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The Cambridge Dover Wilson Shakespeare

VOLUME 6

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
EDITED BY JOHN DOVER WILSON



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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge New York Melbourne Madrid Cape Town Singapore São Paulo Delhi

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108005784

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2009

This edition first published 1960
This digitally printed version 2009

ISBN 978-1-108-00578-4

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

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THE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE

**EDITED FOR THE SYNDICS OF THE
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS**

**BY
JOHN DOVER WILSON**

CYMBELINE

**EDITED BY
J C. MAXWELL**

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by
Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521094733

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First published 1960
First paperback edition 1968
Re-issued in this digitally printed version 2009

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-07530-5 hardback
ISBN 978-0-521-09473-3 paperback

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PREFATORY NOTE

WITH SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE VISION IN THE LAST ACT

By undertaking full responsibility for the ensuing volume Mr J. C. Maxwell once again places me very much in his debt. And subscribers will be glad to learn that he is already busily engaged upon *Henry VIII*; that *King Lear* for which Professor Duthie and I are jointly responsible and *Coriolanus* which I am tackling single-handed are both now in the press; and that when these three are published, some time in 1960, it is hoped, or earlier, they will complete the tale of thirty-seven plays belonging to the accepted canon. After that will follow the *Poems* and the *Sonnets*, which Mr Maxwell and I plan to share between us, while Mr Peter Ure has kindly consented to edit for me the uncanonical *Two Noble Kinsmen* which many consider to be by Shakespeare and Fletcher working in collaboration, and which thus has probably as much right as *Pericles* to be included in the Works. It begins to look therefore as if this edition, hopefully launched as a ten-year project in 1921, under the sporting title of *The New Shakespeare*, may reach its conclusion some forty years later.

Unlike most previous editors, Mr Maxwell can find, he tells us, no grounds for believing that Shakespeare was not the sole author of *Cymbeline*. He is even ready to accept as genuine the Vision at 5. 4. 30ff. which critics as eminent and as diverse as Pope and Johnson, Edmund Chambers and Granville-Barker dismiss as 'a spectacular theatrical interpolation'. I quote Chambers's

words, and must confess that I find myself subscribing to them.

It cannot be denied that the Vision had become an integral part of the play before the text left Shakespeare's hands, and must therefore be held to carry his imprimatur, since the references to it in the following scene (5. 5. 426 ff.) are indisputably his. The case too for its authenticity seems to have been much strengthened of late through the discovery by Mr Wilson Knight and others of parallels between it and other plays written by Shakespeare at the same period. Yet such parallels, I suggest, might have occurred in works by another dramatist familiar with the plays in question, and though I am not proposing Marston as a candidate, the well-known echoes of Shakespeare in *The Malcontent* illustrate the sort of thing I have in mind. The most striking of the parallels in the Vision is for example that in the opening lines:

No more, thou thunder-master, show
 Thy spite to mortal flies,

which is an obvious reflexion of Gloucester's cry in *King Lear*:

As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods;
 They kill us for their sport.

But though Shakespeare often repeats himself, does he ever do so after this crude fashion elsewhere? To my mind the passage is not repetition but imitation, and a bad one at that.

Further, when the circumstances in which he and the company stood at the time *Cymbeline* was first produced are considered, it is not difficult to see how he might have agreed to a spectacular interpolation by another writer. By 1609-10 he was probably often at Stratford, and the text of *Cymbeline* like that of other late plays contains

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some of those long and detailed stage-directions which suggest that he could not feel certain of being present to supervise rehearsal.¹ It was a time of change for the company too; this being the year when they began playing at the Blackfriars Theatre as well as at the Globe. Now the Blackfriars, an indoor candle-lighted playhouse, was much more suitable for the creation of theatrical illusion than an open-air one and served a more sophisticated and more fashionable audience. And though it would be going too far to claim these conditions as responsible for the episodic structure and fairy-land atmosphere of Shakespeare's last plays, those plays assuredly ministered to the taste of a public nourished on the court masques which, especially after the advent of Inigo Jones in 1607, became the rage of Jacobean London.² The Vision in *Cymbeline* was clearly designed in response to this taste, and it is even possible that Inigo Jones was called in to produce it, inasmuch as a Jupiter riding astride an eagle and grasping thunderbolts in one hand is the subject of one of his designs, now at Chatsworth, for the masque of *Tempe Restored* which he produced in 1632.³ In any case in 1610 such a flight was a new and thrilling development of the theatrical machines and was probably the play's chief attraction for most of the audience.⁴

Let us then imagine Shakespeare at Stratford with his hands full of local and domestic affairs, suddenly receiving word from London that his company wished

¹ See W. W. Greg, *The Shakespeare First Folio* (1955), pp. 398, 404, 412.

² See G. E. Bentley, *Shakespeare Survey*, I (1948), 38–50.

³ The design is reproduced as Fig. 45 in Allardyce Nicoll's *Stuart Masques* (1937).

⁴ See J. C. Adams, *The Globe Playhouse* (1942), pp. 336–41.

to introduce a Vision into the play he was already engaged upon for Blackfriars. The Vision, they told him, would exhibit a new triumph of stage-flying, and knowing he could not come to London to see what was involved they had asked *X* to draft the script. Being the easy-going dramatist he was, would he not have replied that if they sent him a copy he would do his best to fit it in? This is of course mere guesswork and the explanation may have been quite different. But the explanation I find quite incredible is that, being the poet he was, whatever else he wrote or did not write in this play, he could possibly have written what Granville-Barker calls 'the jingling twaddle of the apparitions'.

J.D.W.

INTRODUCTION

I. *Date and Authenticity*

The first recorded mention of *Cymbeline* is by Simon Forman.¹ The performance he describes is not likely to have been the first, but we cannot be sure how much earlier the play is. The commonly accepted dates for Shakespeare's 'romances' are still those proposed by Chambers: *Cymbeline*, 1609–10; *The Winter's Tale*, 1610–11; *The Tempest*, 1611–12;² but *The Tempest* is the only one that is at all securely dated, in 1611. Even the relative dating of the other two is uncertain, though it is reasonable to associate the greater artistic assurance of *The Winter's Tale* with a later date, which is also supported by the fact that Shakespeare undoubtedly knew the Boccaccio source of *Cymbeline* when he wrote *The Winter's Tale*.³ I think Chambers's date for *The Winter's Tale* may well be a year too late. There is a fairly close verbal parallel between *The Winter's Tale*, 4. 4. 129–32 and *Philaster*, 4. 4. 2–6,⁴ which seems to me most easily explained as an echo of the former by the latter; and *Philaster* is not later than 8 October 1610.⁵ (Parallels which Nosworthy⁶ cites between *Philaster*

¹ See Stage-history, p. xliii.

² E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare* (1930), I, 271; the dating is in terms of theatrical seasons.

³ See *The Winter's Tale*, Herford cited in note on 4. 4. 778–85 in this edition.

⁴ Noted by E. M. W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's Last Plays* (1938), p. 9. The Shakespeare passage is reminiscent also of *Pericles*, 5. 3. 44–5, as Malone noted.

⁵ E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (1923), III, 223.

⁶ Arden edition of *Cymbeline* (1955), p. xxxix; cf. below, 5. 2. 2–6 n.

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and *Cymbeline* are less persuasive, though the mention in *Philaster*, 4. 5. 115 of 'Augustus Caesar', who has nothing to do with the subject, may, as he suggests, be due to a recollection of *Cymbeline*.) If *The Winter's Tale* is 1609–10,¹ then perhaps *Cymbeline* is 1608–9.² This is the season to which Chambers attributes *Pericles*, but an earlier date seems more probable.³ It may well be that, as Nosworthy suggests, the composition of *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale* 'was more or less simultaneous or, at any rate, that both had been written, revised and prepared for the stage before either was actually performed, with consequent cross-fertilisation';⁴ if the first performance of *Cymbeline* was a public one, it cannot have been earlier than December 1609, when the theatres reopened for the first time since August 1608.

The exclusively Shakespearian authorship of *Cymbeline* has not been as radically challenged as has that of *Pericles* or of *Henry VIII*, but the play lies under more suspicion than either *The Winter's Tale* or *The Tempest*. The Variorum edition, left in an unsatisfactory state by H. H. Furness at his death and published in 1913, contains a number of arbitrary assertions in Introduction and Notes which, taken together, would deny a good deal of the play to Shakespeare; and H. Granville-Barker in 1930 was still sufficiently under the influence of this sort of criticism to hold that 'a fair

¹ Thorndike's claim (see *The Winter's Tale* in this edition, pp. x–xi) that the dance in *The Winter's Tale*, 4. 4, is a borrowing from Jonson's masque *Oberon* (1 January 1611), does not strike me as plausible.

² There were private performances in London during this season, though the plague prevented public ones (Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, IV, 351).

³ See *Pericles* in this edition, pp. 88–9.

⁴ Arden *Cymbeline*, p. xvi.

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amount of the play—both of its design and execution—is pretty certainly not Shakespeare's'.¹ Granville-Barker's own positive contribution to the criticism of the play goes a long way towards undermining the foundations of this view, and the play's substantial integrity is generally accepted today. But there is one part that has more often than not been denied to Shakespeare from Pope onwards: the Vision of 5. 4, which even such a conservative critic as Sir Edmund Chambers rejects as 'a spectacular theatrical interpolation'.² Certainly the central part of this is a passage which few would be sorry to attribute to another hand, but I cannot feel that the evidence for denying it to Shakespeare is at all strong.³

The first question to be asked is: if there is an interpolation, how extensive is it? Pope rejected the whole of 5. 4 after line 29, and also 5. 5. 425–57. Chambers, against Dowden who 'would limit the extent of [the interpolation] to 30–92, leaving the dumb-show, with 97–126, and possibly 93–6 as genuine', held that 'the whole passage [that is, presumably, lines 30–150, with the introductory dumb-show] must stand or fall together. And with it must of course go the reference to the vision in 5. 5. 425–59 [=57]'.⁴ It is certainly difficult to limit the interpolation as strictly as Dowden does, but it is equally difficult to regard 5. 4. 114–50 as wholly non-Shakespearian. And if there is some Shakespearian verse in the episode, the onus of proof is on those who claim to detect any alien material at all. On stylistic grounds Posthumus's speech on waking is surely unassailable, and with it must go the inscription on the tablet and, of course (as Chambers recognizes),

¹ *Prefaces to Shakespeare, Second Series* (1930), p. 243.

² *William Shakespeare* (1930), I, 486.

³ For the opposite view, see Prefatory Note.

⁴ *William Shakespeare* (1930), I, 486.

the explanation of it in the final scene, where, again, it would be hard to attribute to anyone but Shakespeare such lines as

whose containing
 Is so from sense in hardness that I can
 Make no collection of it.

Even before Posthumus wakes, Sicilius's speech at ll. 114-19 has a Shakespearian ring. It seems clear, then, that there was a vision, and an enigmatic tablet, in Shakespeare's text of the play. The solution which some scholars, such as Fleay, have sought is to accept the stage-directions but reject the dialogue; and indeed it is only the fourteeners of ll. 30-92 that have caused real offence—ll. 93-113 pretty clearly stand or fall with them, but I do not think that they would in isolation have aroused any misgivings. The lines are certainly crude, but then this is on any showing a scene in which speech is subordinate to spectacle. The question as I see it resolves itself into this: is there any positive reason to suppose that Shakespeare would have presented this Vision entirely in dumb-show, or alternatively, that he would have assigned the task of writing about sixty¹ lines of verse in a deliberately old-fashioned style² for a special purpose to some playhouse hack, rather than undertake it himself?³ I can see none, and accept the whole scene as Shakespeare's. I do so with no particular enthusiasm; but I think the more thoroughgoing defence by G. Wilson Knight⁴ deserves attention. His elaborate discussion would probably not convince a

¹ According to the traditional lineation; in reality, thirty fourteeners with three short lines.

² Cf. Hardin Craig, *Shakespeare Survey*, 1 (1948), 55.

³ Nosworthy, p. xxxvi of his edition, is probably right in tracing this passage to the introductory theophany in *Love and Fortune*.

⁴ *The Crown of Life* (1947), pp. 168-202.

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hardened sceptic that the Vision is authentic, but it shows that the author, whoever he was, knew the rest of the play well. And against Chambers's rejection of the whole episode, I regard as weighty Wilson Knight's contention that, without it 'Cymbeline is left, alone in this group, without any striking transcendental moment',¹ though I think the phrase inflates the significance of what the scene in fact offers.

II. Sources

The chronicle material which is used in *Cymbeline* consists of scattered fragments in and about the reign of 'Kymbeline or Cimbeline the sonne of Theomantius', whom Holinshed dates 33 B.C. to A.D. 2. (The historical Cunobellinus, whose dates are somewhat later, need not detain us.)² These are collected in W. G. Boswell-Stone's *Shakespeare's Holinshed* (1896), and present no features of special interest. All that Shakespeare takes for his main plot is the account of the temporary refusal of tribute (either by Cymbeline or by his son).³ The battle, completely fictitious in this historical context, represents Shakespeare's closest borrowing from Holinshed in the play, but it is from the *History of Scotland*, the account of the battle of Luncarty (near Perth) in A.D. 976, where 'an husbandman . . . named Haie' and his two sons play the parts of Belarius and the princes. In the Appendix A (*d*) which

¹ *Ibid.* p. 191. A convenient conspectus of earlier views is given in Appendix D of A. J. Wyatt's Warwick edition [1897].

² There is a recent sketch by C. M. Matthews, 'The True Cymbeline' (*History Today*, VII (1957), 755-9).

³ The son, Guiderius, in Holinshed (Boswell-Stone, p. 10). Shakespeare, as Dowden notes (p. xix of his edition), agrees with Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, II. x. 50.

he has contributed to J. M. Nosworthy's Arden edition (1955), H. F. Brooks cites parallels which establish a reasonable probability that Shakespeare also consulted Blenerhasset's 'Complaint of Guidericus' in the *Second Part of the Mirrour for Magistrates* (1578), and some of the 'tragedies' in Higgins's *Mirrour for Magistrates* (1587; some already in earlier editions). What is of more interest than the details of Shakespeare's selection of historical material is its combination with the other elements in the play, and this will be discussed in a later section.

The non-chronicle material raises more complicated problems. The main source for the Italianate element in the story, in particular the wager plot, is, as has always been recognized, Boccaccio's *novella*, 'Bernabò da Genova e la moglie Zinevra' (*Decamerone*, II. 9). The central theme of this is familiar to students of folklore, but it is doubtful if any earlier versions are relevant to Shakespeare. One closely similar version of the story has certainly had some influence on *Cymbeline*: the late fifteenth-century German *Historie von vier Kaufmännern*, translated into English, through a Dutch intermediary, as *Frederick of Fennen*,¹ first published at Antwerp in 1518, and reprinted c. 1520 and c. 1560.²

Boccaccio's story opens with the laying of the wager, after Ambruogiuolo of Piacenza, at a gathering of Italian merchants in Paris, has challenged the claims made by Bernabò of Genoa on behalf of his wife's chastity. Ambruogiuolo goes to Genoa, and, having

¹ This is the name assumed by the heroine in masculine disguise.

² *Shakespeare Quarterly*, IX (1958), 262, records an article by Margaret Schlauch, *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny*, IV (1957), 95-120, which argues that the translator may be Lawrence Andrewe (on whom see *Dictionary of National Biography*).

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heard of the reputation borne by Bernabò's wife Zinevra, decides that his enterprise is hopeless. However, by bribing a woman who frequents Zinevra's house, he obtains access to her bedchamber concealed in a chest, notes the details of the room and a distinguishing mark on Zinevra's body, and steals a purse and other articles. When he returns to Paris, he finally convinces Bernabò, whom the other tokens have left sceptical, by telling him that Zinevra has a mole under her left breast, surrounded by about six golden hairs. Bernabò, on his return, stops twenty miles from Genoa and sends a servant with a letter summoning Zinevra to come to him. At the same time he instructs the servant to take her to a suitable place and kill her. When the moment comes, she pleads successfully for her life, and persuades the servant to return with some of her clothes as evidence that he has killed her. From this point, the story has no close resemblance to that of *Cymbeline*. Zinevra assumes masculine disguise and, after various adventures, finds herself in the service of the sultan at Alexandria; and after meeting Ambruogiuolo at Acre, in possession of some of the tokens stolen from her, she finally extracts a confession from him at Alexandria, in the presence of Bernabò, who has been summoned thither. Ambruogiuolo is anointed with honey and tied to a stake, where he is stripped to the bones by flies, wasps and gadflies, while Zinevra returns to live happily with Bernabò at Genoa.

It is evident that Boccaccio, whether in the original or in the French translation of Antoine le Maçon (1545, often reprinted),¹ is Shakespeare's main source. Most of his modifications are intelligible in the light of other elements in the plot, or from their dramatic effective-

¹ H. G. Wright, *Modern Language Review*, I (1955), 45-8, argues that Shakespeare probably used this translation for *All's Well that Ends Well*.

ness. There is, however, one detail that makes it clear that the *Frederick of Fennen* version was familiar to him in some form: the Frenchman, Dutchman and Spaniard who appear in the Folio stage-direction at the head of Act 1, scene 4, though the last two do not figure in the dialogue, correspond to the 'Courant of Spayne' and 'Borcharde of Fraunce' of that version, whose paragraph-heading notes that the four merchants involved 'were of foure diuers londes'.¹ Though this is the only completely convincing piece of evidence for Shakespeare's use of this form of the story, it is reasonable, once the case has been established, to attribute to it certain variations from Boccaccio which might otherwise be considered Shakespeare's own invention. *Frederick of Fennen*, unlike Boccaccio, has the wager proposed by the villain and not by the hero. Nosworthy notes also that the wager itself, five thousand 'gyldens' on each side, corresponds to Posthumus's offer (1. 4. 131) to wager 'gold' to Jachimo's ten thousand ducats, whereas in Boccaccio the wager eventually agreed on is five thousand florins on Bernabò's side and a thousand on Ambruogiuolo's. On the other hand there is no dispute about the terms in *Frederick*, whereas *Cymbeline*, like Boccaccio, has a more dramatic sequence: in Boccaccio, Bernabò first offers to stake his head, and the five thousand florins is Ambruogiuolo's substitute for this. Though the attempted seduction by Jachimo is Shakespeare's addition, the villain in *Frederick* does at least speak with the wife, and it is this—not, as in Boccaccio, what he hears of her reputation—that makes him give up hope. The hero is 'more sorier then he was before' when he receives the news of his wife's death, and, as in *Cymbeline*, the tokens which the servant

¹ All quotations from the Appendix to Nosworthy's edition, reproducing the reprint of the 1560 edition in J. Raith's *Historie von den vier Kaufleuten* (1936).

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offers are stained with blood, from a pet lamb which the wife had conveniently brought with her.¹ At the end, the villain confesses that he deserves death, whereas in Boccaccio he is struck dumb with shame. In the bed-chamber scene the heroine is sleeping alone, as in *Cymbeline*, whereas in Boccaccio she has a little girl with her. But in general Shakespeare's agreements with Boccaccio against *Frederick* are more striking:² notably the light burning in the heroine's bedchamber (2. 2. 19), and the mole (2. 2. 38), for which *Frederick* has a black wart on the left arm. The presence of Philario in Act 2, scene 4 is of doubtful force. It contrasts with the stress on complete privacy in *Frederick*, but it is natural—though not, as Nosworthy thinks, necessary—to have Philario present as stake-holder, and Shakespeare departs from what is central to the story in Boccaccio: the presence of all the merchants who were there when the wager was made.

There is certainly not much in this part of *Cymbeline* which cannot be accounted for by Boccaccio and *Frederick* between them. But the possibility of a lost intermediate source, though regarded with healthy scepticism by recent scholars,³ cannot be entirely dismissed. W. F. Thrall, to whom we owe the most careful

¹ Nosworthy seems fanciful in thinking that this detail may be echoed in 3. 4. 97.

² W. F. Thrall, *Studies in Philology*, xxviii (1931), 646–7, notes these and some less important agreements.

³ For example, Nosworthy, p. xx of his edition; F. P. Wilson, *Shakespeare Survey*, 3 (1950), 16; for a *commedia dell'arte* derivative of Boccaccio that is in some respects closer to *Cymbeline* than is either Boccaccio or *Frederick*, see the *scenario* of *La Innocencia Rivenuata* printed by K. M. Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy* (1934), II, 568–72, and discussed by F. D. Hoeniger, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, VIII (1957), 133.

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survey of coincidences between the play and *Frederick*, was not himself convinced that either the latter or Boccaccio was a direct source, and was inclined, with Gaston Paris,¹ to believe in a lost English source. At this point, another analogue, the anonymous *Westward for Smelts*, becomes relevant. This was formerly put forward as a source, on the strength of Steevens's assertion that he had seen a 1603 edition; but the only surviving edition is dated 1620, and follows a Stationers' Register entry of January in that year.² The parallels with *Cymbeline* that are not present in Boccaccio and *Frederick* are rather more impressive in Thrall's summary than in the story itself, which is much farther from the other three versions than they are from each other. The whole scene is transferred to England in the Wars of the Roses, which leads Thrall to talk of an 'English historical background, with enveloping war action';³ but the way in which the Boccaccian and the historical elements are related in *Cymbeline* makes it quite unlike *Westward for Smelts*, in which the historical setting is a mere backcloth and does not involve new plot-material. It is very hard to imagine a common source for *Cymbeline* and *Westward for Smelts* which would account for the slender resemblances between them and would at the same time be close enough to Boccaccio to account for the Boccaccian material in Shakespeare which *Westward for Smelts* completely lacks. That the 'actors [are] not merchants but of the gentry' is also a slender parallelism. In *Cymbeline*, the

¹ *Romania*, xxxii (1903), 481-551. H. G. Wright, *Boccaccio in England from Chaucer to Tennyson* (1957), p. 220, n. 3, writes that in *Miscellanea di studi critici edita in onore di Arturo Graf* (1903), which I have not seen, Paris 'had already modified his views'.

² Nosworthy, p. xix, n. 1, by an oversight, has 1619.

³ Dowden, p. xxix of his edition, had also noted this.

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rank of the characters is determined by the historical plot; in *Westward for Smelts*, it is a mere matter of the use of the words 'gentleman' and 'gentlewoman'. The villain does, indeed, become acquainted with the heroine on terms of more familiarity than in *Frederick* (it will be recalled that they do not meet at all in *Boccaccio*), but the specific Shakespearian development is wholly lacking, and whereas the absence of an accomplice in *Cymbeline* arises from what is new in Shakespeare, in *Westward for Smelts* it is merely part of the general simplification the story undergoes: there is, for instance, no bodily token, and the hero is convinced solely by a stolen crucifix.¹ The resemblances detected between *Westward for Smelts* and the later part of the play are slight, and, such as they are, they may be the result of the author's recollections of *Cymbeline* on the stage. Thrall's final remark about 'the presence of most of these traits in *Miracle* or other versions of the "French" type' is not elaborated, and is not borne out by my reading of the *Miracle*. But a couple of rather striking resemblances between it and *Cymbeline*, which can scarcely be other than accidental, were pointed out long ago by Collier.² The villain boasts that he can overcome any woman if he can speak to her twice: 'Que je ne sçay femme vivant | Mais que deux foiz a li parlasse | Que la tierce avoir n'en cuidasse | Tout mon delit'³ (cf. I. 4. 127-30); and in his interview with the heroine, he accuses the hero of unfaithfulness to her at Rome: 'De Romme vien ou j'ay

¹ On some of these divergences, see W. W. Lawrence, *PMLA*, xxxv (1920), 398, n. 14 (on p. 400).

² *Shakespeare's Library* [1843], II, Introduction to section on *Cymbeline*, pp. xi-xii.

³ 'Miracle de Oton, Roy d'Espagne' in *Miracles de Nostre Dame*, ed. G. Paris and U. Robert, IV (1879), ll. 654-7.

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laissé | Vostre seigneur, qui ne vous prise | Pas la queue
d'une serise; | D'une garce s'est acointié | Qu'il a en si
grant amistié | Qu'il ne scet d'elle departir'¹ (cf. 1. 6.
98–138). If this represents parallel but independent
developments of the possibilities of the story—and
there seems no reason to doubt it—it is easy to accept
any slighter resemblances between different versions as
coincidental. They are only to be expected in a wide-
spread story with many variants. Thus in the Middle
English romance, *The Earl of Toulouse*, there is an
analogue to Jachimo's pretence at 1. 6. 155 ff. The
would-be seducer claims that he has not been in
earnest, 'Y did nothyng but you to afray'.²

The analogue that most readily comes to our minds
for Imogen and her stepmother is the story of *Snow
White*, and the parallel was drawn in 1864 by K.
Schenkl,³ but no evidence has been found that this tale
was known in England in Shakespeare's day. Another
stepmother who has been pressed into service is the one
who seeks to procure the death of her stepson by poison
in Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, x, 1–12.⁴ There are some
resemblances between the stories, and there is no reason
why Shakespeare should not have read Apuleius; but,

¹ Ll. 728–33.

² In *Middle English Metrical Romances* (1930), ed. W. H. French and C. B. Hale, l. 581. E. Greenlaw, who pointed out the parallel in *PMLA*, xxi (1906), 617–18, exaggerated the resemblance by calling it a claim 'that his purpose was merely to prove her virtue'; what he says is, however, true of another version he mentions (p. 620), *Sir Tryamour*, where the temptation is claimed to be 'But for a fondyng' (ed. A. J. E. Schmidt (1937), l. 111). On the analogues of *The Earl of Toulouse*, see P. Christophersen, *The Ballad of Sir Aldingar* (1952), pp. 127–42.

³ *Germania*, ix, 458 ff.

⁴ See H. Reich, *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, xli (1905), 177–81.

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as F. Brie has pointed out,¹ almost all the parallels, in a context closer to *Cymbeline*, also occur in Richard Johnson's *Tom a Lincolne* (Stationers' Register, 1599), Part I, ch. 5.

There is a good deal in *Cymbeline* that cannot be traced either to Holinshed or to Boccaccio (plus *Frederick of Jennen*). Is it all of Shakespeare's own invention? The view put forward by A. H. Thorndike² that he was indebted to Beaumont and Fletcher tragi-comedy, and in particular to *Philaster*, is now generally rejected. There was never any good reason to believe that *Philaster* was earlier than *Cymbeline*, and there is nothing in *Cymbeline* itself to suggest such a debt. But the case is different with at least one, and probably two, earlier romantic comedies. In 1887 R. W. Boodle³ argued that Shakespeare was indebted, especially in the Belarius part of the play, to the anonymous *Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune* (performed 1582 and printed 1589). This claim is accepted by Nosworthy, and is fairly plausible. It turns chiefly on the role of Bomelio, who has lived in a cave as a hermit, after being banished from court by the father of the present king Phizantius⁴ because of the false accusation of a treacherous friend. His son Hermione, whose parentage is at first unknown, is in love with Phizantius's daughter Fidelia, and is banished when her boorish brother Armenio reveals the affair to his father. The whole play is introduced by a dispute among the gods about the relative power of Venus and Fortune, pre-

¹ *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, XLIV (1908), 167–70.

² *The Influence of Beaumont and Fletcher on Shakespeare* (1901); *contra*, C. M. Gayley, *Francis Beaumont: Dramatist* (1914), pp. 386–95.

³ *Notes and Queries*, 7th series, IV (1887), 405.

⁴ Nosworthy, p. xxv, makes Phizantius himself responsible for the banishment.

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sided over by Jupiter. Nosworthy is probably right in regarding as beyond coincidence the fact that 'both plays present the banished lover as a pauper brought up at Court, both include a boorish brother,¹ and both introduce Jupiter and use him, flagrantly, as a *deus ex machina*'.² There is also the coincidence of names between Fidelia and Fidele, and the identity of the hero's name, Hermione, with that of the Queen in *The Winter's Tale*. Bomelio is also presented, in a rather inconsequential way, as a magician, and there is some crude stuff about the destruction of his books that may be faintly echoed in *The Tempest*.

Nosworthy suggests that *Love and Fortune* came to Shakespeare's notice among old romantic plays which the King's Men may have been thinking of reviving, as the title-page of the 1610 Quarto tells us that they did in fact revive *Mucedorus*.³ This is very speculative, but if we admit that Shakespeare did by some means or other come to read this crude old play, the probability ought in consistency to be admitted that he also read a similar play, *Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes*. This play, 'sundry times Acted by her Maiesties Players',⁴ was published in 1599, but probably belongs to the 1580's at the latest. Dyce, on the slenderest of evidence, attributed it to Peele, and Bullen retained it in his edition of Peele, though rejecting the attribution, in agreement with all modern scholars. In 1925, R. S.

¹ In *Cymbeline*, of course, only a stepbrother.

² P. xxvi.

³ L. Kirschbaum, *Modern Language Review*, I (1955), 5, is 'loath to posit a revival by the King's Men on the basis of Jones's title-page alone'. Nosworthy, on no evidence that I know of, dates the revival 1607; for various possible dates, see E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (1923), IV, 35.

⁴ Was it still in the repertory when Shakespeare was a Queen's Man—if he ever was?

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Forsythe¹ pointed out some fairly close parallels between it and *Cymbeline*, but his note has since been overlooked. In a way, it is less surprising that Shakespeare should have read this than *Love and Fortune*, for it has an engaging absurdity about it, and would have furnished him with good specimens of King Cambyses' vein. G. L. Kittredge² in fact attributed it to Thomas Preston, the author of *Cambyses*. Forsythe cited the train of events in scenes 11, 12, 15, 16 and 18 of *Clyomon and Clamydes*, in which Neronis, in love with Clyomon, is abducted by Thrasellus, King of Norway. She escapes in man's attire, and takes service with an old shepherd Corin. Clyomon sets out to rescue her, and meets and slays Thrasellus, and, with the help of Corin, buries him, hanging up his own golden shield and sword over the grave, with an inscription. Neronis enters, assumes from the shield that her beloved lies in the grave, and is dissuaded from suicide only by the personal intervention of Providence in visible shape. There is clearly a general resemblance to the circumstances of Imogen's discovery of the body of Cloten, but I doubt whether the evidence Forsythe cites is quite enough to prove his conclusion. But he weakens his case by stopping his comparison at scene 18, and so missing strong corroborative evidence in the succeeding scenes.³ Neronis leaves the shepherd, and enters the

¹ *Modern Language Notes*, XL (1925), 313-14.

² *Journal of Germanic Philology*, II (1899), 8-9. It may be noted that the trick of appending a personal pronoun, as in 'Phœbus, he, "that wandering knight so fair"' (1 *Henry IV*, 1. 2. 15-16), usually to a proper name, is common in this play: ll. 22, 761, 765, 778, 827, 878, 886, 1020, 1041, 1201, 1506, 1615, 1800, 1897 (all references to Malone Society Reprint, 1913).

³ Forsythe's concentration on Neronis at the grave is probably the result of his desire to modify a suggestion he

service of her beloved, Clyomon, as his page, though, as he is also in disguise, she does not know him. She assumes the name 'Cur Daceer', i.e. *Cœur d'acier* (l. 1639), and Clyomon comments on its meaning, 'heart of Steele' (l. 1640). It is surely more than a coincidence that Imogen gives a French name to her alleged former master (4. 2. 377), and that Lucius comments on the meaning of her own assumed name 'Fidele' (4. 2. 382-3). The final discovery bears no close resemblance to that in *Cymbeline*, though Neronis asks permission to talk in private with the Queen of Denmark (ll. 1948-50), as Imogen with Cymbeline (5. 5. 115-16).

Most other suggested sources are either improbable, or unimportant, or both. But there is some similarity between Imogen's adventures in Wales and those of Erminia in Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, cantos VII and XIX.¹

There is, perhaps, more profit in noticing places where Shakespeare seems to have recalled his own earlier work,² and reminiscences of *King Lear* in particular are interesting. The speeches of Guiderius and Arviragus in 3. 3. 27-44 recall *Lear*, 2. 4. 211-15³ (cf. also 2. 4. 270, 'Man's life's as cheap as beast's'), and there is a

had made earlier (*Modern Language Notes*, XXVII (1912), 110) that the scene in *Cymbeline* was indebted to *The First Part of Feronimo*, 2. 4.

¹ W. J. Craig, in Dowden's edition (1903), p. xxxvii, and also in Craig's own 'Little Quarto' edition (1905), p. xxiii; and E. Greenlaw, *Studies in Philology*, XIII (1916), 142-4.

² See also K. Muir, *Shakespeare's Sources*, I (1957), p. 239.

³ Furness noted the link between 'our pinching care' and *Lear*, 2. 4. 214, 'Necessity's sharp pinch'. A wider set of associations with 'pinch' is discussed by E. A. Armstrong, *Shakespeare's Imagination* (1946), chs. 5-6 (for *Cymbeline*, see p. 50).

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more specific resemblance between *Cymbeline*, 3. 3. 42–4 and *Lear*, 5. 3. 8 ff. Professor G. Melchiori, who has called my attention to these parallels, notes that the scenes are linked ‘by analogy of theme, i.e. lack of, and necessity of “experience”’; he also points out that the *Cymbeline* scene is a link between *Lear* and *The Tempest*: the ‘cell of ignorance’ (3. 3. 33) recalls ‘the prison in which Lear wanted to seek refuge and liberation from the world, but at the same time looks forward to Prospero’s cell’.

III. *The Play*

There is no need for a comprehensive survey of the fortunes of *Cymbeline* at the hands of critics. This has been given by Nosworthy in the Introduction to his Arden edition of 1955 (pp. xl–xlviii: with incidental comments at other points), and still more recently Philip Edwards has published an excellent study of the criticism of the Last Plays as a group in the present century,¹ which usefully balances Nosworthy’s more specialized account. But an editor is bound to say where he stands on a number of central issues, and I shall confine my attention to these. It is probably impossible to avoid being accused either of blindness and insensitivity by critics who detect profound symbolism in the play, or of fantastication by their opponents. As far as *Cymbeline* is concerned (it might be different with *The Winter’s Tale*), I prefer to run the former risk.

¹ *Shakespeare Survey*, 11 (1958), 1–18. Edwards apologizes for his emphasis on ‘prevailing critical attitudes’, which has not allowed him ‘to discuss many important studies of individual plays’ (p. 1). I confess to thinking that he pushes his method rather far when he makes no mention at all of Granville-Barker on *Cymbeline*.

Cymbeline was rather a popular play in the nineteenth century. Tennyson's fondness for it is well known,¹ and Swinburne made a point of ending his *Study of Shakespeare* (1880) 'upon the name of the woman best beloved in all the world of song and all the tide of time; upon the name of Shakespeare's Imogen'. But there was an older and more hard-headed tradition, whose classic expression is Johnson's comment at the end of the play:

This Play has many just sentiments, some natural dialogues, and some pleasing scenes, but they are obtained at the expence of much incongruity.

To remark the folly of the fiction, the absurdity of the conduct, the confusion of the names and manners of different times, and the impossibility of the events in any system of life, were to waste criticism upon unresisting imbecillity, upon faults too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation.

Is it enough to say that most of these 'faults' are of the essence of romance and that Johnson did not understand romance? That would be too easy a way out: it is hard to deny an 'incongruity' that goes beyond the mere factual anachronisms and confusions that Johnson refers to; and it is perfectly possible to combine an enthusiastic admiration for others among the Last Plays with strong misgivings about *Cymbeline*. Certainly, hostile voices have not been silenced. Hazelton Spencer holds that 'of all the completed plays of Shakespeare's unaided authorship, this seems to me the poorest'.² Others have implicitly acquiesced in a belittling judgment on the play as a whole by continuing the nineteenth-century

¹ A copy was buried with him (*Alfred, Lord Tennyson: A Memoir by his Son* (1897), II, 429).

² *The Art and Life of William Shakespeare* (1940), p. 361. Contrast this with his judgment on *Pericles* a few lines earlier: 'a noble play'.