portrayed as good. He meant that, as far as was possible, the poet should bring forward in the same play more persons of high moral character; for, although both good and bad are required in a play, and the drama draws its fitness from the one as well as the other, morally good characters are preferable inasmuch as, when seen on the stage, they are more beneficial to the audience.

The second point is to make the characters appropriate. Appropriateness need not conflict with goodness since good characters differ greatly not only from bad but even among themselves. For instance, they differ according to sex, age, and condition. Gorgias used to say that, when virtue was the topic for discussion, it did not have to be examined generically, nor was it necessary to confuse the issue by treating of virtue as a whole. He thought that the individual virtues ought to be considered in order, that is, each one should be given his own.

Plato in his Meno<sup>21</sup> and Aristotle in the first book of the Politics<sup>22</sup> hold to the same opinion. Whether one looks at the intellectual or moral virtues, he will find a great difference according to the relation of the subject. As to sex, man's virtue differs from woman's; as to age, what is virtue in a boy is not in a man; as to condition, the virtue of a master differs from that of a slave. For example, the intellectual virtue of prudence is weak in a woman, imperfect in a boy, and non-existent in a slave. The same is true of the deliberative faculty and of wisdom. 141

Hence Euripides is deservedly criticized for putting the brilliant reflections of Anaxagoras into the mouth of Menalippe.<sup>23</sup> He also granted the virtue of prudence to his female characters and often permitted them to deliberate on matters of the gravest import, whereas both these qualities lie beyond the nature of woman's character. The weakness of body and mind characteristic of their sex has been

assigned to them by Ulpian, the lawyer, while commenting on the senate's decree named after C. Velleius Tutor,<sup>24</sup> and in other passages of his writings. Just as Ulpian points out woman's lack of obligation, so, on the stage, the deliberations of a woman are useless and vain.

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The same is true of slaves. I mean the slaves seen on the stage who are such by nature's choice and not because they were captured in war. This is why the philosophers wisely judge that since the virtue of slaves and boys is imperfect, the slave's must be with reference to his master and the boy's with reference to his father. Neither is virtuous with reference to himself. It is enough for the boy if he can obey his father and the slaves their master.

Hence there must be a great difference between these characters and characters belonging to other classes, just as the character of a woman must differ from that of a man. They must not only have virtues common to both in a different degree but should possess entirely different characteristics. For example, Sophocles<sup>25</sup> and the comic poet Menander say that silence is woman's greatest virtue, but no one praises it as a virtue proper to a man. On the other hand, courage is man's primary virtue, but no one demands courage of a woman.

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The third point is to make the characters like the reality. They can be unlike the reality in two ways--partly or entirely. It would be entirely unreal, for example,

if a poet should assign the character of Ajax to Ulysses when it is quite clear that Ajax was brave, warlike, unconquerable, and ignorant of all pretence, while Ulysses was peaceful, timid, wily, and shrewd. It would be partially unreal if, after an author had begun to depict Ajax, he should devise for him qualities altogether at variance with the character and disposition of Ajax. Horace touches on both cases in the following lines:

You who write, either follow  
tradition or invent such fables  
as are not incongruous. If you  
have to represent the renowned  
Achilles, let him be indefati-  
gable, wrathful, inexorable,  
courageous. Let him deny that  
laws were made for him.<sup>26</sup>

Aristotle drew a distinction and called the first unreal and the second inconsistent.<sup>27</sup> Hence, his last point is that the characters be consistent--that is, that the same person be always the same without any change of character. If, for instance, a character is portrayed as harsh, cruel, or wrathful at the beginning, let him continue to be such right to the end of the play. The same holds good for a character who is charming, kindly, and mild at the opening of a play. 144

But sometimes it is possible that a character ought to be inconsistent, such as Ajax, who is mad and then returns to his right mind. Then he must be consistently inconsistent--that is, the suitability and consistency of both aspects must be maintained in both aspects of a char-

acter. Just as with structure, so also with character, we must look to what is probable and necessary; it is necessary that one who, as the saying goes, has lucid intervals be inconsistent. Still, in this very inconsistency, there is a certain consistency when, according to the two mental states, different characteristics are assigned to the same person.

Aristotle remarks that Euripides sins against the first rule when, in his Orestes, he makes Menelaus a base character, although the story did not require it.<sup>28</sup> But a good poet, like a good painter should always seek what is best, especially in Tragedy which imitates the better things. Euripides also sins against the second rule when, as we already mentioned, he presents a Melanippe who speaks clever speeches. 145

Although Aristotle gives no example, Aeschylus sins against the third rule. As Dio Chrysostom<sup>29</sup> tells us so well, he brought on the stage, in his Philoctetes, an Ulysses who was not wily and treacherous like the corresponding character in the plays of Euripides and Sophocles, but who was stern and more severe than his character required.

Euripides sins again against the fourth rule. The heroine of his Iphigenia at Aulis is ridiculously inconsistent; at first she basely prays to avert death, and a little later, in an entirely inconsistent manner, she willingly offers herself to the sacrificial knife.<sup>30</sup>

Examples for each of these rules could be found in the Latin poets,--if almost all their virtues in this genre had not perished along with their mistakes. To be sure, we have a clear instance of violation of the final rule in the Thyestes of Seneca. At first he made his hero impious,--a character who despised everything divine in the following lines: 146

At last I see the welcome dwellings  
of my fatherland, the wealth of  
Argolis, and, the greatest and best  
of sights to wretched exiles, a  
stretch of native soil and my an-  
cestral gods, (if after all gods  
there are).<sup>31</sup>

Presently Seneca reveals Thyestes as a philosopher in the speech which begins as follows:

False, believe me, are the titles  
that give greatness charm; idle  
our fears of hardship.<sup>32</sup>

Finally he is even religious:

....let wine be poured to our  
ancestral gods, and then be  
quaffed.<sup>33</sup>

But he failed to give him a character that was like the reality or consistent. No one was ever right in creating so inconsistent a Thyestes or ever believed he was a character like that.

## CHAPTER XV

The third part of Tragedy, the threefold element of thought. The first of these which the Greeks call the sentiment. Different opinions on this. Aristotle's opinion. Its function. The second, which the Greeks call the maxim, with its different types. Aristotle's division of them. To whom they should be assigned. Their place in Tragedy. The third. Its use and abuse.

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The discussion of thought follows on the treatment of character. Since the thought element is not peculiar to Tragedy but common to the whole field of eloquence--indeed, character is more essential to Tragedy--Aristotle tells us that he has discussed the thought element at sufficient length in its proper place, namely, in his Rhetoric.<sup>1</sup> In the Poetics,<sup>2</sup> as the proverb goes, he merely "points out the source".

Hence, we, too, shall treat it briefly, but somewhat more clearly and fully. The thought element is threefold. The first is what the Greeks called sentiment, the second they called the maxim. They apparently knew nothing of the third, and the later Roman writers seem to have been entirely too fond of it.

The first includes almost every mental concept which, once formed, we express in the various kinds of sentences. 148

Some of the Greeks termed it the cast of speech and it can be reduced to some seven types. We either summon, as:

Come hither, lovely boy!<sup>3</sup>

or we command, as:

Go forth, my son, call the Zephyrs.<sup>4</sup>

or we ask a question, as:

Why, who, most presumptuous of youths, bade thee invade our home?<sup>5</sup>

or we express a wish, as:

O if Jupiter would bring me back the years that are sped!<sup>6</sup>

or we swear an oath, as:

Now be the Sun and this Earth witness to my prayer.<sup>7</sup>

or we manifest our joy, as:

Art thou come at last, and hath the love thy father looked for vanquished the toil some way?<sup>8</sup>

This last, being also a question, can be classed with the second type mentioned above. Finally, we may make a simple statement, as:

Our king was Aeneas: none more righteous than he in goodness, or greater in war and deeds of arms.<sup>9</sup>

The last of these types is the only one which admits of truth or falsity. Therefore, it is called an "axiom" by the Stoics, who have written at some length on these

casts of discourse, for each of which they had a special name. We would pursue this subject diffusely if our work was one of critical ostentation and if our motive was a vain display of erudition rather than sheer utility. 149

For Aristotle,<sup>10</sup> these were figures of diction rather than casts of thought and he was of the opinion that the poet need not pay too much attention to them. Nature, he maintained, dictates these forms, and it is more the work of the actor to take care to enunciate them than of the poet to compose them.

The old masters of rhetoric made five divisions of thought (and treated them at such length as to make the reader sick),--demonstration, refutation, emotional appeal, amplification, and diminution. We demonstrate what is not clear; we refute our opponent's arguments; we appeal to the emotions when our reasons lack cogency or by way of making them sink in more deeply; we embellish what is meagre and tone down what is too strong. All these topics, as I said, one finds in the works of the rhetoricians. According to Aristotle:

The thought of the personages is shown in everything to be effected by their language-- in every effort to prove or disprove, to arouse emotion, or to maximize or minimize things.<sup>11</sup>

This element is almost as extensive in its scope as the art of oratory, and meets the eye at every turn in Tragedy. 150

But the second, which the Greeks called the maxim never is concerned with individuals--Socrates, Plato, or Alexander, for example. Nor is it any sort of a general statement, such as "black is the contrary of white" but only such as are concerned with questions of practical conduct, courses of action to be chosen or avoided.<sup>12</sup> For example:

He who can forbid a sin and fails to do so, bids the sinner commit it.

Sometimes the maxim points out a truth, as when I say:

Virtue is the mean between the extremes of vice.

Again it tells what is fitting or suitable:

It is the part of a mighty monarch to give courage to a king.

Therefore, a maxim either encourages, as when I say with Seneca:

Bend yourself to this that you be more willing to listen than to speak.

The Wise Man of the Hebrews expressed the same sentiment in elegant language:

Store away your tongue as you do your treasure.

Or it dissuades us, as when I say:

Avoid an inquisitive impertinent (fellow).<sup>13</sup>

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Or it merely makes a statement, as when I say:

It is a truth that everyone ought to measure himself by his own proper foot and standard.<sup>14</sup>

The maxim of statement may be simple, as:

Death is the ultimate boundary of human affairs.<sup>15</sup>

Or it may be complex, as:

Better wilt thou live, Licinius, by neither always pressing out to sea nor too closely hugging the dangerous shore in cautious fear of storms.<sup>16</sup>

Some there are who consider that an affirmative maxim necessarily requires the contrary negative statement. For example:

Riotous living must never be the object of our search. Moderation is the queen of virtues.

This, again is simple and stated without proof, as:

Gold is cheaper than virtue.

Or proof and explanation are supplied. Aristotle called this an epilogue or explanatory sentence.<sup>17</sup> For example:

Gold yields to virtue for gold perishes while virtue abides.

Of the maxims which make a statement some are probable, as:

'Tis only from the sturdy and the good that sturdy youths are born.<sup>18</sup>

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Others are true, as:

Nothing is altogether happy.<sup>19</sup>

Others keep to the truth in fact, but go beyond it in their manner of expression, as:

Man is a bubble.<sup>20</sup>

Aristotle,<sup>21</sup> too, has reduced the maxims to fixed forms, but his classification differs from the one we have given. He first gives the simple maxim, as:

Chiefest of blessings is health  
for a man.<sup>22</sup>

The simple maxim is twofold. Either it expresses a self-evident truth (as in the example I have just given--for no one would doubt the truth of that dictum), or it expresses something new or unexpected, but which is clear at a glance, once the view is stated. Seneca has many such maxims, as, for example, the following:

Least should he will who has  
much right.<sup>23</sup>

The second Aristotelian type has a supplement attached and this, again, is twofold. In the first, the maxim is part of an enthymeme, as:

One must be moderate in teaching  
for it brings listlessness  
and jealousy in its wake.<sup>24</sup>

The other has the essential character of the enthymeme, as:

Mortal creatures ought to cherish  
mortal, not immortal thoughts.<sup>25</sup>

The latter, in which the reason for the view expressed is simply implied, are reckoned more appealing. So it was that we derived great pleasure from the maxim in your Thamara:<sup>26</sup>

Faith that leans on reason  
is weak.

But enough on maxims. Since they are not essential to Tragedy, although suitable for it, Aristotle does not dwell on them in his Poetics. Yet a tragic poet ought to know in to whose mouth a maxim should be put, and which and what kind of maxims are suitable for his different kinds of characters.

Generally speaking, the use of maxims is more appropriate to elderly men than to those in their prime, and to the hero rather than to a common man. This is especially true of maxims that enunciate a proposition, for they amount to human oracular utterances. But experience comes next to the divine [as a source of wisdom]. Since a maxim is a general statement gathered little by little from individual experiences in life, and since they cannot be understood except with the help of time and experience, the uttering of maxims must be suitable for that age which by common consent garners universal truths from individual experiences. The elderly man can do this, nor need he supplement his maxim with proof. His experience wins for him respect and credence.

Secondly, let the maxim be on a subject in which the speaker is experienced. It is not appropriate for a slave or a shepherd or for a woman or a boy to generalize on matters of state, customs of society, questions of philosophy or education. Nor would I follow Euripides in putting max-

ims into the mouths of those who have recently suffered a great disaster. In this way they give the appearance of being witty or wise, which conflicts with what they feel. No one who is overcome by the violence of his pain can reason. But, as the philosophers realized, the maxim depends on one's power to reason because it proceeds from individual instances to universal truths.

I might mention as an instance in point the opening of Seneca's Troades, which is of singular excellence. Yet I know men who consider it unsuitable because of Hecuba's great grief. Among these is that brilliant scholar, my friend, Apollonius Scottus who is an honor to his high position. Still Euripides is at fault in more instances than Seneca.

Maxims have two special benefits, even in Tragedy. First, they help to arouse the emotions. When a person hears expressed as a general truth the opinion which he himself holds about a particular case, he cannot help being moved and feeling joy in his soul. This is especially so when the maxims concern subjects that find application in some particular connection, as, for example, if some one in straitened circumstances should hear Sophocles' maxim:

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Poverty is a dread disease for  
the poor.

Or, when he must contend with a shrew for a wife, he will enjoy Euripides' lines:

Though sea and earth produce  
 many a monster, none lives  
 more baneful than woman.

The same holds good for the people as a whole, and drama can be more readily accommodated to the people than to individuals. For example, in the days of the democracy, the Athenians gave great praise to the sway of kings. The reason was that they found pleasure in Homer's axiom, where the rule of the many is scorned and supreme sway is in the hands of one ruler. The maxim runs as follows:

A multitude of masters is no  
 good thing; let there be one  
 master, one king, to whom the  
 son of crooked-counselling  
 Kronos hath granted it, even  
 the sceptre and judgments,  
 that he may rule among you.<sup>27</sup>

The Romans praised liberty when they were ruled by emperors. They loudly applauded Euripides' dictum:

Nothing destroys a state more  
 than the rule of a tyrant.  
 When a king holds sway life is  
 not lived under popular law,  
 but he commands both state and  
 law.<sup>28</sup>

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When a maxim cannot be coined, the tragic poet should use one already at hand. If its meaning is not obvious, it must be bolstered by adding a reason. For example, when Euripides says that children ought not to be educated he has a reason ready:

It makes them idle; and there-  
 with they earn ill-will and  
 jealousy throughout the city.<sup>29</sup>

So it is that some authorities distinguish only two kinds of maxims: those without an explanatory reason, which are immediately evident; and those which become clear in the light of the added explanation. Hence, poets who have recourse to the Stoic paradox depart from the traditional maxim because these paradoxes are mere popular formulas and admit, at most, an improbable proof. The author of the Thebais is such and he is little more than a silly pedant.<sup>30</sup>

The second benefit<sup>31</sup> of the maxim is that its addition invests a speech with moral character, for the gnome is the utterance of a moral mind. Generally speaking, if the maxims are sound, they display the speaker as a man of sound moral character. For example, when Pyrrhus says:

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Whate'er he will, 'tis the  
victor's right to do.<sup>32</sup>

Agamemnon replies:

Least should he will who has  
much right.<sup>33</sup>

Maxims are employed in, at most, three ways. First, they may be grafted on here and there in the course of a speech, or hold a place of prominence as in the following:

Death weighs heavy on him who  
dies well-known to all, while  
himself he did not know.<sup>34</sup>

Or secondly, they may be scattered throughout a speech and joined one with another. Thus Hecuba for sixty-six lines in the prologue of Seneca's Troades proves that human happiness is frail. Finally, maxims may constitute part of a

periodic sentence such as those which move our hearts and arouse our admiration in the works of Tacitus.

The third aspect of the thought element is what the Romans call a pithy or surprise-ending statement. Such statements used to be employed at the conclusion of a speech and later as a means of amplification. The long series of sententious sayings in the final chapter of Quintilian's treatise on the education of orators seems to prove that the epigrammatic element had found a place in literature.<sup>35</sup>

Then, Martial, whose terse style was in advance of his age, borrowed from the Greeks their not ungraceful but still rather rough epigram and adorned it with a conclusion. He alone made use of the pungency which he had learned from the rhetoricians of his own day; other writers abused it. They not only diminished noble emotions but destroyed character and rendered Tragedy a weak and spineless thing, so that Fabius found their plays flat and insipid. 156

Epigrams of this sort occur endlessly in the elder Seneca's Suasoriae and Controversiae, but the ancient tragic poets and writers in other fields clearly knew nothing about them. Hence, they have preserved unimpaired their dignity, majesty, and splendor up to the day whereon thisbane began to grip the literary world. We need not exclude Accius and Pacuvius (whose vices outweighed their virtues) from the list of those who were free from this affectation.

Petronius is right when he says:

By your empty-sounding nothings and haranguing on absurdities you have weakened the substance of oratory to its destruction.<sup>36</sup>

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Especially is this true of Tragedy. Petronius then goes on to say:

Young men were not yet encompassed by the practice of declaiming when Sophocles and Euripides found words for proper expression. The learned man in his study had not yet destroyed the inspiration of natural genius when Pindar and the nine lyric poets made bold to sing songs in Homeric verse.<sup>37</sup>

What he means is that these poets imitated Homeric diction inasmuch as it is simple, lofty and vigorous--not weak, not perversely impassioned, not branded with the striking and quivering subtleties of epigram. As long as sententious sayings were few and far between, they occasioned pleasure--as is usually the case with the unusual. But once they became overabundant they undermined both manners and speech.

I recall an epigram in Homer--one introduced just in the right place. I mention it to show that so great a man, possessed of god-like genius, devoted to all pursuits of study but especially to the whole field of eloquence, was aware even in his own day of what was to be a later trend in literature. Hector had departed, never to again return. Andromache, was piteously weeping with her handmaids, as was

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the custom when so great--nay, the greatest of griefs--was foreboded. At that point Homer aptly introduces the following epigram:

So bewailed they Hector, while yet  
he lived.<sup>38</sup>

We mourn for the dead. They, because foreboding so moved their minds, weep for him who was still alive. Hence this epigram is in emotional good taste and, since we rarely mourn for the living, possesses the element of surprise.

Although Virgil rarely uses the epigram, he does so with supreme good taste. For example, he says of the Trojans:

Could they, captured, suffer  
captivity? Did the fires of  
Troy consume them?<sup>39</sup>

But he based it on Ennius' lines:

Which could not perish on the  
Dardan plains, nor, when cap-  
tured, could not be captured,  
nor, when burned, could not be  
consumed.<sup>40</sup>

If you wish examples, compare Sophocles' Trachiniae with the Hercules Oetaeus which is now read among the plays of Seneca. You will readily discern the difference between 161 brilliant, majestic language and diction that is weakened by undue appeal to the emotions. As often as the Latin poet strives for the heights of eloquence, he falls to the depths of bombast. In the Greek play, the words of Hercules are truly inspired in the speech which begins:

Oh, I that have toiled with  
 my hands and with my shoulders  
 in many a rash and unutterable  
 deed....<sup>41</sup>

When the Latin poet translates this, with almost an equal dignity of detail and diction, the speech runs along without affectation or pedantic sentiment. The fact that a later writer can copy it successfully reveals the purity of diction found in old Tragedy.

With the possible exception of the younger Seneca, hardly any extant Latin poet possesses this purity of diction. For example, look at the uninspired sentiment of the Oetaean Hercules as he speaks his last words. First he utters some noble enough thoughts in lofty language; then he goes on to say:

If the fates unchanging have  
 willed that by a woman's hand  
 I fall, if through distaff so  
 base the thread of my death has  
 run, ah me! that I might have  
 fallen by Juno's hate! 'Twould  
 be by woman's hand, but of one  
 who holds the heavens.<sup>42</sup>

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For the sake of a single paradox the poet links Juno with an insignificant mortal and makes her a woman like Deianira, his wife. For thus his argument may proceed. He wished their womanhood to be the element common to both; they differ inasmuch as Deianira is mortal while Juno's sphere is heaven. As if to say "woman" includes the notion of "goddess", or the concept "man" implies the concept of "god"! Although the poets allowed both sexes among the divinities, still no one would speak in the afore-mentioned

fashion. This is especially true since if you say "goddess", you imply her sex, but if you say "woman", you exclude divinity.

Another objection is the fact that Juno is said to "hold the heavens". But it is rather the heavens which hold her, unless you would say that he holds a house who lives in it or whom the house holds. But a poet who wished to play the fool to the detriment of good reason and to talk in that fashion had to appropriate mental keenness to himself.

In the same passage there are other examples of the same sort. When Hercules bemoans the fact that he must die while idle and inactive, he couches his grief in different aphorisms, all tending to the same point. For instance:

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....thought which racks me  
more, (shame to my manhood!)  
the last day of Alcides has  
seen no monster slain. Ah!  
woe is me! I am squandering  
my life for no return.

O thou ruler of the world,  
ye gods, once witnesses of my  
deeds, O earth entire, is it re-  
solved your Hercules should per-  
ish by such death as this?<sup>43</sup>

In the hour of his pain, even of death itself, he has abundant leisure for reflection.

The following plumbs the depths of feebleness:

Why on Jove as father do I  
call? Why wretched man, by  
right of the Thunderer do I  
claim heaven? Now, now will  
Amphitryon be deemed my sire.<sup>44</sup>

As if, while burning on the funeral-pyre he had to feel apprehension that he might not be Jove's son; or that he need fear a controversy on his parentage in the midst of the flames; or that he had gone to court with Juno at that hour on the division of their heavenly inheritance!

We find nothing like this in Sophocles' play. There the treatment is altogether different. Hercules merely mentions his deeds and expresses the greatness of his pain with words that match his torture. There is not the slightest suspicion of pedantic trifling.

CHAPTER XVI

The fourth essential part, diction or elocution-- particularly that proper to Tragedy. Requirements for imitation; points to be avoided. How tragedians differ from other poets and among themselves. The style of the ancient, middle and later tragedians. The Greek tragic poets; their virtues and vices. The later poets. Some apposite remarks.

Now we shall treat the fourth part, namely, diction or elocution, which cannot be called a part of Tragedy so much as a part of poetry or eloquence as a whole. Aristotle barely makes mention of the diction proper to Tragedy. We certainly hope to do so at length some time or other.

His remarks concerning eloquence and the general notions on this matter found in the Poetics are extremely 165 jejune. He touches on them only because a careful philosopher in treating of poetic skill must omit nothing pertinent. A fuller discussion, which certainly would not have forwarded his purpose, must be left to the energy of the grammarians.

But the whole theory of eloquence (Aristotle uses the same term) is not one to be given incidental treatment. In some other work of mine on a larger scale it will find its proper place. How successful I shall be, I cannot say, but in that enormous task I shall summon many witnesses from

antiquity before the bar of critical judgment.

As far as tragic diction is concerned, no one has yet discussed it apart from Tragedy as a whole and, hence, it is not clearly understood. Nor has Aristotle shown the way in the field of Greek drama. Still it is a topic that must not be overlooked, but must be left to the energy and judgment of the individual. Meanwhile we shall add some matter to the discussion in the course of this pamphlet, so as not to allow Tragedy (which we have brought this far) to emerge into public ungarbed, so to speak, and without its becoming raiment and dress.

They say the great Sophocles imitated Homer, although 166 he had Aeschylus as an exemplar, and followed the former who wrote in the epic style when he could have followed the latter who wrote in Sophocles' own genre. Although there are points of difference between the two forms there is the same regard for grandeur of diction, the same careful choice of words. Action and arrangement do not differ greatly and the emotions are almost the same.

So it is, if I am not mistaken, that in the Theaetetus, Plato calls Homer the prince of tragic poets as Epicharmus is of the comic writers.<sup>1</sup> Twice he numbers Homer among the Tragedians in the Republic, first, when he calls him the captain of the tragic company,<sup>2</sup> and again, when he names him as their head.<sup>3</sup> I would give the same rank to Virgil among the Latins. Nothing could be called more exquisite, nothing more tragic or dignified than Virgilian diction.

A certain Greek used to say that Sophocles was Homer's only disciple and it is obvious that Homer was a sort of divinity for the tragic poets. It is my judgment, therefore, that the more careful a poet is to imitate Homer's grandeur of diction, the closer will he approach the dignified splendor of Sophoclean expression. Furthermore, both Virgil and Sophocles have imitated Homer's good qualities and omitted the low nonsense of the grammarians. 167

No few interpolations that are little better than blotches appear in Homeric texts--the work of an unskilled hand. Small as the extant portions of Aristotle's Poetics are, they contain passages from Homer not found in our contemporary editions. The same lack is noticeable in our current texts of Plutarch and other writers. What is the explanation of this? Those executioners have not left us Homer but Homer's ghost, a mere phantom born in the library, where each one arbitrarily alters, transposes or deletes to suit his own whim. The editors who wished to appear particularly scrupulous restored corrupt passages and filled in lacunae with words read elsewhere in the poet's works. This is the source of so many unsuitable half-lines, the insertion of which results in incoherence. 168

Therefore, Virgil's epic is, to my way of thinking, the best edition of Homer. We also have a guide for imitation in the parts that Virgil has adapted from the older poet, for his work is not exclusively an imitation. Sophocles is just as useful for an understanding of Homer.

If all Sophocles' works had survived, no one today would look in vain for Homeric excellence in Tragedy. Nowadays, we must go beyond him for theatrical interest.

Another point is the fact that in the days of Caesar Augustus, Tragedy stood at the same peak of perfection as the Latin language itself. Tragedy had come down a long and stormy road from the days of Accius and Paccuvius till it stood perfected, as some believe, in the works of Varius. Although Ovid had given it, thereafter, some complexion in his Medea, it was hardly in blooming health when it reached the hands of Seneca. In the other writers [of Seneca's day] it hardly breathed the breath of life. This late Tragedy was not only far inferior to the middle Tragedies but also praised much less than the early Tragedies, since some, even in the Augustan age did not hesitate to prefer Accius' plays to all the others. If Accius' diction was not perfect, it was healthier than that of the late tragedians.

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There are many indications that Varius wrote in a style very close to that of Virgil. The chief proofs are his fragments which won praise although they are derived from a different literary type. It is difficult to imagine anything more terse or compressed than the majority of these fragments. Although in some cases his metrics differ from Virgil's, in purity of diction the two writers are almost on a par.

But metrical differences occur in the works of

Paccuvius, Sophocles, Seneca, and, perhaps, in Varius' own Thyestes. For example, Seneca and the others who follow immediately after him and whose Tragedies are grouped with his never admit an iamb in the next to the last foot. Writers much earlier than Seneca also often employ a substitute foot at that point in the verse, but their observance of the rule was not universal.

Although this practice adds somewhat to the dignity of the line, you will look in vain for an instance where Sophocles followed it--even for the sake of dignity. The Greeks knew nothing of this rule, because they fashioned a different iambic trimeter for their Tragedies. With possibly one exception in each line the feet are dissyllabic. 170 For example, the following line of Accius would be a tragic trimeter:

Præclarioremque alterum involare me

And also the first line of Seneca's Hercules Furens:

Soror Tonantis, hoc enim solum mihi

The second line of the same play is not quite so neat:

Nomen relictum est, semper alienum Iovem

The third:

Ac templa summi vidua deserui aetheris

is even less elegant because two of the feet are trisyllabic. If there are too many trisyllabic feet it becomes a comic metre--still the later tragedians did not

avoid this fault. But enough about that.

Let us now turn to the question of imitation in diction. For this I am of the opinion--as Quintilian was before me in his work on the education of the orator--that all the authors should be read, even those of conflicting schools of eloquence. This must be done with caution and judiciously so that the budding writer may not drag in hackneyed or unusual words. Some writers of the last generation, and two of the greatest in particular, have defiled Tragedy with such barbarisms.

Nor do I like foreign words or words transliterated from the Greek. Virgil, although sparingly and with good taste, borrows such words as reboant<sup>4</sup> [re-echo], lychnus<sup>5</sup> [lamp], and daedala<sup>6</sup> [cunningly wrought]. Their own authority and good usage have granted these words a place in the language. I would prefer to stop with these than put my trust in others or coin new ones on the same root.

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I would hardly allow boat [roars] as did the poet who when he read in Plautus that,

Heaven roars with the groaning  
of the men,

then wrote in his own Tragedy:

The rattling of the chariots  
roars.

Nor would I allow emplasmata [?] nor pharmaca [drugs]. Much less would I permit pathicus [one who submits to unnatural lust] as did the writer who said:

The pathic rules the whole  
world with his nod.

This line is both morally and linguistically depraved.

I would avoid, too, words used only by the orators--countless though they be and employed by great men in countless passages. Diminutives, furthermore, are not to my liking, such as amiculus<sup>7</sup> [a dear friend], misellus<sup>8</sup> [poor little], gemmaulus<sup>9</sup> [a little bud?], ocelli<sup>10</sup> [darling eyes], retortuli<sup>11</sup> [twisted back slightly?]. Even parvulus<sup>12</sup> [a little lad] is a word I would not use of my own free will. I would hardly use it under compulsion, although the author of the extant Tragedy Thyestes says:

While the little son (parvulus)  
ran to his father's kiss,  
welcomed by sinful sword,  
he fell....<sup>13</sup>

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To be sure, diminutives are a means for expressing contempt and Aristophanes often uses them for this purpose. But meanwhile many have employed them without restraint, even using scrupulus [a little doubt or anxiety] without scruple. For example--indeed a man of high rank in the world of letters--has written the following line, and in an anapestic system:

Un̄us mihi nunc<sup>u</sup> | scrup̄ulus̄ restat.  
[One little anxiety now  
remains for me]<sup>14</sup>

I would also exclude daring or elaborate compounds such as curvicervicum [with a crooked neck] and the others which we excuse, or like in Paccuvius. The same holds for anxiferi [causing anxiety], although this adjective occurs in the excellent speech of complaint spoken by Hercules:

Now, now the uttermost pangs  
of anxiety torture me.<sup>15</sup>

And he goes on in more outstanding style in the chorus:

And free your heart from the  
troubles that bring anxiety.

Syncopated forms should also be avoided such as

asprum [rough,--shortened from asperum]. For example:

Brave amidst rough wounds  
received head on.

And in a choral passage:

Rejoice! Behold the rough  
penalties!

Tmesis, too, should be allowed but rarely. [Quodcun-  
que is separated by tmesis in the second line of the  
following passage]:

....quicquid alis aera findit,  
quod utero cunqe cunctorum  
parens Tellus creavit.  
[....Whatever cleaves the air  
on wings, whatsoever Mother  
Earth has brought forth from  
her womb.]

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Words that are daringly figurative should be avoided.  
I shall speak of this later. I would not use different  
roots for the same word in the nominative and oblique  
cases. For example, although Virgil is a man of excellent  
taste, he has used the proper name Dido in the nominative  
but Elisae in the dative, not Didoni,--and Elisam in the  
accusative, not Didonem.<sup>16</sup> If there is need of a genitive,  
I would prefer Didus to Didonis even though the inflection  
be based on the Greek declension.

On the other hand, I would prefer tyrannidem

[despotic rule] to the Greek accusative form tyrannida which occurs in the verse:

To destroy the despot's rule  
while keeping the citizens  
safe.

But it would be better to avoid the word altogether unless forced to use it, since the word tyrannus [a tyrant] has become approved. In use and meaning it fulfills the needs of Tragedy. In like manner, unless constrained by metrical necessity I would say amicum [friend], an appositional accusative, rather than using the vocative of address which is found in the following line:

As I see, my friend [a vocative],  
the common mistake holds you.

I would also be careful in my use of verbs. I would say mussat [be silent or mutter] which Virgil uses more than once,<sup>17</sup> rather than mussitat, which is not an epic or tragic word, but comic as in the following:

Whatever are you mumbling to  
yourself deep in your heart?

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And I would use the active form merui [I have deserved] in preference to the deponent meritus sum, as:

Si bene quid de te merui.  
[If ever I deserved well of thee.]<sup>18</sup>

Someone has imitated this, in a Tragedy, as follows:

Per si quid unquam merita  
sum de te bene,

but the use of the deponent form makes it comic.

I would not use archaic words rashly, but I shall speak about that in its proper place. Suffice it to say

now that I would no more use suopte [a strengthened form of the third personal pronominal adjective in the ablative case] than tis [archaic genitive singular of tu, the second personal pronoun] or mis [archaic ablative of the first personal pronominal adjective] or sas [archaic accusative feminine plural of the third personal pronominal adjective].

And I would not use words, no matter how pure and accepted they are in some meanings, if they cloak an obscene significance. When words are foul in any or every context, then we must not even hint at them. Good men are indignant when they hear them, the evil and impure snicker and jeer--even when the words are used in a proper context. Nothing is less calculated to arouse pity and fear which are the two emotions specific to Tragedy.

Since the shameless Greeks could not refrain from such words, they had Satyrs ready at hand on whom they poured forth their vulgar expressions, like adulterers on other men's wives. In this way Euripides wittily makes an obscene remark about Helen with impunity because he puts it in the mouths of the Satyr chorus.<sup>19</sup> Words of this sort would meet us at every turn if more of the Satyr plays were extant.

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One should avoid words that are not in polite good usage such as leno [a white slaver] or carnifex [a hangman]; but not all polite terms are suitable for Tragedy. I would use the words tribunus [a tribune], praetor

[a praetor] and aedilis [an aedile] only under compulsion--possibly because my ears have not yet learned to bear these words. The Romans, too, cultivated foreign names for these either because they were beneath the tragic personages, or not of sufficiently lofty dignity, or because a suitable reversal would not arise from them.

I would not admit the oaths of the comic poets, such as hercule [by Hercules!], aedepol [by Pollux!], pol [by Pollux!], aecastor [by Castor!] and profecto [indeed!].

Nor their verbs, as:

....numinis ludibria  
inspecta nosse, nota flocci  
pendere

[....to know the wantonness  
of divinity when one sees it,  
and to esteem it lightly when  
it is known].

Nor archaic infinitive forms, particularly the passive in ier, as:

Coetus viriles intuerier insolens.  
[To gaze aghast at the throngs  
of men..]

Technical terms should also be avoided, such as words that are peculiar to philosophy, mathematics, and the other sciences. For example, seudum [rather than seu dum], or usucapio [acquire ownership by long use--a juridical technical term]. Nor would I say what the most eloquent man of our day did--even in a transferred meaning--when he spoke of a supplex libellus [humble petition] :

....nil libelli supplices  
Queis Brutum abesse civitatis  
vindicem.

[....nothing the humble  
petitions whereby Brutus  
the savior of the state  
was banished.]

In a play based on Scripture, I would not use the technical terms praedestinare [to predestine] or libera voluntas [free-will] which now form the basis for off-stage Tragedies--very complex Tragedies, or, perhaps you prefer to call them involved. This latter term, libera voluntas, is indeed written in separate words but is practically the same whether expressed as a single word or in a phrase. No phrase could be more commonplace, ordinary and popular and it is, therefore, especially suitable for comedy and oratory. Examples of such split expressions are: dicto esse audientem [to obey], sermones commutare [to converse], gerere rempublicam [to lead a public life] and the like. I do not know whether our amazement or our indignation is greater when we note such phrases in the Tragedies of the greatest [contemporary] writers. Hence, in both Tragedy and Comedy, word-choice is a most important factor, as the rhetoricians have correctly noted in the case of oratory.

But now to the question of imitation. In this I would make two principal observations: first, the mode of imitation whereby tragic poets differ from other poets, and, secondly, how they differ among themselves. They differ 177 from other poets whether these others use an entirely different metre (such as the elegiac, hexameter, and

lyric poets who have their own modes of expression) or a metre almost the same as the tragic (such as those who write scazons and comic iambics), although the tragic poets sometimes vary their metre.

Let me digress, for a moment, far afield from both imitation and expression. Aristotle is correct in contrasting tragic and iambic poets.<sup>20</sup> The iambic poets, whether they be scurrilous, joyful, or droll, utter countless things which the dignity of Tragedy rejects. This is true whether one looks to diction, choice of words, feeling, or (and few take this into account) the arrangement and combination of syllables.

First, I would have the Tragedian withdraw from Comedy because, if you can believe it, some tragic writers have barely avoided it. I would banish far from the field of Tragedy even felicitous and bold metaphors which on first sight are appealing. To put it briefly, I would reject in Tragedy everything which I find particularly commendable in iambic poetry and the scazon--a point observed by very few of our contemporary writers of Tragedy. Ninety-nine out of a hundred fail to follow the ancient authors in diction and in the very fundamental matter of pure Latin style.

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Among Virgil's Catalepton we find today two examples of the scazon. The first<sup>21</sup> is written against Tullius Cimber, the rhetorician, and the other<sup>22</sup> is believed to have been written when Virgil was on his way

to Athens to study Philosophy, particularly that of Epicurus. I say "is believed" because I cannot yet bring myself to admit these poems as authentic works of Virgil, although they give us a good idea of this type of poem. Both pieces, despite their extreme brevity, make obvious the great difference in style and how inappropriate the manner of the scazon would be in Tragedy. This is especially true of diction because the scazon allows pertness and waggishness in language whereas the diction of Tragedy is ever serious and grave.

This becomes clear from the second of Virgil's scazons (the first is only five lines long) which runs as follows:

Get ye hence! away, ye empty  
squad of rhetoricians, ye  
words inflated, but not with  
Attic dew! And ye, Silius  
and Tarquinius and Varro, a  
tribe of pedants soaking in  
fat, get ye hence, ye empty  
cymbals of our youth! And  
thou, O Sextus Sabinus, my  
chiefest care, farewell!  
Now fare ye well, ye goodly  
youths!

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We are spreading our  
sails for blissful havens,  
in quest of great Siro's  
wise words, and from all  
care will redeem our life.  
Get ye hence, ye Muses!  
Yea, away now even with  
you, ye sweet Muses! For  
the truth we must avow--  
ye have been sweet. And  
yet, come ye back to my  
pages, though with modesty  
and but seldom.<sup>23</sup>

To say nothing of the style, which has nothing in common

with Tragedy, I would never use in a serious drama the word manipulus [a squad], nor natio [a tribe], nor madere [in the sense of "to soak"], nor cymbalon [cymbal] although more than one contemporary tragedian employs these words.

I would not speak of sleep as "the mimic actor of day" nor as "a frolicsome stage-player". I would not describe Spain as "the white-robed of the universe", nor Neptune as "gluttonous of the restraining shore". I would avoid also (and here I cut the shackles of my youth) similar expressions--the kind that escaped my lips when, as a boy and young man I wrote Tragedies. It was not my fault but the fault of the times which made some people praise that kind of writing. Although such a style is pleasant and engaging, it is not always suitable.

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But the power of correct and felicitous metaphor is the power of a felicitous man and a mark of no ordinary talent. So, too, as Aristotle says,<sup>24</sup> not everyone has the ability to judge for what type of diction the metaphors would be suitable and proper. When I was young I was passionately fond of many Aeschylean metaphors; some of these my sense of restraint and moderation would today make me pass over in silence.

I would borrow largely from Pindar, but if I am wise, I would avoid certain aspects of his diction--especially those which, in arrangement of words and boldness of metaphor, come quite close to the dithyramb. I would avoid these in order that, while striving for too much

grandeur and loftiness--and failing to attain them--I may not at times fall to bombast.

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Commonplace minds do not run afoul of this literary fault. We have proof of this in the Greek writers Eratosthenes and Ion; since their works were free from fault they won praise for being authors of mediocre ability. But the minds of beautiful and exalted writers not only fail to shun the pompous style, but are even fond of it. The ancient critics do not excuse either Homer or Sophocles of this fault; they say that both of them glide majestically down from the heavens like Phaethon,<sup>25</sup> while all the other authors remain standing on earth.

If anyone is altogether different from Homer and Sophocles, Pindar is. Yet he does not walk the earth but is borne along; he, unlike other authors, does not stumble violently to the ground, but falls gently. Such is Longinus' judgment<sup>26</sup> and his opinion is as excellent as that of any ancient critic. I think that a tragic poet should learn Longinus' treatise On the Sublime by heart, as well as making a careful study of certain other masters of oratorical style--a field wherein the Greeks reign supreme.

As for the rest, the great Theban, Pindar, can alone do more good for a tragedian than all the Latin writers put together. He supplies in abundance the noble impetus of vast inspiration, extraordinary sublimity, abundance in diction, and majesty in the whole field of style.<sup>27</sup> Then,

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too, he has a marvellous power for character portrayal-- particularly for certain types which constantly occur in Tragedy, such as the self-controlled man, the devoted man, the man of magnificence.

Pindar deserves his title of "trumpet of the Muses" given to him by the ancient critics. No reader is so sluggish and indolent that Pindar cannot snatch him up, inflame him, enkindle him. Ever swift, his swiftness is sometimes so sudden that, when you least expect it, moving almost like a god, he transcends heaven rather than seeks it.

The pleasantness in which Pindar abounds is the best of flavorings for choral passages--especially when the poet's plot forsakes him. Then, in the midst of lofty and severe language, and the distressing seriousness which is sought therefrom, will be milk and honey and flowers--roses and violets--garlands, gold, and the like. Then you will not think you are reading a poet but that you are wandering in the garden of Adonis, old in story among the Greeks.

Such pleasant details possess a marvellous power to allure the mind and especially the imagination--even in stern and unpleasant stories. Hence the tragic poet must make them dear to his heart. We are not treating of this matter for the present although such details are of great benefit for elocution, and it is most important to follow them. But it would be of great service to imitate all the

writers who will benefit us in this matter. Such is my advice.

The second difference we wish to treat is the difference among tragic poets themselves. They differ first in period and secondly in talent. A man who confuses the period<sup>28</sup> of Paccuvius or Accius with that<sup>29</sup> of Lucretius or Virgil (when Varius began to write) or, what is more laughable, with the period<sup>30</sup> of Annaeus Seneca, would not produce speech but a crazy-quilt of language.

A few years ago in this country the learned young men used to make sport of their own reputation and others' patience by what was a kind of accepted good usage. But it was to their own unpopularity and almost brought belles lettres into disrepute that they "thought they had spoken marvellous well"<sup>31</sup> because they had raked together from Festus<sup>32</sup> or Marcellus<sup>33</sup> some words or phrases current in the most widely separated periods. For example, plerum ["for the most part", archaic] or plurimum ["for the most part", classical] or morta [one of the Fates in Livius Andronicus?] or endo [archaic for in] or nenu [archaic for non] or adgrettus [old form of aggressus, "an attack"] and countless others.

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At that time the verb cluit [he is reputed] served for both good and bad reputation. Even then this very word seemed to some too ordinary and they preferred the deponent form cluetur. The self-styled viceroys and demigods of literature adopted this latter form as their own.

I suppose they were afraid that the active form of the third conjugation verb might occur in Cicero, although he was, if I am not mistaken, a fairly tolerable writer of Latin. But Cicero was not ashamed to be understood and wrote a style that people could understand; often his speeches were addressed to the people--as were those of Demosthenes before him. When Demosthenes used words from Draco's laws that were not very familiar to a contemporary audience, he thought it no crime to explain the unusual terms. These young wits of whom I spoke used to strive among themselves and exult over an unusual word as if it were a treasure.

Others of a simpler turn of mind who hardly ever read the best authors were of the opinion that this indulgence 185 in archaism was a Virgilian or an Ovidian trait. Virgil refrained altogether from unusual words; Ovid, who possessed singularly good taste if anyone did, borrowed from the archaic only its magnificence. These older forms such as quianam [for quia], urbis ["of a city"--hardly an archaic form], aulai [for aulae], olli [for illi] and the like I would allow in Tragedy if they are used judiciously to lend a serious tone to the work.

Sallust and Tacitus, two followers of the Atticism of Thucydides, have given us a shining example of this even in history, their chosen field. But if you take from them the archaisms so useful for this purpose, you deprive their works of the largest portion of their majesty--even if Quintilian would scarcely allow in his day the adverb

oppido ["completely"] as a word in good usage.<sup>34</sup> If he had seen these days of ours, he would have called our writing a disease or madness of language--the kind that Lucian cures by an emetic. Such was the remedy he prescribed as necessary for Lexiphanes, the jovial antiquarian.<sup>35</sup>

Sometimes the charm of erudition does not look in vain for its proper place of honor--an honor which often goes hand in hand with an extraordinary elegance in Tragedy, provided that it is not inconsistent and does not turn out "as when a cook combines a lot of sauces".<sup>36</sup> For example, the peerless Joseph Scaliger and Florens Christianus have translated some plays of the ancient Greeks in the style of Paccuvius and Accius. These translations should be carefully read with a three-fold purpose: first, that the difference between these and other contemporary efforts may become clear; secondly, that the charming and winsome roughness of primitive antiquity may soothe the soul; and finally, that, if opportunity offers, we may borrow from them with careful good judgment, as Virgil does from Ennius.

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I, myself, many years ago made some translations in this style. While I was writing this present treatise I found among my papers the opening scene of Sophocles' Electra done into archaic Latin.<sup>37</sup> I thought that I should include it for the benefit of the young writers I mentioned before.

Attendant --- Orestes

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Attendant: O son of Agamemnon, who once commanded the army at Troy, now mayest thou here present behold those things for which thou wert ever eagerly longing; for this is the ancient Argos, which thou didst desire, the grove of the phrensy-stricken daughter of Inachus, and this, Orestes, the Lycaean forum of the wolf-slaying god; but this on the left, the renowned temple of Juno; and for the place whither we have arrived, assure thyself thou seest the all-opulent Mycenae: and this the habitation of the Pelopidae teeming with murders, whence I formerly, having received thee from thine own sister, bore and rescued thee from thy father's bloody fate, and nourished thee thus far onward in thy youth, as an avenger of his murder to thy sire. Now therefore, Orestes, and thou Pylades, dearest of foreign friends, what is needful to do we must quickly consider, since already the brilliant light of the sun wakes clear the morning carols of the birds, and the dark night has gone from heaven. Ere, therefore, any of the inhabitants walk forth from his dwelling, we must confer in counsel, since we are come to that point where there is no longer any season for delay, but the crisis for action.

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Orestes: O most beloved of serving-men, what evident proofs showest thou that thou art good toward us; for even as a generous horse, although he be aged, in danger has not lost his spirit, but pricks his ears upright, even so thou both urgest us forward and art among the first to follow us. Wherefore my determination I

will unfold; and do thou,  
 lending an alert attention  
 to my words, if in aught I miss  
 of what is fitting, set me  
 right. For when I came a  
 suppliant to the Pythian  
 oracle, that I might learn in  
 what way I should exact jus-  
 tice for my father from his  
 murderers, Phoebus gave me an  
 answer, such as thou presently  
 shalt hear: "That in person,  
 alike unfurnished with armor  
 and with martial host, by craft  
 I should steal the lawful slaugh-  
 ter of my hand." Since, then, we  
 have heard such an oracle as this,  
 do thou entering, when opportunity  
 shall introduce thee, into this  
 house, learn all that there is  
 doing, that being informed thou  
 mayest tell us sure tidings. For  
 fear not that with both thine own  
 age and the long lapse of time  
 they shall recognize thee, or even  
 suspect thee thus tricked out.  
 But make use of some such tale as  
 this, that thou art a Phocian  
 stranger, coming from Phanoteus,  
 since he is the chiefest of the  
 foreign allies they have. But  
 announce, adding an oath, that  
 Orestes is dead by a violent  
 death, having been tumbled from  
 a wheeled chariot-car at the  
 Pythian games. So let thy story  
 stand. But we having, as he en-  
 joined, first crowned my father's  
 sepulchre with libations and  
 locks cropped from my head, will  
 then come back again, bearing in  
 our hands a brazen-sided vessel,  
 which thou also knowest is some-  
 where hidden among the brushwood,  
 that cheating them with words, we  
 may bring them pleasant tidings,  
 how my body is perished, already  
 consumed by fire and reduced to  
 ashes. For what does this pain  
 me, when, dead in words, in deeds  
 I shall be safe, and bear away  
 renown? I indeed think no  
 expression ill-omened which gain

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attends: for already have I frequently seen the wise also in story falsely dying; then afterward, when they shall again have returned home, they have been the more honored. As I presume that I also, coming to life subsequently to this report, shall yet blaze forth, as a star, to my foes. But O land of my forefathers; and ye, its gods indigenious, welcome me as prosperous in this my journey; and thou too, O abode of my ancestors, for, urged by an impulse from heaven, I come to purge thee by my just revenge: then dismiss me not in dishonor from this my country, but make me not a dishonored outcast from my country, but master of my wealth and restorer of my house. This now I have said, but, old man, be it at once thy care, having gone, to execute with caution thy duty, but we will go forth, for it is the season; which indeed is to mankind the greatest arbiter of every act.

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Compare this translation with those made by Varius' contemporaries, or with Seneca, if you will. Let them be mingled and fused together; they will produce a mixed drink of spelt-grain and wine, for there are many details in such translations that must nowadays be avoided--even in point of style.

As to talent, there is hardly anything we can say on how one tragic poet differs from another, so small is the corpus of extant Latin Tragedy. From the earliest writers only fragments remain, and these are often very brief in compass. Hardly a word of Middle Tragedy is extant, and

we have but a few plays from the pens of the later writers.

Nevertheless, we can compare Lucius with Marcus<sup>38</sup> and the author of the Hercules Oetaeus with the author of the Thebais,<sup>39</sup> and derive some benefit from the comparison. I did this recently with great care and at some length with these very authors and recommend this study of mine to the reader's perusal, so that I will not be saying the same thing twice.

But if we should ever allow on the stage the license 192 to declaim, I would wish that the plays of Lucan were extant. His talent was certainly a worthy one, which achieved maturity before his reputation did. Even in his epic, Pharsalia, there are many passages possessing a distinctly tragic tone, and surely the reversal is magnificent and unusual--the chief warrior of the world is slain, and that not even by a hero; he is not only stripped of life and honor but even barred from burial.

There is a Tragedy with a complex plot--such as fortune displays too freely on this great stage of the Universe whenever it practices its cruel dramatic art. It makes no difference that the subject matter be true. As we said before, a situation does not lose its probability because it is true, although the grammarians have, perhaps, failed to understand this point.

But to return to the Pharsalia. Its maxims are often spirited, the style is eminent and in the Stoic tradition. I am always cheered by Cato,<sup>40</sup> whose name

alone encouraged those descendants of Romulus and gave dignified vigor to a languid pen. I admit its high Stoic coloring and its inferiority to Virgil's work--the very thought of comparison would seem sacrilegious to some minds. But if one were not greater than the other, he would not on this account be like the other. Virgil's style differs from Lucan's as do the periods in which they wrote.

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Those who now openly disparage Lucan's work are guilty of excessively harsh criticism. Such was not the case in antiquity when people recognized his reputation, praised him sincerely, almost paid him reverence. Among those who did so were Fabius,<sup>41</sup> Statius,<sup>42</sup> and Martial.<sup>43</sup> This was especially true after Lucan's death, when there was no need for servile flattery and adulation.

Statius said that he had given more to the world than Seneca. Statius' brief birthday poem<sup>44</sup> to Lucan is extant and I would rather have written that in one day than the Thebais which, as Statius boasts, took twelve years to complete.<sup>45</sup> It is a splendid little poem in which Lucan is set before all the Roman writers of ability--as the equal of some and different from almost all who are mentioned.

But what was he compared to Ennius, Lucretius, Varro Atacinus, Ovid, and Virgil? None of these wrote in the manner of Lucan, none gave such free rein to natural inclination. In him this vast freedom wins our wonder;

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it is not, however, mellowed by the sound style of the ancient writers. I would prefer it if Tragedy returned to the purity of the old style,--with the added provision that not even a single maxim should rear its head.

I speak now of the declamatory tragic poems. Although these may be very excellent, still they were introduced after the best periods of writing. The author who excelled in declamatory composition became prominent either because such declamations coated over both the directness and purity of the Latin language or because they came to be accepted after the art of eloquence had declined.

The result is that the stage has become too narrow to leave room for imitation--unless we include the Greeks, to whom we are indebted for the tragic form in its entirety. We have already spoken briefly of Aeschylus whose diction, although noble, is more vigorous and brilliant than it is perfect. But at times I would rather have a single metaphor of his than twenty unsuitable or perverse sentences of the other writers. 195

Of the other Greek tragic poets, Fabius often wondered which of the two (I mean Euripides and Sophocles) was superior as a poet. He was, so to speak, afraid to come to any conclusion. Since he felt no such doubt in the matter of public speakers, which was his proper field, we ought not to hesitate to pass judgment on the tragedians. Sophocles was brilliant, yet austere, compressed,

yet lofty, and sublime. He observed propriety in character portrayal, he was forceful in emotional expression, and majestic in both.

Euripides paid close attention to details, was subtle in his maxims, abundant in his plots--a rhetorician in the theatre and, at times, little more than a comic poet on the tragic stage. Just as he was the model of orators, so too, among other comic poets, he was Menander's model. Students of rhetoric in particular should make a careful study of his plays. Often will you recognize the satiric element--I speak now of the Satyr drama then common in the theatre--in which Euripides was reputedly outstanding. Such dramas, although altogether different from Tragedy, were part of the tragic poet's stock in trade. Although we would wish it otherwise, the Satyr play was low--almost beneath the poet's dignity, and it is because of this element that Aristophanes holds up to scorn the "phrasicles"<sup>46</sup> and "versicles"<sup>47</sup> of Euripides.

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Nor is Euripides a match for Sophocles in depicting character. His men are inconsistent and his women are worse--which makes his male characters naturally inappropriate and his female rôles dramatically so, because Tragedy has to do with ideas that are outstanding in excellence. Furthermore, he was conceited to the point of carelessness--for example, in his prologues. These are always after the same pattern and often revealed negligence to contemporary audiences and to his present-day

readers. They often give away the turning-point of his plot (and thus destroy the spectator's interest), or some character, who is part of the change, unwittingly does so. Jocasta and Electra are examples of this fault. Jocasta foretells the coming of Polynices, and Electra that of Menelaus.

His characterization is often degraded, as in the persons of Telephus, Oeneus, Phoenix, Bellerophon, and others. He brings into his plays paupers, beggars, and cripples which is, I think, undignified on the stage. We 197 must not discount the correctness of the criticism found in the Old Comedy because it sometimes lapses into calumny as Aristophanes often does.

Often, too, Euripides is careless in constructing his plots, as, for example, in the Phoenissae and in more than one other play. He was more an oracle than a promoter of wisdom; he was not only a guide to virtue but the surest master of the discretion which Sophocles portrayed in life as he portrayed all the other virtues on the stage. Sophocles was perfect in this respect--the Virgil of the theatre. We hope one day to give space to a discussion of these matters in a work on Aristarchus--if God allows us to complete the task.

That saintly man, Gregory, bishop of Nazianzus, who possessed exalted inspiration in other fields but was beyond all praise as a Theologian, gave us an acceptable picture of pietas [devotion] in his sermon on the

Sufferings of Christ. His approval of this Virgilian virtue came at the very time when even wicked Julian the Apostate would not allow pagan literature in the house of God and when orthodox young men were forbidden to read the writings of the ancients.

It was either zeal for pietas or holy indignation or the critical need or other motives which wrested his spirited defense of the classics from this great man who was in all else tranquil. He also tried other defenses of the classics in poetry. But in this poetry of his--if indeed it is his, since Suidas, who ascribes thirty thousand verses to him, does not make specific mention of it--there are many details that a skilled critic would brand as defective. For instance, as the critics would put it, he employs long vowels without distinction or discrimination as to quantity. Then the Greeks, a nation given to acting as Juvenal says,<sup>48</sup> flocked to follow him in this practice. But, as the older critics note, Homer took this liberty only rarely and never rashly.

Read the opening of Gregory's poem to the Mother of God, from the prologue to which I shall now quote. What sort of poetry is this?

To escort succession to life

and

Dear Lady, whence our dishonored  
nature

and the following:

Summon thy friends to the  
banquet. Happy thou art,  
happy because thou hast  
done such deeds.

From such license<sup>49</sup> was born the kind of verse commonly called "political",<sup>50</sup> in which many authors wrote whole volumes. An example of this is as follows:

Accurately my friend must  
you learn my whole inquiry  
of this one letter.

and another:

My flesh-loving soul admires  
the woods and undertakes  
everything toward the achieve-  
ment of its desire.

The former example is from the beginning of the Chiliades of Joannis Tzetzes<sup>51</sup> and the latter the opening lines of the Annals of Constantinus Manassis.<sup>52</sup>

Although these writers give some useful information which we must not scorn, nevertheless they could have done without the charm of this sort of inspiration! One must not write loose metre for didactic purposes when the prose of everyday language is at hand. We pass no judgment on Manassis' treatise on the structure of drama so that we may not seem to be reproaching in such minute details an author whose peer antiquity scarcely knew among its great men. Surely you do not expect me to add any comment from my own treatise. Choose for yourself some apposite remarks although I have made some in their proper place above--not maliciously but with respect to the tragic skill which is the subject of our discussion.

If the blemishes and faults of earlier writers are carefully and judiciously criticized, a perfect style is the result--just as Aristotle notes in the formation of an orator that, according to the popular proverb, the best laws are sometimes born from corrupt customs. Everyone today knows our two eminent contemporaries--Mark Antony Muretus,<sup>53</sup> the outstanding Latin purist of our day, and George Buchanan,<sup>54</sup> the distinguished poet. You would say that nothing was beyond the scope of their talents. Yet when they turned their pens to dramatic composition, you would say that Muretus had put his foot in the buskin of Tragedy and Buchanan his in the comic sock--so completely did they fail to understand that they were subject to the law and norm of ancient drama.

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Nothing could be more insignificant than Muretus' Caesar or more commonplace than Buchanan's Jephte,<sup>55</sup> since they hardly ever rise. Some portions of their plays lie prostrate in a manner so uninspired as to belie belief. Look at the following passage from Muretus:

We all follow thee as our  
leader. See thou to it  
that thou art at hand when  
need there be.

The situation, the vocabulary, the diction and metre obviously tend to the comic. Another example:

Go rather with courage and  
claim thy name lest it think  
it is being neglected and  
mocked.

And there are other examples without end.

We find just as many in Buchanan's work, such as the following remark of Jephthe:

I admit it. But meanwhile,  
see to it that all is well  
at home and heed your  
father's wish.

If this were not in verse form it would be sheer prose.

So, too, the following words of the priest to Jephthe should 202  
be written not as verse, but as continuous prose:

To be wretched or not lies  
in your own hand. It is in  
your power to sacrifice your  
daughter or not, or--to  
bring my words closer to the  
truth--it is not in your  
power, unless a person should  
wish to be wretched of his  
own accord.

If those lines were written continuously, who would suspect they were in metre? Or from a Tragedy? One need not concern himself to look for further examples: they meet the eye on every page. What of the fact that in his desire to imitate he slips from the tragic to the comic? Surely, these lines are comic:

For children must bear the  
injustices of their par-  
ents with equanimity.

And likewise the following:

No one was of late more  
generous than he, no  
father was more fond  
of his children.

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I do not intend now to speak of kinds of diction or words that are beneath the dignity of Tragedy. But if I were writing a Tragedy I would not allow such expressions

as absque controversia [without debate], or flocci pendere [to care not a straw for], or retortulum cicinum [?], or siderum similes ocellos [little eyes like the stars], or ita seres habet [as the Chinese put it---], or vir optime [my fine fellow], or rem loqueris ipsam [now you're talking], or other expressions of this sort.

We must examine, too, whether his imitation of Tragedy succeeds any better. The following lines from the Troades, spoken of Polyxena when she was on the point of death are of singular excellence:

The maid herself comes on  
with eyes in modesty cast  
down, but yet her face is  
radiant and the dying  
splendor of her beauty  
shines beyond its wont;  
as Phoebus' light is wont  
to appear more glorious  
at the moment of his set-  
ting, when the stars come  
back to their stations  
and the uncertain daylight  
is dimmed by the approach  
of night.<sup>56</sup>

In imitation of these lines Buchanan wrote the following:

Just as the splendor of  
the sun is wont to please  
us more as it swoops to  
rest in the Tartessian  
waves, and the breath and  
hues of summer's last rose  
holds more delight for our  
avid eyes....

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To be sure because the sun sets, it falls rather than swoops, and the poets speak of it both falling and setting. There is no connection between the roses and the sun with which they are joined in the above quotation. Nor do the

roses have any more connection with tragic grandeur. Their scent or breath, unless I am mistaken, is not an object of sight and therefore must be distinguished from color.

Furthermore, I would exclude from a choral passage any satirical element such as the following:

Since theft was the purpose  
on both sides, he rejoices  
in making sport of the  
gaping crows.

For Horace had said:

....a lawyer, risen from a  
Quinquevir shall delude the  
gaping raven.<sup>57</sup>

Buchanan mocks at us in the length of time covered by his drama--which is at least two months. Everyone knows that one must bewail the loss of one's virginity for that period according to the familiar custom of the Hebrews. And in the very narrative which we are now discussing, it is clearly stated that she is said to have returned to her father after two months and he fulfilled his vow in her regard. I fear he fulfilled it in a manner different from what the tragic poet imagined. But we will treat of this at length elsewhere.

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I would not call the girl's mother Storge, for there is a distinction between an emotion and the person who experiences it. Storge [love] is the emotion; Stergusa is a woman who loves. Hence her name should have been Stergusa on the analogy of Creusa. If you bring Storge

into a Tragedy, she will be a character such as Violence in Aeschylus, or Rumor in Virgil, or Poverty in Aristophanes, or Luxury in Plautus.

When the poets introduce these characters they are called mental, since they are not real but exist only objectively in the mind. There is nothing of this sort in Buchanan's play, for a character actually exists and a name is sought for her. It is just as if I should hear of Oedipus' mother and not know that her name is Jocasta. Hence, the author must go to a story in a similar vein for a name for his character; or he must coin one that is suitable.

He should have done the same with the name of the girl, who was a great hero's daughter. Sacred Scripture<sup>58</sup> tells us she was an only child, a virgin consecrated to God, but Buchanan gives her the name Iphis, adopted from the poets. But why Iphis, whom the ancients 206 conceived as caught in the meshes of a mad love for a woman, woman though she was herself? I suppose it was because Iphis was charged with that crime through which the poets wish Sappho to be spoken of as "manly".<sup>59</sup> Nothing more shameful can be imagined. Iphis herself condemns her own love, as we see in the following well-known verses from the gifted Ovid:

(Oh, what will be the end  
of me) whom a love pos-  
sesses that no one ever  
heard of, a strange and  
monstrous love? If the

gods wished to save me  
 they should have destroy-  
 ed me; if not, and they  
 wished to ruin me, they  
 should at least have  
 given me some natural woe,  
 within the bounds of ex-  
 perience. Cows do not  
 love cows, nor mares,  
 mares.<sup>60</sup>

I omit an intervening line and continue the quotation:

....and in the whole animal  
 world there is no female  
 smitten with love for  
 female.<sup>61</sup>

Subsequently Iphis confesses she is more a madwoman than

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Pasiphae, who loved a bull. Finally:

Why, Juno, guardian of the  
 marriage rites, and why,  
 Hymenaeus, do you come to  
 this ceremonial, where  
 there is no bridegroom,  
 where both of us who  
 marry are brides?<sup>62</sup>

The story goes on to tell how Iphis was changed into a male, and certainly Iphis is a man's name, for it means "swift", "quick", "strong". Again I ask what connection is there between this name and such a girl as the character in Buchanan's play--the daughter of a mighty chief, a woman at whose side stood the Spirit of God, Who, as it is said, dwelt within her? If she must be given a Hebrew name, as all the holy women are in the Old Testament, I could call her Jechida, which means "her father's only daughter". Such a name would make the tragic element of the play more poignant and the father's grief greater. There is no grief so great as to lose one's only daughter.

No child is cherished more and hence, such a daughter is spoken of as the "very soul of her parents".

Let her name be changed, therefore, to Jechida, on the analogy of Sara,<sup>63</sup> for both names become suitable and proper although each has another use. Surely Iphis and any woman of her ilk--if such there ever was--is obviously an offering unworthy of God, Who abominates all impurity-- 208 but especially such as even the poets despised. Yet, she was dedicated to God, or, according to Buchanan, she was offered as a victim to Him. How can this be when in Tragedy only one who is a virgin is offered even to Achilles! Mark well the example cited from Seneca of Polyxena, whose complete modesty, even at the hour of her death, both Euripides and Ovid praise to the skies.

My opinion is that the one and only rule and norm, both for living and writing, is good judgment. The man whom judgment forsakes loses the exercise and benefit of true knowledge in all things--especially such wherein he thinks he cannot follow Aristotle to his profit. But far be it from me that I should appear to disparage anyone, since I give the opinion of but one man--my own. If I mistake not, Caesar Scaliger never disparaged anyone; his criticism in all cases was for his own benefit and for the profit of posterity.

Let us proceed, therefore. I would certainly not call a friend--such as the one introduced in Buchanan's 209 play--Symmachus. As we know from military science,

foreign allies are called symmachi; Homer calls them epikouri, and the Latin writers speak of them as auxiliares. For example, Rhesus and Sarpedon were allies of the Trojans, the latter from Lycia and the former from Thrace. It is not everyone who has the ability to coin names and dub people.

Buchanan's Baptist deserves censure, for it is a tragic Comedy. The author unwittingly admits this when he prefaces his play with a Terentian prologue, for in Tragedy one of the actors speaks the prologue, as Polydorus in Euripides' Hecuba, Hecuba in Seneca's Troades, Juno in the same author's Hercules Furens, and Jocasta in Euripides' Phoenissae.

The diction is altogether commonplace--in the comic rather than the tragic tradition. To begin with, his words are altogether slavish. For example, nebulo [an idle rascal], conventicula [meetings], garrire [to prate], vir bone [good sir], homunculi [little fellows]. He even uses socculi, the diminutive form, in the following:

Whose slippers (socculis)  
I would be unworthy to  
remove.<sup>64</sup>

Terence himself does not use the diminutive:

My servants run to me; they  
take off my shoes (soccas).<sup>65</sup>

To dismiss the matter, I would say that there is no occasion for the word soccus [shoe] in Tragedy. It is a comic word, particularly appropriate to those Comedies in

which Greek characters were introduced in Greek dress.

Among the Romans socci were a sign of effeminacy. Pliny says of the emperor Gaius [Caligula]:

....who, in the height of effeminacy, donned pearl-studded shoes.<sup>66</sup>

Such then are some examples of his modes of expression. Some are not even Latin! For example, concoquere consilia [to cook up plans!] instead of inire consilia [to form or make plans] in the following lines:

....a heinous crime is being plotted, plans are being secretly cooked up.

There are other instances like this, but the one is enough to show they should be avoided. Otherwise I would not even mention them, for, to satisfy me, both Muretus' and Buchanan's plays would have to be recast in another mold.

Still in one way or another we must derive profit from judging correctly those primarily who can make mistakes--provided that we be sincere and that malice and ill-will play no part in our purpose. But these motives are not suitable to a noble soul, much less a lofty one. Certainly we must not feel fear that we may seem harsh in criticizing anyone since we give our criticism with this hope--that we would not excuse a shortcoming even in ourselves. But we write some of our comments even with the confidence that envy will grant us this, namely, that some works, even of the ancient authors, have not met with full approval.

## CHAPTER XVII

The remaining two parts,  
 melody and spectacle, which  
 are the least essential.  
 Why no treatment of these is  
 necessary. The quantitative  
 parts as Aristotle lists them.  
 Incidental discussion of each.  
 Why this is sufficient.

The fifth part is melody which Aristotle has called the greatest of the pleasurable accessories of Tragedy.<sup>1</sup> The sixth is spectacle, that is, the decorative element which embraces the costumes of the actors and stage adornment. Aristotle himself in two ways excuses us, even warns us against any elaborate treatment of these points. The first way is by his example, for he includes no formal treatment of melody and spectacle in his discussion of Tragedy. The second warning rests on two arguments.

The first of these arguments is that melody and spectacle are not characteristic of the tragic poet or of any poet because they lie outside the scope of his particular skill. Melody is the business of the musician and spectacle is more a matter for the costumers than the poet.<sup>2</sup> But it is true that the poets, among other details, 212 sometimes composed the music for their plays. Sophocles did so, and the grammarians note that he played the cithara in his Thamyris.<sup>3</sup>

The second argument<sup>4</sup> is that a Tragedy is complete without melody and spectacle. No one who has ever read Sophocles or Euripides or Seneca looks for these elements and he judges a play independent of them. A written speech is still a complete and perfect speech without the elements of gesture and delivery; we do not see or hear Cicero and Demosthenes delivering their speeches, yet we read and admire them. There is this difference between the orator and the tragedian: the orator depends on himself for gesture and delivery, whereas the tragic poet looks to another for melody and spectacle. Hence, the writer on rhetoric of necessity must treat of elocution, but the author of a hand-book on Tragedy need not discuss melody and spectacle.

There remain for our consideration the quantitative parts--the separate sections into which a Tragedy is divided. According to Aristotle<sup>5</sup> these were: prologue, episode, exode, and a choral portion. This last is distinguished into the parode, or moving chorus, and the stasimon, or stationary chorus.

The ancient critics understood the voice of the prologue in different ways. In New Comedy, such as the plays of Plautus and Terence, it means just what the ancient writers spoke of as the parabasis. The only difference is that the prologue stands at the beginning and the parabasis occurs in the course of the play. Furthermore, the prologue often explains the plot. In

both prologue and parabasis the poet pleaded his own cause or attacked any adversary he might have,--as Terence almost always did.

The grammarians distinguished several types of prologues but since we are not discussing what has been elsewhere discussed, these divisions and types must be sought in the works of other critics. Just to give an example, they maintained that, in Euripides, the prologue was the first speech. This was put in the mouth of one actor and no other actor interrupted during the course of the prologue which often contained an explanation of the play's plot. This method is peculiar to Euripides, and he employs it in almost every play.

Aristotle called the prologue that whole part which precedes the entrance of the chorus;<sup>6</sup> but he points out the position of the prologue rather than defines its purpose. The episode is all that comes in between two whole choral songs,<sup>7</sup> for in Greek Tragedy the chorus sings some parts and recites others.

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Aristotle suited his divisions of quantitative parts to the chorus. A choral portion is whatever part the chorus sings or recites. The parode is the whole first statement of the chorus;<sup>8</sup> the stasimon is a song of the chorus without anapests or trochees. To these he added the commos, a lamentation sung by chorus and actors in concert.<sup>9</sup>

Many writers have already described how the chorus

made its entrance, for they came in either in groups or rows. If a chorus of fifteen entered in groups, there were five groups of three each; if it came in in rows, there were three rows of five. But this belongs to spectacular arrangement and properly to that of the Greeks. Other writers both ancient and contemporary have discussed the Greek choral metres. There is nothing obscure about the metres in the Latin plays.

The subject matter of the choral passage may be sought from the subject matter of the play in such wise that it is almost a part of the Tragedy and forms a unity with the other portions of the play. Aristotle approves a chorus of this kind. Or the choral ode may have no connection with the subject matter of the play--a practice which Sophocles sometimes follows and Seneca after him, although not so often. 215

Since many of these points scarcely apply to Latin Tragedy, and since several critics--Caesar Scaliger in particular--have discussed the quantitative parts of Tragedy, there is no reason why we should dwell on them further. Furthermore, we have spoken at length on the structure of Tragedy--which was our purpose. This structure is not only, as some say, the principal part of Tragedy, but, as we said before, the entire essence thereof. To it, all the other parts can be referred--character, diction and thought. These, therefore, I discussed briefly and according to the division handed

down to us. To omit the other points that have not been discussed, I might say, as I have already said, they pertain neither to me nor to any poet.

CONCLUSION

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Noble Honerdius, these are the thoughts that have occurred to me. From what I have said, it becomes clear that Aristotle's excellent statement is true: the office of the tragic poet is that of a philosopher. He treats of man in general and must have a clear understanding of man's actions and the qualities of these actions, whether these qualities be gentle (which people call character) or violent (which they call emotions). To be brief, he must understand whatever can befall a man.

Then he must know how to accurately divide and distribute his material, for some details pertain to individual character, others to human nature in general. Still others are proper to the logician--just as in the art of eloquence (which also comes into our present consideration), the judgment and duty of the orator is taken up with some matters which belong to the statesman's province, as, for example, maxims and general arguments which pertain to the state or its citizens. In the Supplices, Euripides shows this at length while treating of the forms of government. 217

To be sure, moral character is within the province of the statesman; so, too, that art which portrays moral character is subject to the science of statesmanship--just as the art of horsemanship is subject to the art of leadership in war. This latter gives a soldier to his

general and the former, a citizen to his civil chief. Whatever is left, the poet claims for his own; in his case art completes the work which nature has begun. But unless one wins the pleasurable accessory of reputation, he learns in vain what any man may teach.

Furthermore, each man to his inclination. Aristotle did not vie with Sophocles in a contest of Tragedies, nor was Sophocles ashamed to know the rules which, under the guidance of nature rather than reason, he was the first to fix in many aspects of Tragedy. So it is that the grammarians are talking high-flown nonsense when they claim this honor for themselves. They are boldly bursting in upon the harvest and possessions of another. Just as he who has no seat in the theatre should stand with dignity, so since everything on the stage has already been taken, we will set those critics among the mourners that they may weep. That is what they are always doing.

Our task we have fulfilled as best we could--not as we hoped to but as time, which was obviously short, allowed. 218 As you see, we have gathered what memory suggested. This we did for your pleasure, being more intent on fulfilling our obligation than on careful research. Some of our remarks are rather subtle; others are less pleasant and scarcely allow the garb of style and speech. I say this that you may understand what a laborious task this was in which you found delight.

When you read this you will be astonished that some

of its principles did not occur to you of themselves and that you have known others all the time. From the rest you will perhaps learn this one thing: how great a task you set before me. We have done just what people do who have an intimate friend--especially if they are country folk. They set before their friend home-grown things, perhaps some eggs fresh from the straw and the hen that laid them, and even luctucae [lettuce], turnips, asparagus and other ordinary dishes. But first, as the main course, they show their guest at the table a joyous and willing smile which reveals a noble mind. If you have either learned how to excuse this or, of yourself, can do so and can maintain a fondness for the everyday fare, you will always be on the same terms of friendship with me. I shall see to it that you find a guest who, while not altogether rustic, is no less candid than he is appreciative of you.

DEDICATORY POEM

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O Honerdius, thou who dost lead an extraordinary life of learned leisure in the midst of civil cares, thou who even now didst not scorn the majestic buskin that idleness might claim no moment of thy life, receive thou what in a few hours we have hastened to fashion for thee whilst love for thee urged on our eager task.

The book itself--nought could clearer be--did grow of its own accord; of its own accord it reached its goal. 'Tis something when commands are harsh to make one's way through the deep and to willingly seek what one may not scorn. Such is the spirited steed who, knowing it not, stands at the goal all covered with the dust of the Olympic course. Such is the seaman who, knowing it not, cleaves the ocean waves whilst he is swept from the mighty river's mouth.

Perhaps there will be one or another, struck with the glory of the stage, whom thou wilt read who will wish to know these things. If anyone seeks for skill, brevity and simplicity will give him his reader. Let their writing be swift, but unlaborious, although hastened. Too late did I write this to thee, after Thamara.

NOTES ON DEDICATION

1. Cf. p. 8.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I

1. Sophocles died in 405 B.C.; Aristotle, in 322 B.C.
2. Demosthenes' dates are 384-322 B.C.
3. Cf. Aristophanes, Acharnians, 530 ff.
4. Plutarch, Alcibiades, X, 2-3.
5. Cicero, de inventione rhetorica, I, 25, 36: .... habitum appellamus animi aut corporis constantem et absolutam aliqua in re perfectionem: ut virtutis aut artis perceptionem alicuius, aut quamvis scientiam et item corporis aliquam commoditatem, non natura datam sed studio et industria partam.
6. Particularly in the Acharnians and the Frogs.
7. Cicero names these two as the principal factors of true greatness (Pro Archia, 7).
8. Another echo of Cicero, Pro Archia, 6.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II

1. II, 392-393.
2. Socrates is the principal interlocutor of the dialogue.
3. Republic, II, 394.
4. Cf. e.g. Republic, III, 393; X, 600; Laws, IV, 719.
5. 19.
6. II, 379 ff. But the reference seems to be rather to X, 598.
7. Ibid.

8. E.g. Ethica Nicomachea, 1096a-1097a; Magna Moralia, 1182b.
9. Ethica Eudemia, 1217b.
10. Plato excludes poets from his Republic. Cf. X, 595 ff.
11. In his Poetics.
12. Poetics, 1447a.
13. Republic, II, 398.
14. Cf. Aristotle's definition, Poetics, 1449b.
15. Ibid., 1452b.
16. Cf. Aristotle, Politics, VIII, 1342a.
17. Cf. ibid. and Poetics, 1449b.
18. Cf. Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities, Peck, H.T. (ed.), New York, 1897, s.v. Pythagoras.
19. Ethica Nicomachea, II, 1105b; cf. 1103a.
20. Plutarch, Moralia, 29F.
21. Politics, VIII, 1340a.
22. Ibid., 1341b-1342a.
23. Ibid.
24. Proclus (410-485 A.D.), a Neo-Platonist commentator on Plato.
25. Republic, X, 603.
26. Atreus and Thyestes were brothers infamous in the Greek tragic cycles; Tiresias was a celebrated blind prophet of Thebes, prominent in the Oedipus cycle; Ajax, a Greek hero in the Trojan War, crazed when Achilles' arms were awarded to Ulysses, slew some harmless sheep, thinking he was taking vengeance on his foes. His madness and suicide are the basis for tragedies by both Sophocles and Seneca.
27. Thersites, an officer in the Trojan War was the most deformed of the Greeks at Troy. Cf. Iliad, II, 212 ff.

28. Nireus, king of Naxos, was celebrated for his beauty among the Greek leaders at Troy. Cf. Iliad, II, 671 ff.; Horace, Odes, III, 20, 15; Epodes, XV, 22.
29. Alcaeus was a Greek lyric poet of the 6th century B.C.
30. Anacreon (fl. 532 B.C.), a Greek lyric poet famed for his drinking songs.
31. Hipponax, b. Ephesus, 540 B.C., author of bitter invectives and satirical lampoons.
32. Republic, III, 388-389.
33. Poetics, 1449b.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER III

1. Cf. Iliad, I, 545; Odyssey, IV, 214, 597; XV, 196.
2. Poetics, 1450a.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., 1451b.
5. Ibid., 1450a.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER IV

1. Cf. Poetics, 1450b.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., 1451a.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 1455b.
6. Ibid., 1451a.

7. Cf. ibid.
8. Aeneid, III.
9. Ibid., II.
10. Poetics, 1451a.
11. Ibid.
12. Juvenal, Satires, I, 1, 2.
13. Iliad, VII.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER V

1. Cf. Poetics, 1451b.
2. This poem gives an account of the civil wars of Caesar and Pompey.
3. A tragedy by Euripides.
4. Cf. Poetics, 1451a.
5. Ibid., 1451b.
6. Ibid.
7. Rhetoric, I, 1357a. The reference is none too clear.
8. Cf. II, Kings, 13.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER VI

1. Poetics, 1452a.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., 1455b.
4. Cf. pp. 80-83.
5. Cf. Seneca, Hercules Furens, 658-829.
6. Cf. Sophocles, Ajax, 1047-1162; 1226-1317.
7. Poetics, 1451b.

8. Ibid., 1452a.
9. Historia Animalium, 590b.
10. Poetics, 1452a.
11. Cf. ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Genesis, 44.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VII

1. Cf. Poetics, 1452a; 1455a.
2. Ibid., 1452b.
3. Ibid., 1452a.
4. Ibid.
5. Cf. 727 ff.
6. Poetics, 1454b.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Tauric Iphigenia, 727 ff.
10. Ibid., 814 ff.
11. Poetics, 1454b-1455a.
12. Odyssey, VIII, 521 ff.; cf. ibid., 83 ff.
13. Rather in Juno's temple. Cf. Aeneid, I, 446.
14. Ibid., 441 ff.
15. Choephoroe (Libation Bearers), 168-234.
16. Oedipus Tyrannus, 924 ff.
17. Poetics, 1455a.
18. Tauric Iphigenia, 582 ff. But Iphigenia makes no mention of her brother whom she believes to be dead. Cf. ibid., 56.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII

1. Rhetoric, 1355b.
2. In the Frogs.
3. Cf. Poetics, 1450b.
4. Ibid., 1453b.
5. Ibid.; cf. 1449b.
6. Ibid., 1453b.
7. Rhetoric, 1370b.
8. Statius, Silvae, II, 7, 124 ff.
9. Cf. Iliad, II, 212 ff.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IX

1. Rhetoric, 1382a-1383a.
2. An incorrect reference since the Magna Moralia is divided into but two books. Perhaps one of the other ethical treatises is meant. However, cf. Magna Moralia, 1186a; 1200a.
3. Poetics, 1453a.
4. Ibid., 1453b.
5. Iliad, XVIII, 108-110.
6. Juvenal, Satires, XIII, 180.
7. Cf. Aeschylus, Choephoroe; Sophocles, Electra. Mother slain by her son.
8. Again, the mother is slain by her son for betraying his father. Cf. Virgil, Aeneid, VI, 445; Cicero, in Verrem, 2, IV, 18; Hyginus, Fabulae, 73.
9. Poetics, 1453b.
10. Ibid.
11. Sophocles, Antigone, 1231.

12. Poetics, 1453a.
13. Ibid.

NOTES ON CHAPTER X

1. Poetics, 1453a.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XI

1. Troades, 203-352.
2. Ibid., 524-704.
3. Cf. Poetics, 1455b.
4. Oedipus, 1-81.
5. Ibid., 208-402.
6. Ibid., 530-618.
7. Ibid., 868 ff.
8. Poetics, 1456a.
9. Ibid.
10. Cf. Aeneid, II.
11. Cf. Aeneid, VI; Odyssey, XI.
12. Cf. Poetics, 1455b-1456a.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XII

1. Plato, Cratylus, 425E.
2. Metaphysics, I, 4, 5.
3. Cratylus, 425D-E.

4. Medea, 1319-1322.
5. Seneca, Medea, 971 ff.
6. Metaphysics, I, 4, 5.
7. Poetics, 1454b.
8. Modern editors notice the dislocation of this passage. Cf. e.g. Butcher, S.H., Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, 4th ed., Macmillan, London, 1923, p. 2.
9. Poetics, 1454b.
10. Hercules Oetaeus, 1940 ff.
11. Ibid., 1963 ff.
12. Ibid., 1977 ff.
13. Amphitryo, V, ii, 1 ff.
14. Ibid., V, iii, 1 ff.
15. Hercules Oetaeus, 1980 ff.
16. Poetics, 1454b.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII

1. Cf. Wright, W.C., A Short History of Greek Literature, American Book Co., New York, 1907, p. 445.
2. Terence, Andria, I, i, 35. The name in Greek means "friendly to all".
3. Ars Poetica, 180 ff.
4. Sophocles, Ajax, 801 ff.
5. Sophocles' Orestes is not extant.
6. Seneca, Troades, 1151 ff.
7. Ibid., 1121 ff.
8. Ibid., 438.
9. Ibid., 1118 ff.

10. Ibid., 1153 ff.
11. Hippolytus, 1082 ff.
12. Cf. Aristotle, Rhetorica ad Alexandrum, 1438a.
13. Iliad, XVIII, 20 ff.
14. Electra, 673.
15. Ibid. 680 ff.
16. Hippolytus, 997.
17. Ibid., 1000-1114.
18. Rhetoric, III, 1416b.
19. Fasti, II, 735 ff.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., 771 ff.
22. Muretus (1526-1585).
23. Cf. Fasti, IV, 740.
24. Scaliger (1540-1609).
25. Julius Scaliger (1484-1558).
26. Institutiones Oratoriae, VIII, v, 6.
27. Quintilian himself speaks of the work as his. Cf. Institutiones Oratoriae, VI, praefatio, 3. In X, i, 98 he mentions the Medea and Thyestes to praise them.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XIV

1. Quintilian, Institutiones Oratoriae, V, ii, 8-9.
2. Ars Poetica, 156.
3. Rhetoric, II, 1388b ff.
4. Poetics, 1450b.
5. Plautus, Curculio, IV, 111, 1-2.
6. Aeneid, IV, 20 ff.

7. Ibid., 419-426.
8. Iliad, IX.
9. The poetical works of Seneca the Younger have been referred by many scholars to a later age, but they are now commonly accepted as authentic.
10. Cf. above n. 3.
11. Varro, apud Nonium, p. 374.
12. Terence, Adelphoe, IV, v, 49 f.
13. Ibid., V, iii, 3 f.
14. Eunuchus, III, v, 2 f.
15. Adelphoe, IV, ii, 5 ff.
16. Phormio, V, ix, 20 f.
17. Heauton Timorumenos, I, i, 54-60.
18. Ibid., I, i, 73-82.
19. Poetics, 1454a.
20. Republic, III, 395.
21. Meno, 72.
22. Politics, I, 1259b-1260a.
23. Poetics, 1454a.
24. Ulpian, Digest, XVI, 1, 2.
25. Ajax, 293.
26. Ars Poetica, 119-122.
27. Poetics, 1454a.
28. Ibid.
29. Dio Chrysostom, Oratio LII (de Aeschylo et Sophocle et Euripide, vel de arcu Philoctetae).
30. Cf. Iphigenia at Aulis, 1211 ff.; 1368 ff.
31. Seneca, Thyestes, 404-407.

32. Ibid., 446 f.

33. Ibid., 984 f.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XV

1. Cf. especially Rhetoric, I, 1356a ff.
2. Poetics, 1456a.
3. Virgil, Eclogues, II, 45.
4. Aeneid, IV, 223.
5. Georgics, IV, 445 f.
6. Aeneid, VIII, 560.
7. Ibid., XII, 176.
8. Ibid., VI, 687 f.
9. Ibid., I, 544 f.
10. Rhetoric, III, 1403b.
11. Poetics, 1456a.
12. Cf. Rhetoric, II, 1394a.
13. Horace, Epistles, I, 18, 69.
14. Ibid., I, 7, 98.
15. Ibid., I, 16, 79.
16. Odes, II, 10, 1-4.
17. Rhetoric, II, 1394b.
18. Horace, Odes, IV, 4, 29.
19. Ibid., II, 16, 28 f.
20. Cf. Varro, de re rustica, I, 1, 1; cf. Petronius, Satiricon, 42, 4.
21. Rhetoric, II, 1394b.
22. Possibly a fragment of Epicharmus.
23. Troades, 236.

24. Cf. Euripides, Medea, 294 ff.
25. Possibly from Epicharmus; cf. Horace, Odes, IV, 4, 7.
26. The tragedy of Honerdius referred to in the Dedication (p. 3) and in the Dedicatory Poem (p. 190).
27. Iliad, II, 204 ff.
28. Euripides, Supplices, 429 ff.
29. Medea, 294 ff.
30. This play (more commonly called the Phoenissae) is now attributed to Seneca.
31. Rhetoric, II, 1395b.
32. Seneca, Troades, 335.
33. Ibid., 336.
34. Varius, Thyestes (?); cf. above, p. 112.
35. Institutiones Oratoriae, XII, 11.
36. Satiricon, II, 1-4.
37. Ibid.
38. Iliad, VI, 500.
39. Aeneid, VII, 295 f.
40. Ennius, apud Macrobius, Saturnalia, VI, 1, 60.
41. Sophocles, Trachiniae, 1046 ff.
42. Seneca, Hercules Oetaeus, 1179-1183.
43. Ibid., 1170-1176.
44. Ibid., 1246 ff.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XVI

1. Theaetetus, 152E.
2. Republic, X, 595B.



20. Poetics, 1448b.
21. Catalepton, 2.
22. Ibid., 5.
23. We follow the text as given in the Loeb edition, which differs in some respects from that quoted by Heinsius. The Loeb text represents, it would seem, a better set of readings. We alter this, however, and make it conform to the Heinsius text in the first line in order to preserve the point of his objection to the word manipulus, which is not read in the Loeb.
24. Poetics, 1459a.
25. Son of Phoebus Apollo who took over the chariot of the sun for one day. Unable to control the horses, he was almost destroying the earth by fire when Jupiter struck him with a thunderbolt. Ovid (Metamorphoses, II, 1-328) gives the story.
26. "Longinus", On the Sublime, XXXIII, 5.
27. Cf. Horace, Odes, IV, 2.
28. Early (archaic) Latin.
29. Golden Age of Latin Literature.
30. Silver or Late Latin.
31. Catullus, LXXXIV, 3.
32. Festus (2nd cent. A.D.) abridged the de Verborum Significatu of M. Verrius Flaccus. Paulus Diaconus (8th cent. A.D.) further abridged Festus' abridgment. These abridgments are among our most valuable sources for the study of early Latin.
33. Nonius Marcellus (4th Cent. A.D.) composed a manual (de Compendiosa Doctrina) on points of grammar and antiquities. He included quotations from lost authors, especially of the archaic period.
34. Institutiones Oratoriae, VIII, iii, 25.
35. Lucian's " .... Lexiphanes ridicules the affectations of the archaists and purists, and their efforts after the peculiar word ...." (Wright, Short History of Greek Literature, p. 498.)

36. Plautus, Mostellaria, I, iii, 121.
37. Since the archaic tang of the translation given in the Oxford Series (Buckley, T.A. ed., The Tragedies of Sophocles in English Prose, Harper, N.Y. 1884, pp. 110-113) does in English what Heinsius sought to do in Latin, we judged that it would be apposite to include it.
38. The two Senecas.
39. Both these plays are now attributed to the younger Seneca.
40. The hero of the Pharsalia.
41. Quintilian, Institutiones Oratoriae, X, i, 90.
42. Statius, Silvae, II, 7.
43. Martial, Epigrams, VII, 21, 22, 23.
44. Statius, Silvae, II, 7.
45. Thebais, XII, 811.
46. Aristophanes, Acharnians, 444, 447; Clouds, 943.
47. Acharnians, 398; Peace, 532; Frogs, 942.
48. Juvenal, Satires, III, 100.
49. The license is metrical.
50. "Political" verse is based on accent rather than on syllabic quantity.
51. Tzetzes, Constantinopolitan grammarian and poet of the 12th century.
52. Manassis wrote a 12th century Chronicle in 6733 lines of accentual verse, covering from the Creation to the year 1081.
53. Muretus, 1526-1585.
54. Buchanan, a Scotch humanist, 1506-1582.
55. Cf. Judges, 11.
56. Seneca, Troades, 1137-1142.

57. Horace, Satires, II, 5, 56.
58. Judges, 11.
59. Cf. Horace, Epistles, I, 19, 28. A misinterpretation?
60. Metamorphoses, IX, 727-731.
61. Ibid., 733 f.
62. Ibid., 762 f.
63. Cf. Genesis, 17, 15.
64. Cf. Matthew, 3, 11; Mark, 1, 7; John, 1, 27.
65. Terence, Heauton Timorumenos, I, 1, 72.
66. Naturalis Historia, 9, 35, 56, Section 114; cf. 37, 2, 6, Section 117.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XVII

1. Poetics, 1450b.
2. Ibid.
3. The play is not extant. Cf. Athenaeus, Deipnosophistae, 20F.
4. Poetics, 1450a.
5. Ibid., 1452b.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.