SHAKESPEARE'S TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

NARCISSISM AND ENVY

IN

SHAKESPEARE'S TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

By

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ABSTRACT

Narcissism and envy are two primary psychological forces that determine human behaviour. Narcissism affects a person's sense of self; envy affects his relations with others. Shakespeare seems to have anticipated the recent emergence of psychoanalytic theories about how these forces affect the masculine self. This thesis will investigate how the ideas of René Girard and Heinz Kohut coincide with issues raised by Shakespeare, in Troilus and Cressida.

According to Girard, many characters in the play are driven by 'mimetic desires' created by 'mediators'. Troilus's desire for Cressida is mediated by Pandarus; Ajax's desire to fight Hector is mediated by Ulysses. Yet these characters also display aggressive behaviour symptomatic of the 'narcissistic personality disorder', described by Kohut. Many warriors experience their environment and other people narcissistically; that is, they expect total control over these. When their narcissistic expectations are thwarted, they compensate for inward self-doubts with outward aggression and rage. Shakespeare's Trojan War is largely fuelled by man's fear of being cuckolded, "gored with Menelaus' horn" (I.i.108). Men insult, attack and cuckold rivals in 'preventive attacks', to avoid being victimized themselves.

The Trojan War can thus be seen as the culmination of many individuals' mediated envies combined with preventive attacks and narcissistic rage; behaviour symptomatic of insecurity, not moral depravity. Kohut's theory of archaic narcissism provides the deep psychic foundation on which to build Girard's behavioral model of mimetic rivalry, to create a more comprehensive model for the psychoanalytic criticism of Shakespeare's plays.

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I dedicate this thesis to my father.

NOTES ON EDITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Although I have consulted the glosses of several different editions of Troilus and Cressida, unless otherwise indicated all citations, act/scene/line numbers and stage directions for this play are taken from the paper-cover The Pelican Shakespeare: Troilus and Cressida, edited by Virgil K. Whitaker. All other plays are quoted from The Complete Pelican Shakespeare.

The following abbreviations are employed for frequently cited sources:

Envy = Girard, A Theater of Envy (1991)

AOS = Kohut, The Analysis of the Self (1971)

ROS = Kohut, The Restoration of the Self (1977)

SFS followed by volume number = Kohut, The Search for the Self (1978, 1990 & 1991). For example, "(SFS 2: 672)" indicates The Search for the Self, volume 2, page 672.

Funk = Funk and Wagnalls Canadian College Dictionary

OED = The Oxford English Dictionary.

See Works Cited or Consulted (107-13, below) for complete bibliographic references.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

This thesis is primarily a study of masculine identity and the world as seen through the narcissistic perception of Shakespeare's male characters. It is also written from a male perspective (i.e., my own and those of most of my critical and theoretical sources). Therefore, words such as 'child', 'man', 'mankind', 'he', 'his' *et cetera* refer to men only, and do not include the experiences of women, which deserve more critical attention than the limited scope of this study permits.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of narcissism, envy, shame, aggression and rage in his plays suggests that Shakespeare harboured an extremely pessimistic view of man's nature. Yet the disturbing behaviour that plagues his myriad of male characters seems more often prompted by insecurity than by moral depravity. Insecurity is defined as a "condition of anxiety and apprehensiveness; [a] sense of being unsafe and threatened" or feeling "liable to injury, failure, loss, etc." (Funk s.v.). As we shall see, the last phrase of this definition is particularly applicable to the young hero of Troilus and Cressida. Troilus fears not only injury in battle and failure in his rite-of-passage from Priam's youngest son to a warrior and lover equal to his older brothers Hector and Paris, but also the loss of his Cressida.

Insecurity causes the compulsive self-promotion of Richard II, King Lear, and Prospero, whose narcissistic displays fail to compensate for recurring self-doubts. Likewise, insecurity about social and sexual status cause Iago's manipulation of Cassio, Roderigo and Othello, and makes these three susceptible to Iago's envious machinations. Insecurity is an underlying cause of sexual jealousy, and men abuse women to compensate for feelings of weakness: Leontes imprisons Hermione, Othello strangles Desdemona,

Posthumus plots to poison Imogen, Claudio humiliates Hero, and Troilus rages at his 'false' Cressida.

Aggression and violence are employed by men to counteract feelings of insecurity: to assert manhood, to hide self-doubts, and to boost self-esteem. Coppélia Kahn writes that in Shakespeare's early history plays, "the means of masculine self-definition is aggression" (49; see also Hawkins 45-64). For example, the campaigns of Henry V are a large-scale coming-of-age, contrasting with the French Dauphin who fails his first trial by fire. Yet this is not limited to the histories, as other types of plays portray men who fight or kill as a rite of passage from insecure youth to 'honourable' adulthood: comedy (Orlando wrestles Charles), problem play (Bertram joins the French army), tragedy (Demetrius and Chiron kill Bassianus and rape Lavina), and romance (Guiderius beheads Cloten).

Perhaps Shakespeare's greatest insights into masculine insecurity occur in King Lear, which is often cited as his most bitter tragedy (Simon 103-05). Lear's situation demonstrates one recurring Shakespearean theme, that man's identity is largely determined by others. As Lear expresses it, "Who is it that can tell me who I am?" (I.iv.220). Cordelia's refusal to flatter her father in answer to his query, "Which of you shall we say doth love us most" (I.i.51) causes a childish tantrum that is 'adult' in its terrible scope and intensity. Yet Shakespeare suggests that a cure for Lear's condition is possible through

empathy; that is, caring for others and understanding oneself by seeing one's 'self' objectively (ROS 302-06). Lear learns to empathize on the stormy heath where he cares for Poor Tom, and realizes: "They told me I was everything. 'Tis a lie -- I am not ague-proof" (IV.vi.103-04). His childish feelings of grandiosity and omnipotence, and the self-doubts which enrage him after these feelings are not confirmed by his "pelican daughters", are eventually converted into empathic self-awareness: "You must bear with me./ Pray you now, forget and forgive. I am old and foolish" (IV.vii.83-84).[1]

Whereas Shakespeare explores insecurity in later life in King Lear, he presents spectacular examples of narcissistic and envious behaviour in younger men in Troilus and Cressida. This play is fraught with insecure characters who envy their rivals, berate their loved ones, have solipsistic and unempathic relations with their peers, and display chronic aggression. As a result, perhaps more than any other play, it is the focus of pessimistic criticism, which often cites it as evidence of Shakespeare's 'cynical' view of man as morally depraved and irredeemable. One such critical view is held is René Girard. Yet it is a play which the more empathic self-psychology of Heinz Kohut seems especially well-suited to explore. Troilus and Cressida explores

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[1] Bennett Simon uses Kohutian self-psychology to show the all too human origins of Lear's elemental rage: "Lear's narcissistic character structure entails defects in empathy, rage at his inability to control natural and familial processes, and delusional attempts to reconstruct and control his shattered world" (105).

the etiology of, and possible solutions to, insecurity and aggression, providing brief glimpses of hope before the plot disintegrates into cruelty and chaos. By reading this play empathically, and by exploring its characters' disturbing behaviour patterns, I hope to reveal important traces of optimism in one of Shakespeare's 'darker' visions of man.

In his most recent study of Shakespeare, A Theater of Envy (1991), René Girard interprets many plays according to his theory of "mediated envy"; that is, the mimetic rivalry created between two characters, by a third (the mediator). Girard devotes six chapters of his book to "the arch-mimetic play", stating: "If this thesis had to be defended on the basis of a single play, *Troilus and Cressida* would be my choice. No play is more clearly designed for the unravelling of a whole range of mimetic phenomena" (Envy 70, 121). I believe that although Girard's model is innovative, it confines his reading of the play to immediate causes of human behaviour, ignoring important underlying causes. Often, Girard simplifies and distorts complex plays in order to fit his model: "The mimetic approach solves the 'problems' of many a so-called problem play" (Envy 5).

I propose that Heinz Kohut's innovative clinical work on narcissism and the archaic (i.e., childhood) origins of the adult self can compensate for deficiencies in Girard's model. According to Kohut, a child displays "grandiose-exhibitionistic" behaviour in order to gain praise from an "admiring selfobject"

(mother-figure), while an "idealized selfobject" (father-figure) inhibits excessive behaviour and provides the child with a socializing role model (SFS 2: 620-26). Imbalances in this delicate formative process create archaic "narcissistic imbalances" that cause aggressive behaviour in adults who never outgrow their childish dependence on the praise of admiring selfobjects or the examples of idealized selfobjects whom they imitate (SFS 2: 636-39).

According to Girard's 1991 reading of Troilus and Cressida, the characters are driven by 'mimetic desires' created by the two great 'mediators': Pandarus and Ulysses. Troilus desires Cressida, because of Pandarus' suggestions; Ajax fights Hector in a complex plot mediated by Ulysses to create envy in Achilles. Yet I will argue that the participants in the Trojan War and love-plots also display symptoms of the 'narcissistic personality disorder', described by Kohut. Their aggression is caused by fear of the narcissistic injury of being cuckolded, "gored with Menelaus' horn" (I.i.108). Thus, the insults and aggressive behaviour that pervade the play are forms of 'preventive attack' against the humiliation of abandonment that affects cuckolds. Rage at being cuckolded prompts the arming of Achilles (who loses Patroclus), Ajax (who twice loses his friend, Thersites), and Troilus (who loses 'his' Cressida). The Trojan War can be seen as the culmination of individual mediated envies combined with narcissistic rage.

These two psychoanalytic approaches can be used in concert to examine behaviour from different points of reference: the immediate, mechanical, surface desires discussed by Girard; and the deep-seated narcissistic needs presented by Kohut. Using a hybrid Girardian/Kohutian approach, I will explore, but not resolve, some of the "insoluble enigmas" contained in one of Shakespeare's most paradoxical plays (Envy 138). This thesis will also investigate many dramatic and psychoanalytic issues: mimesis and "self-fashioning",[2] mirroring and metatheatrics, cuckoldry and masculine rivalry, and the etiology of dysfunctional adult social interaction. Unlike the Prologue, who "tickling skittish spirits,/ On one and other side, Troyan and Greek,/ Sets all on hazard" (20-22), I do not intend to set Girard against Kohut in a psychoanalytic contest. Rather, just as many of the Trojans and Greeks are related and there are many similarities between the two camps,[3] so too are

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[2] Here I use Stephen Greenblatt's phrase in its broadest sense, "the forming of a self" (1980, 192). However, it is beyond the scope of this study to situate the characters in their various historical contexts -- whether Ancient, Medieval or Elizabethan -- as Greenblatt strongly advocates (1990, 131-45). Strict adherence to his New Historical approach would make the writing of this thesis a "double impossibility"; that is, it is anachronistic to examine Renaissance texts using modern psychoanalysis because the modern concept of the self is irreconcilably different from the Renaissance one (Holland 1-6; Greenblatt 1991, 142). Yet I hope that my close reading of the play, and heavy reliance on textual evidence and historicized usages of key terms will justify the methodology and compensate for personal and historical biases.

[3] Ajax is Hector's cousin; Achilles loves Polyxena, daughter of the Trojan queen Hecuba; Helen grows to love her captor, Paris; Cressida's father Calchas lives among the Greeks; *et cetera*.

the theories of Girard and Kohut both related in their objectives and interdependent in my application of them.

The thesis is organized in five chapters. Chapter 1 outlines the psychoanalytic models of Girard and Kohut, and how (and why) these are combined to examine the play. Chapter 2 examines the phenomenon of cuckoldry and the related issues of insults *qua* preventive attacks, sexual rivalry, and man's fear of abandonment. Chapter 3 examines the relationship between Ajax and Achilles, arguing that the former fashions himself after the latter and that their aggressive behaviour is intensified when they lose their companions and become cuckolds. Chapter 4 traces the coming-of-age of Troilus, and examines his relationships with others as perceived through his narcissistic perception. Chapter 5 examines the cuckolding of Troilus, and how his narcissistic rage and fragmenting self are reflected by the play's thwarting of audience expectations and chaotic closing battle scenes.

CHAPTER 1

"Emulation hath a thousand sons": Narcissism and Envy

Girard's theory of mediated envy is widely applicable because of its simplicity. In this triangular model of human interaction, a "subject" imitates his "model"/ "mediator" and desires a "common object" (Envy 9). The subject is usually a novice; the model more experienced. The desired object can be a person, a thing or a concept. In Troilus and Cressida, objects are most often women such as Helen and Cressida, or attributes such as fame and honour. Because men learn by imitation, there can be no un-mediated desire:

> *the subject desires the object because the rival desires it.* In desiring an object the rival alerts the subject to the desirability of the object. The rival, then, serves as a model for the subject... in regard to desires (Girard 1972, 145, italics his).

In fact, the subject can only desire an object if another person desires the same object: "All desire is an imitation of the rivals's desire and therefore mimetic" (Moi 22). Girard maintains that mimetic rivalry is distinct from Oedipal rivalry as envisaged by Freud. Mimetic rivalry occurs less often between fathers and sons than it does between siblings or individuals of similar age and social stature (1980, 114-15). Therefore it is especially useful for examining Troilus

and Cressida, where "emulation hath a thousand sons" (III.iii.156) all competing with one another. When the desired object cannot be shared by the subject and the model (either because it is a sexual partner, or something in short supply), conflicting desires escalate in intensity from disharmony to rivalry to violence (Girard 1973, 34-35).

Although a model's self-esteem increases when a subject imitates his example, if the subject approaches the model's superior position -- and threatens to steal the model's object -- differences disappear and conflict occurs (Girard 1972, 145). Conflict is caused by the "mimetic double-bind": the mediated subject's discovery that "in addition to the usual imperative of friendship -- *imitate me* -- another imperative has mysteriously appeared: *do not imitate me*" (Envy 15, italics his). Ajax is one victim of such mixed messages. He is encouraged to imitate Achilles by the Greek generals, who hope that the double-bind will spur Achilles to arm and fight to (re)create distinctions -- 'do not imitate me' -- between himself and Ajax. But the more Ajax resembles his model, the more he is mocked by his peers (II.iii.140-172). The double-bind leads to a breakdown in the hierarchical social order that Girard calls a "crisis of degree".

Girard borrows Ulysses's term "degree" (I.iii.109) to describe the "crisis of degree", or undifferentiation, that causes mimetic violence:

> a process of mimetic crisis... leaves the characters without a real identity -- or difference. As they seek to restore this identity through mimetic violence and revenge, they destroy more and more the system of arbitrary but socially real differences they formerly inhabited. [...] Tragic heroes do not kill each other because they have 'their differences' but because they do not have them any more (Girard 1980, 112).

Modern societies have legal institutions which define and police differentiation (Girard 1972, 19). In more "primitive" societies, only "the sacrificial death of the hero brings the mimetic crisis to an end" (Girard 1980, 121). Girard argues that the collective murder by the Myrmidons of the "defenceless" victim, Hector, is a cathartic "turning point, the beginning of the end for Troy, the great climax beyond which the crisis of Degree continues for a while and even worsens, but then winds down and is ultimately resolved in favor of the Greeks" (Envy 231).

In fact, Shakespeare omits the fall of Troy from his play, and instead shows how this immediately ends the 'crisis of degree' on the Greek side as Achilles is re-instated as the great hero: "The bruit is, Hector's slain, and by Achilles" (V.ix.3). Yet the audience and Ajax know that Achilles's actions are "bragless" (V.ix.4). Shakespeare suggests that the solution to mimetic violence, "degree" as envisaged by Ulysses (and Girard), is an artificial and malleable social construction; a "praxis" rather than a "precept" (Bredbeck 42-43). Yet the only alternative to "degree" seems to be anarchy and violence: "Take but degree away, untune that string,/ And hark what discord follows. Each thing meets/ In mere oppugnancy" (I.iii.108-11).

Fighting for a disputed object provides the means to other ends: the fashioning of a self after a model, and the maintenance of a self by creating self-esteem. Especially in masculine rivalry for women, "when the rivalry further intensifies, the object recedes into the background and the mediator looms larger and larger" (Envy 42). The Trojans and Greeks are ostensibly fighting over Helen, but she is displaced by the rivalries themselves; a displacement symbolized by her short appearance in the play (III.i.40-148). The rival armies are not fighting over an object: "Everything is rivalry for the sake of rivalry" (Girard 1980, 122). Through mimetic rivalry, a subject defines and improves his self by imitating superior models: "The object is only a means of reaching the mediator. The desire is aimed at the mediator's *being*" (Girard 1965, 53, italics his). No subject has a stable, autonomous self; confined to perpetual mimetic circles, he can only imitate other models' selves, which in turn are imitations of other models' selves.

Girard's "self" is therefore defined through imitation and rivalry, and even narcissistic individuals are entirely dependent on others to inspire and maintain their "self-love". Girard rejects the Freudian model of narcissism, in which an individual is "centered upon himself", because "The more one becomes narcissistic or 'egotistic' ...the more one becomes morbidly objectal or Other-oriented" (Girard 1979, 3-4). One cannot experience "self-love" without being

loved or desired by another, as Achilles discovers when he is snubbed by the Greek generals:

> ...I do enjoy
> At ample points all that I did possess,
> Save these men's looks; who do, methinks, find out
> Something not worth in me such rich beholding
> As they have often given. (III.iii.88-92)

Girard insists that a subject only loves himself to compete with a model, who loves the subject; the subject loves himself to be like the model (Envy 100-04). No independent narcissism is possible, as human interdependence is axiomatic:

> [there is only] a potentially infinite process of reciprocal imitation. Both partners are simultaneously models and imitators of the same desire and, inside this circular system of imitation, there is no room for a second desire... In a world of rampant mimetic contagion, no good reciprocity is possible (Envy 101).

Girard's circular model of self-love, and triangular model of object-love are cynical and reductive.[1] Although there is little mutual love or empathy in Troilus and Cressida, and few characters have independent, cohesive selves, these are symptoms of individual psychological disorders, not the universal human condition that Girard posits (Envy 3). Restoring balance, independence

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[1] Girard's model and his readings of Troilus and Cressida have been examined by many critics. Kofman and Moi question the validity of the general model; while Fineman and Wilson assess more favourably Girard's readings of Troilus and Cressida.

and empathy to an individual are the goals of the self-psychology of Heinz Kohut.

Kohut's empathic view of narcissism presents a radical departure from the traditionally pejorative views held, to varying degrees, by theorists since Freud equated it with masturbation, homosexuality and other "perversions" in his seminal paper "On Narcissism: An Introduction" (Freud 73-89). Kohut distinguishes healthy narcissism (cohesive identity, self-esteem and the ability to empathize with others) from the unhealthy 'narcissistic personality disorder' (fragmentation, low self-esteem, propensity to shame and rage).[2]

Kohut defines the self as "a unit, cohesive in space and enduring in time, which is a center of initiative and a recipient of impressions" (ROS 99).[3] The self includes the classical topography of id, ego and superego, as well as the physical body and the experience of objects (other people) (Layton 2-3). The

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[2] It is important to note that, unlike in current 'pop-psychology', in self-psychology self-esteem is not an end in itself: "the goal is not the building of self-esteem, but the actual structuralization of the ego. Self-esteem is merely a consequence of this structuralization and not an independent goal" (Moberly 44; see also Lasch 29-34).

[3] This is not radically different from the Elizabethan concept of the self: "in Shakespeare's time 'self' meant... the individual [and] that individual's consciousness of his own identity" (Garber 49). The OED provides two historicized definitions of 'self': "4.a. ...one's nature, character, or (sometimes) physical constitution or appearance"; and "b. An assemblage of characteristics and dispositions which may be conceived as constituting one of various conflicting personalities within a human being" -- citing Spenser's Amoretti of 1595 as containing the first occurrence of this latter usage.

nucleus of the self (primary narcissism) is inherent at birth. This foundation of the self is built upon during infancy and early childhood (secondary narcissism) through relationships with caregivers. If this gradual process of structure-building is interrupted, these caregivers -- and substitutes for them in later life -- continue to be experienced narcissistically as "selfobjects": "objects which are themselves experienced as part of the self" (AOS xiv). The "admiring selfobject" is initially the mother, nurse or primary caregiver; and the "idealized selfobject" is usually the father, guardian, or role-model (Kohut 1987, 77-79; Bacal 230-32). Selfobjects are "interwoven" into the self-structure of the child, "whose maintenance of self-cohesiveness and self-esteem... [depend] on their presence, their confirming approval" (AOS 21). Howard A. Bacal likens selfobjects to "the glue necessary to keep the parts of a broken vase together [which] becomes part of the vase itself" (232).

The admiring selfobject "mirrors" the actions displayed by a child's grandiose-exhibitionistic self; that is, the self that craves constant affirmation (SFS 2: 626). Mirroring is not confined to "imitative, reflective responses" (Hamilton 50), but is more accurately defined as "appreciation" (50), "adequate confirming responses... from the environment" (SFS 2: 626), or "recognition" (Bacal 232). D. W. Winnicott states that, for a child, "*the precursor of the mirror is the mother's face*" (111, italics his). Kohut writes that "empathic-mirroring" can be as subtle as

> the gleam in the mother's eye, which mirrors the child's exhibitionistic display, [or] other forms of maternal participation in and response to the child's narcissistic-exhibitionistic enjoyment [which] confirm the child's self-esteem (AOS 116).

Troilus, whose self-esteem is quite low, is very sensitive to facial responses to his actions (see Chapters 4 and 5, below).

After the painful renunciation of the feelings of primary narcissistic omnipotence, a child buttresses his weakened self by merging with a powerful idealized selfobject (AOS 37; Layton 2-7). The father becomes a source of strength for the child; a role model to be "gazed at in awe, admired, looked up to, and like which one wants to become" (SFS 1: 436). Bacal describes the idealized selfobject relation as "the experience of feeling linked to the admired other: the self, in effect, walking proudly in the shadow of his admired object" (232).

Because these caregivers cannot always respond to the child's needs, he introjects the caregivers to compensate for the inevitable insufficiency and unpredictability of their responses. In this manner, he alleviates his fears of abandonment and gains self-sufficiency: "the chief developmental task of the first few years of life is the development of a cohesive self" by integrating these archaic structures into the maturing personality (Layton 4-5). The "effective internalization" of the two parent imagos involves their gradual depersonalization: "The internal structure... now performs the functions which

the object used to perform for the child -- the well-functioning structure, however, has largely been divested of the personality features of the object" (AOS 50). The admiring selfobject becomes self-esteem and ambition: the idealized selfobject becomes the super-ego, encompassing conscience, ideals and values (AOS 39-43).

If this maturational structure-building process is interrupted or disappointed, "The major danger to the vulnerable self [is] 'disintegration' (loss of cohesion)", also known as "fragmentation" or the "breakup of the self" (Morrison 73). Troilus re-enacts this childhood process during his coming-of-age: he should eventually gain self-confidence without the constant affirmation of his admiring selfobject Cressida, and he should internalize the values learned from his idealized selfobjects, Hector, Aeneas and Paris. Yet both these processes are interrupted, and Troilus experiences narcissistic fragmentation at the end of the play (see Chapter 5, below). Without a cohesive self, Troilus flies into a rage because he cannot withstand "narcissistic injuries"; that is, setbacks, insults or anything else that fails to comply with his "grandiose self [which] expects absolute control over a narcissistically experienced archaic environment" (SFS 2: 656).

Narcissistic personality disorder in adults is thus caused by this "insecure cohesion of the nuclear self and selfobject[s]" (SFS 2: 626 note 2). Kohut argues that rage occurs in individuals, not because ego defenses fail to

suppress violent id urges, but because of more fundamental "defects in the psychological structure of the self" (Layton 3).[4] A defective self feels vulnerable because it cannot control elements of its narcissistically perceived environment. For example, when the Greek generals enter "*[at a distance]*", Achilles immediately assumes that they have come to see him: "Patroclus, I'll speak with nobody" (II.iii.64-65). Later, when the generals pass by without confirming his importance, he reacts with panic, confusion and anger (III.iii.74-92). What most distresses an unbalanced individual, such as Achilles, is the "inability to regulate self-esteem and to maintain it at normal levels" (AOS 20). This results in a split in the nuclear self, experienced as "temporary oscillations" between "anxious grandiosity and excitement" on one side, to "mild embarrassment and self-consciousness, or severe shame, hypochondria, and depression" on the other (AOS 8, 20).

The most common reactions to an injury are shame and rage: "the narcissistically vulnerable individual responds to actual (or anticipated) narcissistic injury either with shamefaced withdrawal (flight) or with narcissistic rage (fight)" (SFS 2: 637). Rage is provoked by psychological injuries, "such as ridicule, contempt, and conspicuous defeat", and it occurs in many forms:

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[4] Here, Kohutian self-psychology makes a radical break with Freudian psychoanalysis. Kohut asserts that "fundamental to the self are not biological drives but rather the desire for a sense of relationship with and responsiveness from others" (Bouson 13).

> The need for revenge, for righting a wrong, for undoing a hurt by whatever means, and a deeply anchored, unrelenting compulsion in the pursuit of all these aims, which gives no rest to those who have suffered a narcissistic injury (SFS 2: 638)

An enraged individual experiences a "total lack of empathy toward the offender" (SFS 2: 645). In fact, "the enemy" is not perceived as an autonomous individual with whom one is at odds, but as a "*flaw in a narcissistically perceived reality*... a recalcitrant part of an expanded self over which the narcissistically vulnerable person had expected to exercise full control" (SFS 2: 644, italics his).

Rage is often wildly disproportionate to the slight incurred, because the rage involves a regression to the "psychological 'bedrock'" of archaic experiences: "Destructive rage... is always motivated by an injury to the self... especially a narcissistic injury inflicted by the self-object of childhood" (ROS 116-17). Of course rage occurs in balanced individuals as well, but it is particularly volatile when it "arises from the matrix of narcissistic imbalance" (SFS 2: 616). Childlike over-reactions to injuries (such as those of King Lear) are dangerous because of the powerful physical and intellectual means at the adult's disposal (SFS 2: 646).

A narcissistically vulnerable individual avoids injuries by employing a "policy of preventive attack": "the active (often anticipatory) inflicting on others of those narcissistic injuries which he is most afraid of suffering himself" (SFS

2: 638-39). Many of Shakespeare's young males mock their peers, such as the 'cuckold' Menelaus, to avoid incurring scorn themselves (see Chapter 2, below). Andrew P. Morrison adds that a similar defense, "contempt", "frequently functions as a mechanism for ridding the self of unbearable shame" by projecting that shame onto another person (104-05). Adults who cannot avoid painful situations are further frustrated when their reactions seem irrational, extending beyond their control. Their adult selves become enslaved to childish needs to control their narcissistically perceived environment, and to be admired and praised by the "current transference representatives" who fill in for the childhood selfobject structures (Bacal 234).

Curing a fragmented self entails the re-enactment of archaic situations in order to work through deficiencies and internalize the "missing psychic structure[s]", making the self whole again (Layton 5). The key to this "restoration" of a healthy self lies in the transformation of archaic "grandiose-exhibitionism" into more realistic self-esteem, and the "yearning" to merge with an omnipotent selfobject into "the socially useful, adaptive, and joyful capacity... to admire the great after whose lives, deeds, and personalities we can permit ourselves to model our own" (SFS 2: 620). Persisting into adulthood, "one never 'outgrows' one's needs for selfobject responsiveness", but "these needs decrease in intensity and urgency, along with the lessening of the requirement

that the selfobjects of childhood and their current transference representatives fulfill them" (Bacal 234).

In other words, Kohut advocates the transformation -- not the suppression -- of archaic structures into more mature forms (SFS 2: 620-21). This is done through empathy: "Since narcissistic disorders are caused by empathic failure, they can be cured only by unwavering empathic support" (Berman 31). A 'restored' self enjoys increased self-esteem and realistic ambitions "that result from the integration of the grandiose self", and strengthened ideals and respect for others "that result from the integration of the idealized parent imago with the ego and superego" (Layton 6). Elements of a healthy self include creativity, humor, "understanding and accepting human limitations" and the capacity to feel empathy towards others (6). Ajax experiences a temporary 'working through' to a healthy self, thanks to Hector's empathy (see Chapter 3, below).

Despite their different backgrounds and approaches, Girard and Kohut have many points in common. Both are interested in the causes of rivalry and aggression, especially how these relate to masculine needs to boost self-esteem. Both demonstrate that a threatened self will resort to aggression -- whether "mimetic violence" or "narcissistic rage". Both would agree that even the most self-absorbed narcissist is radically other-dependent. Girard's 'mediator' resembles Kohut's 'idealized selfobject' in that the subject seeks to

merge with both of these to strengthen his self. Girard's "hypermimetic characters" experience fragmentation -- "perpetually oscillat[ing] between megalomaniacal elation and complete despondency" (Envy 318) -- very similar to the splitting of a Kohutian self with a narcissistic personality disorder (AOS 8, 20). This 'common ground' between their views of the self encompasses many of the issues raised in Troilus and Cressida: self-love, self-fashioning, mimesis, sexual rivalry, aggression and fragmentation. Also, both approaches are versatile and adaptable.[5]

However, one metaphor, used by both, illustrates a qualitative difference between the two theorists' work: the image of the puppet. In his discussion of Shakespeare's plays, Girard frequently reduces characters to "puppets of mimetic desire" (Envy 54). In addition to denying the existences of a cohesive self or identity, in favour of the "infinite process of reciprocal imitation" (101), Girard also rejects the importance of "hormones", the unconscious, "the repressiveness of families and other social institutions" (18), and physical appearance: "the mimetic context makes physical appearance irrelevant" (11).

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[5] Girard writes of "the 'protean' quality of mimetic desire" (Envy 5). I will take him at his word and combine his theory with that of Kohut. Kohutian self-psychology has been combined with Classical (Simon), Object-relations (Bacal), Kleinian (Westlund) and Jungian (Schwartz-Salant) psychoanalysis, to create other 'protean' models of the self.

He dismisses these concepts as "psychiatric vocabulary [which] detract[s] us from the Shakespearean source of intelligibility, mimetic desire" (14).[6]

Kohut uses the image of the puppet very differently, arguing that because of psychological complications, the individual human subject is *not* like a puppet (SFS 2: 615-16). Unlike Girard, Kohut considers the importance of families and childhood development, whether empathic and healthy or 'repressive' and dysfunctional. Kohut does not consider physical appearance 'irrelevant' and he documents the effects of physical ugliness or deformity on one's propensity to shame and rage (SFS 2: 628-630). While it is true that Kohut often gets lost in his 'psychiatric vocabulary' and "has a tendency toward obfuscation" (Berman 29), Girard employs his own terminology with only slightly less abandon.

Girard's pessimistic view of human behaviour as perpetual mimetic jostling suggests little capacity for human adaption, or compassion in either himself or his fictional analysands. No human autonomy seems possible as the propensity to imitate and compete is inherent from birth (Girard 1972, 147; Moi 27). Girard's theory implies that "the automatic mechanism of mimetic desire" which motivates a subject immediately overrides defenses or compensatory structures; and that in order to deal with object loss, logically this subject must

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[6] In a recent review of A Theater of Envy, Robert M. Adams comments wryly on the "mechanical" nature of Girard's model: "Why look for psychic mechanisms inside puppets who are motivated entirely by strings?" (51).

go out and compete for a replacement (Moi 27). Kohut's description of "the autonomous equipment of the psyche", which compensates for object loss and adapts to other traumas, seems more plausible:

> If the psyche is deprived, however, of a source of instinctual gratification, it will not resign itself to the loss, but will change the object imago into an introject... that takes over functions previously performed by the object (SFS 1: 432).

Perhaps the most glaring omission in Girard's model is an explanation of *why* some individuals are particularly prone to imitation and rivalry. Girard's division of humanity into novices-who-imitate and experts-who-mediate begs the questions: what criteria does he use to evaluate roles, needs and propensities? Why the compulsion to imitate? He does not elaborate any further than to say that, "The mimetic aspects of desire must correspond to a primary impulse of most living creatures" (Girard 1972, 147). On the origins of this "primary impulse", Girard seems deliberately vague:

> Once his basic needs are satisfied... man is subject to intense desires, though he may not know precisely for what. The reason is that he desires *being*, something he himself lacks and which the other person seems to possess. The subject thus looks to that other person to inform him of what he should desire in order to acquire that being. If the model, who is apparently already endowed with superior being, desires some object, that object must surely be capable of conferring an even greater plenitude of being (1972, 146, italics his).

The need for a "greater plenitude of being" occurs in the murky depths of psychic structures explored by Kohut's self-psychology, but over which Girard sails without peering beneath the surface.

Girard's proposed solutions to end rivalry are sometimes impractical (such as sacrificing scapegoats) sometimes inappropriately moralistic:

> The only way to escape from the mimetic double bind... would be for both friends to renounce all possessive desire once and for all. The real choice is between tragic conflict and total renunciation, the Kingdom of God, the Golden Rule of the Gospels (Envy 15).

Sounding as reactionary as Ulysses does in his speech on "the specialty of rule" (I.iii.78), Girard warns that those that do not submit to God, patriarchal fathers, and hierarchical "Degree" "are condemned to the distortions and perversions of ever renewed mimetic duplications" (Envy 162-63, 15). Girard views mimesis and rivalry as a "contagion" (Envy 101); "the mimetic plague" (1985, 208). Kohut views these with empathy, not contempt (Berman 29-35). Girard would cure mimetic rivalry with the further separation -- "differentiation" -- of individuals, rather than with the non-competitive, compassionate mergers and object-relationships advocated by Kohut. Girard's cure of the "cult" of narcissism (Envy 102) involves depriving the narcissist abruptly and totally of mirroring others: "through feigned indifference, [one] compels the interest of a disdainful partner by beating her/him at her/his own narcissistic game and thus destroying that partner's false self-sufficiency" (Envy 110). Kohut's treatment is

less punitive: "by a gradually increasing selectivity of [mirroring] responses begin to channel [narcissism] into realistic directions" (SFS 1: 489).

The purpose of this thesis is not, however, to cure the many character imbalances presented in Troilus and Cressida. Nor is it to cure Girard of his idiosyncrasies or to supplant his reading of the play with my own. Rather, it is to supplement Girard's model with Kohut's self-psychology in order to provide more probing insights into controversial characters, scenes, themes and structural elements of the play. Kohut's self-psychology provides the unconscious foundation on which to build Girard's behavioural model of mimetic rivalry. This combined model suggests that, in certain brief instances, Shakespeare posits a middle-ground between absolute order (Girard's 'differentiation') and absolute chaos (Ulysses's 'mere oppugnancy'); that is, Kohutian empathic relationships with others.

In Troilus and Cressida, Shakespeare provides no immediate evidence about characters' childhoods or the possible origins of their adult personalities. Yet rather than speculate about these (or downplay their importance, as Girard so conveniently does, Envy 18) one can examine on-stage behaviour for symptoms which reveal archaic psychological disorders. For example, the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* lists the official symptoms of the narcissistic personality disorder:

> a grandiose sense of self-importance or uniqueness; preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited success; exhibitionistic need for constant attention and admiration; characteristic responses to threats of self-esteem; and characteristic disturbances in interpersonal relationships, such as feelings of entitlement, interpersonal exploitativeness, relationships that alternate between the extremes of overidealization and devaluation, and lack of empathy (quoted in Berman 20; see also Kerr 585-600).

Although Troilus and Cressida "Leaps o'er the vaunt and firstlings of those broils,/ Beginning in the middle, starting thence away" (Pro. 27-28), one can certainly work backwards from these symptoms and say that Achilles, Ajax, Thersites, Troilus and Hector all suffer from this condition, to varying degrees. Their individual disorders cumulatively affect the language (discourse, image-patterns, allusions, jokes), character, plot, and structure of the play.

CHAPTER 2

"Gored with Menelaus' horn":
Cuckoldry and Selfobject Betrayal

The prevalence of jokes about cuckoldry in Troilus and Cressida suggests that it plays a major part in the definition and maintenance of male characters' selves vis-à-vis rivals and sexual partners. The noun 'cuckold' is defined as "a derisive name for the husband of an unfaithful wife"; the verb 'to cuckold' is to steal a man's wife, and 'to be cuckolded' is to have one's wife stolen by another man (OED s.v.). Thus by definition, to be a cuckolded male is doubly painful: he feels betrayed by a loved-one, yet receives derision, not sympathy, from his peers (Kahn 121). As the thesis develops, I will broaden the definition of cuckoldry to include relationships in which a man is deprived of any love object or cherished companion by a rival, because the feelings of abandonment and rage are analogous to those experienced by a cuckolded husband.[1] Katharine Eisaman Maus writes that masculine anxiety about

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[1] Kahn asserts correctly that, by definition, "Cuckoldry is something that happens to husbands... because they are husbands. A man whose mistress is unfaithful does not become a cuckold" (120). Yet, as I will argue, even though their relationships are not sanctioned by marriage, Troilus rages at his rival Diomedes for stealing his 'achievement', Cressida; Achilles exacts terrible revenge on Hector for killing his lover, Patroclus; and Ajax 'bays' at Achilles for stealing his fool, Thersites.

sexual betrayal "pervades the drama of the English Renaissance"; an anxiety analogous to the fear of abandonment (561). Marianne Novy also writes that cuckoldry has archaic origins: "the intensity of masculine anxiety about cuckoldry comes from the infant's anxiety about losing the mother, who is his whole world" (Novy 107, and sources cited there). Children feel especially betrayed when a new baby arrives and diverts maternal care away from them (Novy 108).[2] Therefore, sibling rivalry and fears of admiring selfobject betrayal form the archaic roots of adult sexual rivalry, fears of cuckoldry and mistrust of women. Kahn suggests that adult sexual anxiety is intensified by the patriarchal institution of marriage in which "a husbands's honor depend[s] on his wife's chastity" (121). A cuckold is stigmatized and often ostracized: "His dishonor and the scorn he endures are for him a loss of status in the community and particularly among his male peers" (122).

The cuckolding of Menelaus by Paris is of central importance to the Trojan war and Shakespeare's play. The Prologue wastes no time introducing Menelaus's awkward situation: "The ravished Helen, Menelaus' queen,/ With wanton Paris sleeps; and that's the quarrel" (9-10). The first battle of the play

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[2] See for example Shakespeare's Sonnet 143, in which the protagonist is a "neglected child" who is set down by his mother so that she can chase "One of her feathered creatures broke away". Cuckolded by a chicken -- an unflattering metaphor which aptly conveys both a poet's anger with a sexual rival, and a child's rage at a younger sibling -- the "loud crying" lover exhorts his love to "turn back to me/ And play the mother's part, kiss me, be kind" (Novy 108-09).

is an off-stage skirmish between Paris and Menelaus, as reported by Aeneas (I.i.105-07). Troilus mocks Paris's wounds, thereby introducing the theme of contempt for cuckolds that pervades the play: "Let Paris bleed; 'tis but a scar to scorn./ Paris is gored with Menelaus' horn" (108-09). Yet according to Pandarus, Paris is not seriously injured: "Who said he came hurt home to-day? He's not hurt" (I.ii.203-04). There is no evidence in I.iii. that Menelaus is injured either. The play's final duel is also between "The cuckold and the cuckold-maker" (V.vii.9-12).[3] This last duel is also inconclusive: Menelaus re-enters unharmed (V.ix.1), as does Paris (V.x.1). By opening and closing the play with these two duels, Shakespeare emphasizes the difficulties of resolving masculine rivalry and sexual aggression. Yet even though Menelaus contributes to the play's structural framework,[4] is present on-stage for well over 600 lines, and is repeatedly referred to in jokes, he himself remains a marginal character.

Menelaus is a figure marginalized by the contempt of others. He is subjected to universal derision in both camps, but especially among the Greeks: he is the butt of lewd jokes by Ulysses (IV.v.30-31), Achilles (III.iii.64),

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[3] Excluding the sparing of Thersites by Margarelon (V.vii.13-22) and the ambush of Hector by Achilles and the Myrmidons (V.viii.5-22), which are not single combats.

[4] An approximate structural symmetry is created by Helen's much anticipated but brief appearance which is 350 lines short of occupying the center of the play (III.i.40-148). Menelaus is forced to the outside edges: Helen is trapped in the middle.

Diomedes (IV.i.61-66), Patroclus (IV.v.27-29) and Thersites (II.iii.67-71; V.i.52-64; V.vii.9-12). As E. A. M. Colman points out, "Throughout *Troilus and Cressida* the function of bawdy is to act as a belittling agent" (117). During the Greek war-council, he is excluded from the generals' discussion except to act as a sort of errand-boy:

> *Tucket.*
> AGAMEMNON: What trumpet? Look, Menelaus.
> MENELAUS: From Troy. (I.iii.212-14)

These two words are his only contribution to 390 lines of discussion. In an environment where masculinity is defined by one's ability to protect one's lady from seducers, and to issue roistering challenges to opponents,[5] Menelaus's relative speechlessness would be interpreted by his peers as a sign of "weakness" (Garber 80-83), or perhaps sexual impotence.

Most of Menelaus's lines are limited to greeting other characters, and in each instance he is insulted. Although Nestor, Ajax and Agamemnon all take part in the engineered "snub" of Achilles (Rossiter 137), only Menelaus's "How do you?" is answered with an insult: "What, does the cuckold scorn me?" (III.iii.55-69). Menelaus is humiliated when Patroclus, Cressida and Ulysses block his six attempts to get a kiss from the new arrival, Cressida, with insults

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[5] See, for example, Aeneas's bombastic delivery of Hector's challenge (I.iii.256-83) or the heated verbal exchange between Hector and Achilles (IV.v-.229-69).

about his "horns" (IV.v.26-46). Menelaus's genuine welcome to Hector, "You brace of warlike brothers, welcome hither", is also answered with Hector's allusions to his "quondam wife", and to Mars and Venus (IV.v.173-181).[6] Menelaus is embarrassed by these insults, "Name her not now, sir; she's a deadly theme", but Hector's apology seems mocking and half-hearted: "O, pardon! I offend" (180-81).

Although Jane Adamson recommends that one avoid using Thersites as spokesman for the play (63-69), some of his comments accurately represent widespread fears of cuckoldry. As Geoffrey Bullough suggests, Thersites "scatters his filth over everything in life... but some of the mud sticks and there are some bitter home-truths in his railing" (110). One of his "bitter home-truths" is the oft-cited comment that "All the argument is a whore and a cuckold" (II.iii.68). This thesis hopes to show that Thersites's comment does not in any

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[6] By implication, Menelaus is as unattractive as Vulcan, whose wife Venus was seduced by Mars. The tradition of mocking cuckolded husbands dates back to antiquity, especially in Ovid's Metamorphoses:

> Vulcan flung open the ivory doors, and admitted the gods. There lay Mars and Venus, close bound together, a shameful sight. The gods were highly amused; one of them prayed that he too might be so shamed. They laughed aloud, and for long this was the best-known story in the whole of heaven (Ovid 98-99).

Joel Fineman agrees with the view that "Vulcan and his wife... are Shakespeare's mythological instance of Olympian cuckoldry" (98).

way trivialize the two sides' "argument" for fighting, but actually legitimates the intensity of the Trojan struggle. Kahn writes that

> neither side can afford to admit the triviality of the war's precipitating incident because, on both sides, honor, reputation, and thus masculinity itself is at stake... The war is folly, but essential to the identity of either side (131).

Cuckoldry motivates all the major rivalries in the play: Troy vs. Greece, Paris vs. Menelaus, Troilus vs. Diomedes, Hector vs. Achilles, Ajax vs. Achilles. These men are fighting to avoid becoming objects of scorn, and to defend or regain their admiring selfobjects, their sources of self-esteem; they are fighting for their very identity, for their selves, for their lives.

Thersites's other "home-truth" is the widespread misconception that a cuckold's impotence drives his wife/ lover into the arms of another man. A cuckold, as Thersites puts it, "is both ass and ox" or "a herring without a roe" (V.i.57-60). Deprived of semen, the males of these species cannot reproduce (Rubinstein 220, s.v. "ridgel"). Yet there is no evidence in the play to suggest that either Helen or Cressida are dissatisfied with their original sexual partners.[7] Helen is abducted by Paris, Cressida is traded for Antenor against her will. If Helen seems happy with Paris (III.i.94, 144-48), it says more about

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[7] Cressida fears that Troilus will be one of the "lovers [who] swear more performance than they are able" (III.ii.78-79) *before* their affair is consummated. Her only complaint the following morning is that "You men will never tarry" (IV.ii.16).

her loneliness and adaptability as seven-year captive, than about Menelaus's impotence. Likewise, Cressida succumbs to Diomedes's crude sexual advances in order to attain a protector in a hostile army camp, and avoid a repetition of the symbolic "gang rape" of IV.v.17-53 (Gaudet 138). The notion that the cuckolded husband is to blame for another man's aggression is so strong that, as Thersites puts it, "I care not to be the louse of a lazar, so I were not Menelaus" (61-63). Thersites cheers on the final duel between Menelaus and Paris as if it were a bull-baiting: "Now, bull! now, dog! 'Loo, Paris, 'loo! Now, my double-horned Spartan!" (V.vii.10-12, Palmer 296). It is as though Menelaus is baited by vicious dogs who attack him with their scorn, bite him, tear away his flesh to feed their own self-esteem. As Ulysses puts it, "How one man eats into another's pride" (III.iii.136).

In the male-dominated wartime environment, the primary roles of women (and of effeminate substitutes such as Patroclus) are largely defined -- and confined -- by masculine needs for admiring selfobjects.[8] The males perceive their environment and its inhabitants narcissistically; that is, as extensions of themselves (SFS 2: 656). Thersites summarizes the struggle as "war for a placket" or 'skirt' (II.iii.18; Palmer 170); a misogynistic view of

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[8] While men perform both admiring and idealized selfobject roles for other men, women are confined to admiring selfobject roles only. No warrior voluntarily idealizes a woman as 'role-model'; for example, absence from the battlefield is rejected as "womanish" (I.i.103).

women's role as entirely metonymic. They are not considered individuals with independent volition and needs, but 'tools' whose value is determined by their obedient and reliable building, maintenance and repair of masculine selves. Kohut writes that for a child, the admiring selfobject is a piece of "psychological equipment" which is important "only insofar as it is invited to participate in the child's narcissistic pleasure and thus to confirm it" (SFS 1: 438-39). Likewise, a woman boosts a grown man's self-esteem with the reliability of her mirroring responses to his displays, especially his sexual performance: "If she remains faithful, she in effect certifies his virility" (Kahn 121; see also Bacal 230).

Yet a woman also boosts masculine self-esteem by being a rare and coveted possession; a "highly decorative mistress" inspiring envy and sexual rivalry in other men (Envy 129). Hector's challenge to Achilles extols the value of Hector's wife (and hence, Hector): "He hath a lady wiser, fairer, truer,/ Than ever Greek did compass in his arms" (I.iii.275-76). Hector de-values his rivals by denigrating their possessions: "The Grecian dames are sunburnt and not worth/ The splinter of a lance" (282-83). A woman is desirable only if she is desired by others, and Troilus assesses feminine value as entirely extrinsic: "What's aught but as 'tis valued?" (II.ii.52). Because they are needed to repair rampant masculine insecurity with reliable empathic responses -- in a competitive environment where gossiping males insult, manipulate and betray each other -- women are treated as a scarce and valuable commodity. Troilus

likens them to pearls (I.i.96), silks (II.ii.69) and exotic spices, relishes, and nectars (III.ii.17-20). Once acquired, a woman is guarded jealously and never willingly transferred to another man.[9] As Bacal notes, "There is a sense of ownership about the selfobject" (233). She can only be "stolen" (Kahn 121), and Troilus likens the abduction of Helen to the theft of an 'inestimable' prize (II.ii.86-96).

Women are highly valued because they mirror the archaic grandiose-exhibitionism of men. In time of war, soldiers are encouraged to display archaic behaviour, no matter how illogical. According to Hector's challenge, a true soldier "seeks his praise more than he fears his peril" (I.iii.267). For example, Troilus fears death less than the dishonour of losing his loved one: "I come to lose my arm, or win my sleeve" (V.iii.96). Similarly, Diomedes craves affirmation from Cressida, and after beating Troilus in battle he sends a servant back to her with Troilus's horse in an exhibitionistic display: "Fellow, commend my service to her beauty;/ Tell her I have chastised the amorous Troyan,/ And am her knight by proof" (V.v.3-5). Although nothing comes of Paris's plan to send Helen to dissuade Hector from fighting, Paris acknowledges the powerful

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[9] In Cymbeline, Posthumus brags that although his "unparagoned mistress" resembles a "most precious diamond", she is 'non-transferable': "The one may be sold or given... The other is not a thing for sale" (I.iv.60-78).

influence she has on the warriors: "You shall do more/ Than all the island kings [to] disarm great Hector" (III.i.142-43).[10]

Heroism in the Trojan War is, in essence, the search for affirmation from admiring selfobjects. Troilus's desire for "So rich advantage of a promised glory/ As smiles upon the forehead of this action" (II.ii.204-05) is very similar to Kohut's description of admiring selfobject responses such as smiling or the mirroring "gleam in the mother's eye" (AOS 116). When Achilles is snubbed by the Greek generals, Patroclus complains that, "They pass by strangely. They were used to bend,/ To send their smiles before them to Achilles" (III.iii.71-2). Achilles also notices this missing "gleam": "What the declined is/ He shall as soon read in the eyes of others" (76-7). Achilles needs praise because he lacks a cohesive self with internalized but depersonalized admiring selfobjects (AOS 50). He demands total control over the mirroring responses that confirm his identity and maintain his self-esteem (SFS 2: 656), and is utterly dependent on others for the "filling in of the structural void" (ROS 127). As Ulysses observes:

> ...man, how dearly ever parted,
> How much in having, or without or in,
> Cannot make boast to have that which he hath,
> Nor feels not what he owes but by reflection;
> As when his virtues aiming upon others
> Heat them, and they retort that heat again

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[10] Likewise, Helen acknowledges that a woman is valued highly by the men whose actions she mirrors: "'Twill make us proud to be his servant, Paris;/ Yea what he shall receive of us in duty/ gives us more palm in beauty than we have" (III.i.144-46).

To the first giver. (III.iii.96-102)

This reflected "heat" is the warmth of empathic-mirroring: whereas unempathic responses, the "negligent and loose regard" of "unplausive eyes", are experienced as the cold gaze of "derision" (III.iii.41-44). Unempathic-mirroring ranges from frowning disapproval by masculine peers to adulterous betrayal by wives and lovers. Ulysses's personification of time subsequently exploits Achilles's craving for mirroring:

> ...time is like a fashionable host,
> That slightly shakes his parting guest by th'hand,
> And with his arms outstretched, as he would fly,
> Grasps in the comer. The welcome ever smiles,
> And farewell goes out sighing. (III.iii.165-69)

If Achilles ends his heroic displays, the mirroring will cease and his self-esteem will be depleted. Self-esteem is a source of strength and confidence that soldiers require to fuel further displays of heroism. Unempathic responses damage self-esteem and weaken their resolve. Troilus interprets divine intervention in terms of empathic or unempathic mirroring, when he rages after Hector's death: "Frown on [the Greeks], you heavens, effect your rage with speed;/ Sit, gods, upon your thrones, and smile at Troy" (V.x.6-7).

Women are especially threatening, and hence targeted for abuse by males, when they refuse to mirror exhibitionistic displays. There is a hint of resentment in Paris's teasing about his lover's influence on him: "all the

gallantry of Troy [are a-field]. I would fain have armed to-day, but my Nell would not have it so" (III.i.123-26). Cassandra's unempathic interruption of the Trojan debate is ignored only because, as Troilus points out, she is their "mad sister" -- a sibling -- not a lover or a mother-substitute with a selfobject function: "Her brainsick raptures/ Cannot distaste the goodness of a quarrel" (II.ii.98, 122-23). When his wife, sister and father attempt to stop Hector from arming, Hector is "ungently tempered" towards his wife only: "Andromache, I am offended with you./ Upon the love you bear me, get you in" (V.iii.1, 77-78). As Hector's admiring selfobject, Andromache's dissent is tantamount to betrayal.[11] Ulysses tries to shame Achilles into fighting by evoking scenarios of female derision:

> ...fame shall in our islands sound her trump,
> And all the Greekish girls shall tripping sing,
> 'Great Hector's sister did Achilles win,
> But our great Ajax bravely beat down him.'
> (III.iii.210-13)

The warriors in this play fear betrayal and cuckoldry more than death in battle. To be cuckolded by another man is both to invite ridicule, and to lose the mirroring source of self-esteem needed to withstand ridicule; it is to become doubly vulnerable. Men guard against such injuries to the self by employing

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[11] Even in happy and stable married relationships, Kohut argues that "there is no mature love in which the love object is not also a self-object... there is no love relationship without mutual (self-esteem enhancing) mirroring and idealization" (ROS 122, note 12).

"preventive attacks" (SFS 2: 638-39). Young adult males are especially unsure about their sexuality, and they turn this massive insecurity into outward verbal and physical aggression: "potential shame [becomes] a motive for defense" (SFS 1: 428). Thus the universal ridicule of Menelaus reveals a universal fear of being cuckolded and ridiculed *like* Menelaus. For example, Diomedes could be accused of hypocrisy for berating Paris and Menelaus in response to the former's query, "Who... deserves fair Helen best[?]":

> He, like a puling cuckold, would drink up
> The lees and dregs of a flat tamèd piece;
> You, like a lecher, out of whorish loins
> Are pleased to breed out your inheritors. (IV.i.61-64)

Diomedes has no deep-felt disgust for cuckoldry, for he later repeats Paris's actions by seducing Cressida. Rather, these words form a preventive attack to which Paris responds with a profound insight into the envious sexual rivalry that pervades the play: "Fair Diomed, you do as chapmen do,/ Dispraise the thing that you desire to buy" (75-76); the "thing" he desires to buy, but fears losing once he has bought.

Paris must listen to much abuse of Helen, but because of the reliability of her affectionate mirroring, and because the desire of other men inflate her extrinsic value, Paris's self-esteem seems immune to attack. For example, he shrugs off Diomedes's searing insults that Paris is a "lecher" and Helen a "whore" (IV.i.75-79). A less self-assured character, such as Troilus,

would respond to such abuse with violent rage. During the Trojan debate, Priam observes that Paris's bravura is linked to the "sweet delights" fed to him by Helen:

> Paris, you speak
> Like one besotted on your sweet delights.
> You have the honey still, but these the gall;
> So to be valiant is no praise at all. (II.ii.142-45)

Envious of Helen, Paris's source of self-esteem, his galled rivals refuse to mirror his "valiant" displays. One man gains self-esteem at another man's expense.[12]

Morrison argues that "contempt" is a defense mechanism one uses to conceal insecurity by projecting it onto others: "The person toward whom one feels contempt usually displays qualities that resemble the disavowed shameful feelings and constructs experienced in the self" (105). So, for example, when Hector enters the Greek camp after an abortive duel with Ajax (IV.v.113-16), Hector masks his insecurity with preventive attacks, insulting Achilles for his "portly size" (IV.v.161), Agamemnon for his "most imperious" speeches (171) and Menelaus for losing his "quondam wife" (178). In a preventive counterattack, Ulysses, embarrassed by his armies' inability to take

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[12] One reason for Ulysses's plot to ridicule Achilles is that he envies the praise that Achilles is hoarding: "What glory our Achilles shares from Hector,/ Were he not proud, we all should share with him" (I.iii.366-67).

Troy,[13] likens it to a woman's body and Hector to "her base and pillar" (211).[14] Ulysses implies that the Greek armies will humiliate Hector's wife: "yonder walls, that pertly front your town,/ Yon towers whose wanton tops do buss the clouds,/ Must kiss their own feet" (218-20). Hector springs to Troy's defense, saying that "her" towers "stand yet, and modestly I think", as if bragging of her chastity.[15] Hector's next lines, "The fall of every Phrygian stone will cost/ A drop of Grecian blood" (222-23), echoes earlier associations of Helen with spilled blood.[16] Their seemingly innocuous and witty banter about the setting has a rather ominous sexual subtext, as threats of cuckoldry mask their military shortcomings.

René Girard is correct in asserting that Troilus and Cressida is the "arch-mimetic play" and that his triangular model of mediated envy elucidates much of its masculine rivalry (Envy 70). However, Girard is strangely silent on

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[13] He complained earlier that rival army factions have weakened their siege of Troy: "Troy in our weakness stands, not in her strength" (I.iii.137).

[14] Similarly, Henry V likens his future wife, Katherine, to a "fair French city" which he desires to conquer. The French king boasts of the modesty and chastity of his daughter and countrywomen: "they are all girdled with maiden walls that war hath never entered" (Henry V V.ii.305-314).

[15] In Cymbeline, Posthumus brags of his wife's chastity, whereupon Iachimo brags that he can seduce her and cuckold his rival: "you know strange fowl light upon neighboring ponds. Your ring may be stol'n too" (I.iv.81-83).

[16] Troilus complains, "Helen must needs be fair, When with your blood you daily paint her thus" (I.i.86-7); Diomedes says, "For every false drop in her bawdy veins/ A Grecian's life hath sunk" (IV.i.69-70).

the issue of cuckoldry, perhaps because it contradicts, in three ways, major elements of his model.

Firstly, when a subject imitates a model's desire for an object, by implication the model does not already fully possess the object, and hence rivalry is possible. Yet if the desired object is the model's wife or monogamous lover the logic of Girard's model falters. Girard takes Cressida's complaint that "Things won are done" (I.ii.273) as axiomatic in human relationships, and asserts that the morning after Troilus's tryst with Cressida, his "'original' desire is completely dead" (Envy 128). By the same logic, a man would not defend his wife or lover, but instead would discard her immediately after the consummation of their relationship and find a new lover. Yet once Paris is established with his honey-sweet "Nell", he does not compete with the other soldiers for women; nor does married Hector attempt to seduce other women.

Secondly, if a subject mimics his model's desire for an object to approach the model's 'being' (to be like the model), then successful rivalry creates a catch-22 in which the subject gains the model's wife, and hence becomes *like* a cuckold. The strategy backfires, and instead of gaining "an even greater plenitude of being" (Girard 1972, 146), the subject obtains a "flat tamèd piece" and becomes as contemptible as the model he cuckolds. Diomedes's contempt for Paris (IV.i.53-66) is a prime example of this adulterous 'double-bind'.

Thirdly, while Girard asserts that "*Being* is provided by others" he deduces too much from this (otherwise valid) psychoanalytic axiom:

> men... cannot enjoy whatever they possess *but by reflection*, be it a mistress, military glory, or political power. Their passion for "boasting" is an effort to turn their interlocutors into better mirrors, sharper reflectors of a happiness that loses all reality once it becomes theirs. It can be revived only by envy (Envy 146-47, italics his).

Men do boast, but not to create "mirrors, sharper reflectors" of themselves and their desires: rivals who imitate exactly these desires. Such carbon-copies fit into Girard's nightmare scenario of 'undifferentiation', in which mimetic doubles kill one another to recreate the very distinctions blurred by their boasting and mimesis (1980, 107-17). But this is a *reductio ad absurdum* of more complex psychoanalytic processes. According to Kohut, men boast to gain an empathic reaction to their displays, not to create rivals. Mirroring is craved by individuals precisely to reassure them that "differentiation" from the model is acceptable: they crave "an appreciation of difference and contrast" that affirms their independence and cohesive selves (Hamilton 50). Sexual rivalry is more complicated than Girard's mechanical system of mediated envy would suggest.

CHAPTER 3

"Ajax hath lost a friend":
The (other) Greek Cuckolds

Ulysses and Nestor take advantage of prevailing masculine fears of cuckoldry to rouse Achilles to leave his tent and to fight again. Using two female allegorical figures, "choice" and "fortune", they exploit Achilles's needs for a stable mirroring relationship. Nestor reveals their strategy when he comments to Ulysses that "choice.../ Makes merit her election", and that if Achilles does not once more prove his merit, another "heart [will receive] from hence a conquering part,/ To steel a strong opinion to themselves!" (I.iii.348-53). An aural pun on "steel"/ steal would seem to suggest that a rival may steal "choice" -- a female personification of reputation -- thus cuckolding Achilles. "Choice" becomes the disputed object of the desires of Achilles and his rival, Ajax.

Similarly, Nestor personifies "fortune" as a female figure, as changeable as the weather, who either approves (with "her ray and brightness") or disapproves (with her "chiding", "splitting wind") of men's actions (I.iii.47-54). Later, Ulysses confronts Achilles directly with this metaphorical figure that preys on his sexual insecurity: "How some men creep in skittish Fortune's hall/

Whiles others play the idiots in her eyes!" (III.iii.134-35). Fortune is "skittish" (i.e., "fickle, inconstant, changeable", OED s.v.) and this conjures up a bawdy fabliau scenario in which Ajax creeps into Achilles's hall and "eats" his woman, while the impotent Achilles is left "fasting in his wantonness" (III.iii.137-38).

Ulysses plans to undermine Achilles's confidence in his sexual potency and in the loyalty of his mirroring other, Patroclus. For example, Ulysses states that "Ajax employed plucks down Achilles' plumes" (I.iii.385). A plume may be a bawdy symbol of his 'penis'; or plumes a pun on 'plums' or testicles in Elizabethan slang (Rubinstein 198, s.v.). Ajax's success could castrate Achilles and, as the prevailing misconception suggests, Achilles would lose his companion to a more potent rival. When the Greek generals snub Achilles outside his tent, the insult is made particularly sharp by Menelaus's presence, and the spectre of cuckoldry could be suspected by Achilles in Ajax's cordiality to Patroclus:

MENELAUS: How do you? How do you?
ACHILLES: What, does the cuckold scorn me?
AJAX: How now, Patroclus?
ACHILLES: Good morrow, Ajax.
AJAX: Ha? (III.iii.63-67)

Ajax's words, while seemingly innocuous, can be performed on stage (or interpreted by Achilles) as equivalent to those of a man greeting another man's wife while ignoring her husband. Achilles confesses to feeling 'plucked' after

this display: "when they fall, as being slippery standers,/ The love that leaned on them as slippery too,/ Doth one pluck down another" (III.iii.84-86). His confidence is temporarily shattered, as symbolized by his repetition of the word "fall" five times (III.iii.75-87). Girard explains this scene as the "pinprick" that deflates Achilles's overinflated pride (Envy 143-45). Kohut would view Achilles's hypersensitivity to slights as symptomatic of a narcissistic personality disorder: "the adult ego will tend to vacillate between an irrational overestimation of the self and feelings of inferiority, and will react with narcissistic mortification... to the thwarting of its ambitions" (SFS 1: 438).

Achilles fears he may lose his "slippery" love, Patroclus, and he echoes the play's motif of being "gored with Menelaus' horn" (I.i.108) when he says: "I see my reputation is at stake;/ My fame is shrewdly gored" (III.iii.228-29). Earlier, after Achilles and Patroclus exit to their tent, Thersites makes his famous comment: "All the argument is a whore and a cuckold, a good quarrel to draw emulous factions and bleed to death upon" (II.iii.68-69). Besides referring to Helen and Menelaus, Thersites's comment may also refer to Patroclus and Achilles. Achilles's use of the word "gored" suggests an unconscious fear of cuckoldry, and Thersites elsewhere calls Patroclus a "masculine whore" (V.i.16). Intense "quarrels" do emerge between Achilles and Ajax, and later Achilles and Hector. In the play's closing act, Patroclus and

Hector "bleed to death" while the original quarrellers, Paris and Menelaus, survive unscathed.

Achilles employs a preventive attack to avoid the potential injury of losing his companion, Patroclus: he steals Ajax's companion, Thersites. While the Greek generals are annoyed at Achilles for refusing to "untent" himself, Ajax has additional reasons for being angry:

> NESTOR: What moves Ajax thus to bay at him?
> ULYSSES: Achilles hath inveigled his fool from him.
> NESTOR: Who, Thersites?
> ULYSSES: He.
> NESTOR: Then will Ajax lack matter, if he have lost his argument.
> ULYSSES: No, you see, he is his argument that has his argument, Achilles. (II.iii.86-92)

Later on, Patroclus mocks the play's central cuckold, Menelaus, for losing his "argument", Helen: "thus popped Paris in his hardiment,/ And parted thus you and your argument" (IV.v.28-29). While there is no hint that anyone has sexual relations with Thersites, Achilles has cuckolded Ajax in the broader sense of stealing his "argument", or companion. An earlier insult by Thersites foreshadows this humiliating loss: he calls Ajax "Mars his idiot" (Mars's idiot), a mindless soldier, but also the proverbial cuckold, Vulcan (II.i.51).

None of Ulysses's manipulations of Achilles and Ajax succeed in rousing Achilles to fight. Although Achilles seems about to arm when he challenges Hector (IV.v.229-68), soon after, Achilles is dissuaded from combat

by the arrival of a letter from Queen Hecuba, reminding him of his promise to Polyxena (V.i.36-44). As long as Achilles is loved by two admiring selfobjects, Polyxena and Patroclus, he does not need to fight to please the generals: "Fall Greeks, fail fame, honor or go or stay,/ My major vow lies here" (V.i.42-43). With the "fair love" and affirmation of these two (and with an additional companion, Thersites, to "help to trim [his] tent", 44) Achilles's self-esteem is resistant to Ajax's bombast and Ulysses's strategies. Only the unexpected death of Patroclus causes Achilles to arm.

The killing of Patroclus by Hector has sexual overtones that suggest that Achilles is cuckolded by his rival. Nestor describes Hector in battle as an apocalyptic, scythe-wielding demon who cuts, rapes and murders: "the strawy Greeks, ripe for his edge,/ Fall down before him, like a mower's swath" (V.v.24-25). To fall, be thrown down, or be tumbled suggest "to be thrown sexually" (Partridge 200, 207, s.v.).[1] On several other occasions, the verb 'to throw down' suggests both violence and seduction: Ulysses suggests that "better would it fit Achilles much/ To throw down Hector than Polyxena" (III.iii.207-08);

[1] Partridge's glossary cites numerous words which combine images of violence and seduction (26-28). Many of Shakespeare's male characters blur distinctions between sexual intercourse shared by consenting parties and rape. 'To throw down' is just one of a "list of sadistic synonyms: clap, cope, fuck, hit, strike, thump" (Partridge 200).

and Pandarus comments about the women in his niece's family, "They are burrs... they'll stick where they are thrown" (III.ii.104-05; Palmer 198).[2]

Achilles reacts to news of the death of Patroclus with the rage of a cuckolded husband. As Ulysses reports, "Great Achilles/ Is arming, weeping, cursing, vowing vengeance./ Patroclus' wounds have roused his drowsy blood" (V.v.30-32). The enraged Achilles searches the battlefield, shouting "Come, come, thou boy-queller, show thy face" (V.v.45). While he may likely say "boy" out of affection for the youthful, handsome Patroclus, a second meaning of boy as 'passive homosexual' is supported by Thersites's comments: "Thou art said to be Achilles' male varlet", "...his masculine whore" (V.i.14-16; Rubinstein 32-33, s.v. "boy").[3] Achilles ties the corpse of Hector to his horse's tail (V.viii.21),

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[2] I am assuming that Patroclus is 'mowed' along with the other "strawy Greeks" because of the simultaneity of Nestor's two battlefield reports: "Go, bear Patroclus' body to Achilles,/ And bid the snail-paced Ajax arm for shame./ There is a thousand Hectors in the field" (V.v.17-19). In most of Shakespeare's sources (i.e., Caxton, Heywood and Homer), there is an interim of several years between Patroclus's death and Achilles's re-arming (Presson 69-73). Shakespeare telescopes these events to emphasize the etiology and intensity of Achilles's rage: "Only the tempest of grief and rage aroused by the murder of Patroclus drives him back to battle" (Campbell 104).

Shakespeare uses a similar image combining mowing, rape and murder in Henry V. At the siege of Harfleur, Henry warns the French Governor that his English soldiers will storm the town, "mowing like grass/ Your fresh fair virgins" (III.iii.13-14).

[3] Robert Kimbrough disagrees with this view, arguing that Thersites is a "known liar" and that his phrase "masculine whore" is characteristic of a technique of rhetorical exaggeration, described by Alvin Kernan, in which "in every railing sequence, [Thersites] tops his previous insult with a stronger one" until he reaches "'...some final insult, some phrase which will obliterate his

a vengeful insult which echoes the insult inflicted on the cuckold Troilus by Diomedes: "O traitor Diomed!.../ ...pay the life thou owest me for my horse" (V.vi.6-7).[4] Like the enraged Troilus of V.x.4-34, Achilles too is a cuckold in a narcissistic rage dominated by the "need for revenge, for righting a wrong, for undoing a hurt by whatever means" (SFS 2: 638). The cold-blooded ambush of unarmed Hector by Achilles and his Myrmidons (V.viii.5-20) is characteristic of an enraged individual who experiences a "total lack of empathy toward the offender" (SFS 2: 645).

While Girard's model of mimetic rivalry fails to account for the phenomenon of cuckoldry, it is very useful for the examination of other aspects of the relationship between Achilles and Ajax. Girard's concept of the "model", a sort of experienced role-model whom the novitiate subject imitates, is very similar to the Kohutian concept of the "idealized parent imago... [which] is gazed at in awe, admired, looked up to, and like which one wants to become" (SFS 1: 436). Ajax is like a child, dwarfed by his father; yet as Agamemnon

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victims'" (Kernan 194-96, cited in Kimbrough 1964b, 175). Kimbrough's insistence on the "sexual normality of Patroclus and Achilles" borders on the homophobic implication that same-sex relations are more corrupt and disgusting than the catalogues of oozing venereal diseases (e.g., V.i.16-23) which are surpassed by this "final insult". (For a less pejorative view of Thersites's homoerotic "construction of Patroclus", see Bredbeck 33-48).

[4] Although Troilus is bemoaning the loss of his horse, he may also be unconsciously derogating Cressida with an aural pun on "whore" (Rubinstein 128-29, s.v. "horse").

observes, "A stirring dwarf we do allowance give/ Before a sleeping giant" (II.iii.133-34). Girard writes that, "just as Achilles wants to *be* Agamemnon, so Ajax, the next ranking hero, desperately wants to *be* Achilles" (Envy 141, italics his). Girard sees this craving for self-improvement through mimesis in a very negative light: it is a "destructive" "contagion" that must be cured with "discipline" (Envy 141-42). Kohut would advocate a more empathic view of this human propensity to imitate: the "intense hunger for a powerful external supplier of self-esteem and other forms of emotional sustenance in the narcissistic realm" (AOS 17). The case of Ajax demonstrates that at least a temporary cure of this "disease" comes not through harsh discipline, but through empathic interaction with certain idealized figures.

Ajax's almost childlike behaviour and dependence on others makes him the butt of many jokes in the Greek camp. For example, Ulysses calls him "blockish", "dull brainless Ajax" (I.iii.374-80), and "the lubber Ajax" (III.iii.139). Ajax is frustrated by his intellectual dependence on Thersites to keep him informed of the latest battlefield news: "Toadstool, learn me the proclamation" (II.i.19). Alexander comments that Ajax's chronic dependence on others springs from an insecure self:

> There is no man hath a virtue that he hath not a glimpse of, nor any man an attaint but he carries some stain of it. He is melancholy without cause and merry against the hair. He hath the joints of everything, but everything so out of joint that he is a gouty Briareus, many hands and no use... (I.ii.23-29).

This comic characterization of Ajax's physical and social awkwardness suggests that he is emotionally unbalanced, does not 'fit in' with the other warriors, and perhaps feels alienated from his own body. As Thersites's joke so perceptively puts it, "that fool knows not himself" (II.i.63). Ajax's reply reveals his deep-seated frustration: "Therefore I beat thee" (64). Ajax's precarious identity causes his many outbursts of rage. Similar aggressive reactions to self-doubts occur in other characters; they could be described as the essence of the Trojan war. Girard never explains *why* Ajax is so susceptible to the mimetic manipulations of Ulysses and the Greek generals -- except to say that "he is very much the same as the false hero whose vanity he denounces" (Envy 141-42, 151).

Ajax introjects Achilles as his idealized selfobject, to fulfill a structural deficit left-over from a more archaic developmental stage. Ajax has not out-grown a craving for paternal imagos to provide him with ambitions, goals and self-confidence to pursue these. Thus when he is being mocked in II.iii.86-259, this scene culminates in a comic exchange that is as poignant as it is revealing:

> AJAX: Shall I call you father?
> NESTOR: Ay, my good son.
> DIOMEDES: Be ruled by him, Lord Ajax (248-50).

Ajax spends the play desperately seeking a father-figure, and being "ruled" by the Greek generals who exploit his need for idealized selfobjects to their own

ends. Their plan is to "dress [Ajax] up in voices" and "Give him allowance for the better man,/ For that will physic the great Myrmidon/ Who broils in loud applause, and make him fall" (I.iii.376-79). Yet their machinations succeed only in creating a parodic shadow version, a sort of "mini-Achilles" whose actions echo those of his father-substitute. Instead of setting an example *for* Achilles, Ajax is "ruled", not by Nestor or the other Generals, but *by* Achilles.

Most of Ajax's actions are fashioned after Achilles's actions. Ajax imitates Achilles's relationship with Patroclus, and Nestor complains of Ajax's "imitation of these twain":

> Ajax is grown self-willed, and bears his head
> In such a rein, in full as proud a place
> As broad Achilles; keeps his tent like him;
> Makes factious feasts; rails on our state of war,
> Bold as an oracle, and sets Thersites,
> A slave whose gall coins slanders like a mint,
> To match us in comparisons with dirt,
> To weaken and discredit our exposure (I.iii.185-95).

Ironically, Ajax has not grown "self-willed": he is utterly dependent on Achilles to provide him with a model after which to fashion his behaviour. What irks the generals is that he is not listening to them, that he is not grown "[Ulysses]-willed" or "[Agamemnon]-willed".

Achilles is like a father-figure, admired and imitated, yet envied and resented by Ajax. For example, Achilles enters to separate the brawling Ajax and Thersites:

"Why, how now, Ajax, wherefore do you thus?" (II.i.52); "Nay, good Ajax" (74); "Nay, I must hold you" (76); "What's the quarrel?" (86). Like a scolding father, Achilles arbitrates the quarrel, restraining Ajax like a child in tantrum. Kohut writes that such individuals must gradually learn to restrain themselves:

> the patient should openly face the fact that there exists in him a residual propensity to be temporarily under the sway of narcissistic rage... and that he must be alert to the possibility that he might be overtaken by a tantrum (SFS 2: 653).

Then, Achilles "learns" Ajax the proclamation, suggesting intellectual, as well as physical, superiority (II.i.116-25). In this instance, Girard's model of mediated envy fits perfectly: Ajax (subject) desires to fight Hector (object) to imitate the 'being' of Achilles (model). Ajax has already "coped Hector in the battle" once, as reported by Alexander (I.ii.4-34). Thus a new desire to fight Hector is mediated in Ajax by the Greek generals, who are aware of Ajax's admiration for his model (Envy 141-43). Thersites warns Ajax that Achilles could "pun thee into shivers with his fist, as a sailor breaks a biscuit" (II.i.36-37). Ajax imitates the aggression of his model, and he boasts of doing the same to Hector: "with my armèd fist/ I'll pash him o'er the face" (II.iii.196-97). Ajax defines himself solely in relation to Achilles, and Agamemnon flatters Ajax by comparing him to his model: "you are as strong, as valiant, as wise, no less noble, much more gentle, and altogether more tractable" (II.iii.144-46). Yet Ajax also hates the person he sorely wishes to be like:

> THERSITES: Thou grumblest and railest every hour on Achilles, and thou art as full of envy at his greatness as Cerberus is at Prosperina's beauty, ay that thou bark'st at him (II.i.30-32).

Thersites's choice of images implies that Ajax (Cerberus, watchdog of Hades) envies Achilles (Cerberus's master, Pluto) and wishes to steal his "greatness" (Prosperina, Pluto's bride) (Whitaker 60). His envy combines sexual rivalry, threats of cuckoldry, and bestiality which echoes Nestor's earlier comment that "Two curs shall tame each other" (I.iii.389). As with fame, reputation and fortune, "greatness" is personified as woman, a locus for competing masculine desires.

Ajax's problem is not that he desperately craves a role-model, but that he imitates a figure who himself displays the following symptoms of a narcissistically unbalanced individual:

> depressed mood, lack of zest and initiative in the area of work, dullness of interpersonal experience... uneasiness about his physical or mental state... lack of humor, lack of empathy for other people's needs and feelings, lack of a sense of proportion, tendency toward attacks of uncontrolled rage [and] pathological lying (AOS 22-23).

Achilles lolls "Upon a lazy bed the livelong day" (I.iii.147); refuses to fight (I.iii.197-205); will not "Untent his person" to speak with the Generals (II.iii.162); feels self-conscious about his declining physical abilities (V.vi.15-17) and reputation (III.iii.227-28); uses humor only to insult others (III.iii.265-75); shows no empathy toward Hector (V.viii.5-22); threatens Hector with violence at a

peaceful banquet (IV.v.241-45); rages at Patroclus's death (V.v.44-47); and lies about slaying Hector (V.viii.13-14). Clearly, Ajax would do better to imitate someone else.

The exhibitionistic displays of Ajax are very similar to those of Achilles. For example, Ulysses complains that

> ...Possessed he is with greatness,
> And speaks not to himself but with a pride
> That quarrels at self-breath. Imagined worth
> Holds in his blood such swoln and hot discourse
> That 'twixt his mental and his active parts
> Kingdomed Achilles in commotion rages
> And batters down himself. (II.iii.164-70)

Ajax displays similar symptoms of 'plaguy proudness' (172) during an exhibitionistic display, perhaps only slightly exaggerated by Thersites's report:

> He must fight singly to-morrow with Hector, and is so prophetically proud of an heroical cudgelling that he raves in saying nothing. [...] Why, he stalks up and down like a peacock -- a stride and a stand... The man's undone forever (III.iii.247-57).

These exhibitionistic displays of Achilles and Ajax conceal their fragmenting senses of self. Thersites jokes that Ajax "goes up and down the field, asking for himself" as if asking 'where's the privy?' (III.iii.244-45; Whitaker 102). However, he is also literally 'asking for his self' because of his radical dependence on others to mirror his displays and confirm his self-esteem. Achilles also depends on others to sustain his feeling of wholeness. When he

is snubbed by the generals, he asks, "What, am I poor of late?" (III.iii.74). Diomedes comments on Ajax's dependence on selfobject praise as if it were water, perhaps even mother's milk: "how his silence drinks up his applause!" (II.iii.195). Similarly, Achilles's self is incomplete, and his dependence on others to fulfill selfobject functions is evoked by his comments to Thersites: "Where, where, O, where? Art thou come? Why, my cheese, my digestion, why hast thou not served thyself into my table so many meals?" (II.iii.37-39).[5] As Girard puts it, "Achilles no longer has what it takes to prevent his self-love from starving" (Envy 145). Achilles knows not himself and directs his aggression inward, "batters down himself" (II.iii.170): whereas Ajax "knows not himself" and vents his frustration outwards at Thersites (II.i.63-64).

Ajax's imitation of Achilles forms an exaggerated parody of his model's behaviour. While vanity causes Achilles to grow "lion sick" (II.iii.82), it transforms Ajax into "a very land-fish, languageless, a monster" (III.iii.262-63). The audience hears about Patroclus's pageant of Agamemnon (I.iii.151-64), and immediately afterward the audience sees Thersites's cruder pageant of

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[5] A. P. Rossiter writes that "*Troilus and Cressida* is about the hollowness of the seeming glories of war [and] the hollowness of seeming heroes (Achilles, Ajax)" (119). The pejorative use of the term 'hollowness', as well as his derogation of these "two swollenheaded military nuisances" (137) lacks consistency and precision. How can they be both hollow and swollenheaded? Rather than condemn the two, one should explain how missing self-structures make them *literally* hollow. Graham Bradshaw provides a more helpful suggestion, when he writes that Hector is "a hollow man who needs to be admired" (138).

Agamemnon (II.i.1-10): "Agamemnon, how if he had boils -- full, all over, generally?" (2-3). Achilles refuses to "untent his person" to speak with the generals, saying, "Patroclus, I'll speak with nobody" (II.iii.65). Thersites later comments on Ajax's antisocial behaviour: "...Why, he'll answer nobody; he professes not answering" (III.iii.266-67). Thersites and Patroclus then proceed to play "the pageant" of Ajax's imitation of Achilles's refusal to speak with the generals (III.iii.269-94). At the outset of the final battle sequences, both Achilles and "the snail-paced Ajax" remain in their tents (V.v.17-18). Yet once Achilles decides to arm, predictably, Ajax follows his example:

> ULYSSES: Great Achilles
> Is arming, weeping, cursing, vowing vengeance.
> Patroclus' wounds have roused his drowsy blood,
> . . . . . .
> Ajax hath lost a friend,
> And foams at mouth, and he is armed and at it,
> Roaring for Troilus. (V.v.30-37)

Achilles weeps and curses, whereas Ajax "foams at the mouth". Achilles has lost Patroclus and roars for Hector. Likewise, "Ajax hath lost a friend" and roars for Troilus. Both react with the rage of a cuckolded husband. Despite the rapidity and confusion of the battle sequences, an audience likely recognizes that Ajax's rage mimics that of Achilles because of the direct juxtaposition of their entrances and exits: Ajax enters and bellows for Troilus (V.v.43), then Achilles enters and bellows for Hector (44), then Ajax enters and bellows for

Troilus (V.vi.1). Ajax's exaggerated imitation of Achilles is ironic (and pathetic) because it is founded on misinformation: his "friend" Thersites is not killed by Troilus, but is, rather, spared by Hector (V.iv.24-29).

In The Iliad, Ajax is on the battlefield defending Patroclus's slain body, long before Achilles decides to fight (Homer Book XVII, 319-20). Also, none of the sources listed by Presson (61-66, 69-74, 79-91) or Bullough (107, 112-219) mention any "friend" of Ajax who is killed. Shakespeare's deliberate alteration of events from his sources results in a stronger emphasis on the mimetic relationship between Ajax and Achilles and on their identical experiences of rage when cuckolded. As Presson notes, "Achilles' problem is reflected in another ...how clearly Achilles is revealed in Ajax!" (139, emphasis his).

Kohut writes that it is possible to cure excessively exhibitionistic behaviour by subordinating it to "goal directed activities... through gradual frustrations accompanied by loving support" (SFS 1: 439). In the case of Ajax, Ulysses and the generals do exactly the opposite of what is helpful, whereas Hector provides Ajax with a brief respite. Hector does so by allowing his cousin to shine in a brief but harmless "maiden battle" (IV.v.87), and then by providing him with genuine praise. When roused, Hector can be terrifying in battle, as Nestor points out (V.v.19-29). Yet when fighting with Ajax, Troilus complains "Hector, thou sleep'st; awake thee!" (IV.v.114). Hector deliberately cuts short

the fight, which Ajax had agreed to as an exhibitionistic display: "I came to kill thee, cousin, and bear hence/ A great addition earnèd in thy death" (139-40). Thus thwarted, Ajax is quite annoyed: "I am not warm yet; let us fight again" (117). Yet Hector calms Ajax with reassurances that Ajax is both a worthy fighter, "thou hast lusty arms" (135), and a whole, coherent self:

> Were thy commixtion Greek and Troyan so
> That thou couldst say, 'This hand is Grecian all,
> And this is Troyan; the sinews of this leg
> All Greek, and this all Troy; my mother's blood
> Runs on the dexter cheek, and this sinister
> Bounds in my father's,' by Jove multipotent,
> Thou shouldst not bear from me a Greekish member
> Wherein my sword had not impressure made (119-130).

In other words, if Ajax had a divided self, Hector would destroy the Greek half. But Ajax is whole, thanks to the inseparable blood of his mother and father which in this context suggests a balance of admiring and idealized self-structures. These structures are weak, but they do exist. Ajax's self is strengthened by Hector's praise and recognition of his noble blood.

Ulysses's earlier flattery of Ajax's background is as excessive as it is insincere: "Praise him that got thee, she that gave thee suck;/ Famed be thy tutor, and thy parts of nature/ Thrice-famed beyond all erudition" (II.iii.234-36).[6]

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[6] Elsewhere, the number three occurs in contexts which suggest sarcasm or exaggeration. Ulysses calls Ajax a "thrice-worthy and right valiant lord" (II.iii.184), and while waiting for his tryst with Cressida, Troilus swoons in anticipation of "Love's thrice-repurèd nectar" (III.ii.20).

This praise perpetuates Ajax's churlishness, evoked by his many gruff exclamations during this scene (II.iii.196-248). He never speaks more than two lines consecutively, and is interrupted by many mocking asides spoken by Agamemnon, Ulysses, Nestor and Diomedes. He is made the butt of an elaborate joke.

In contrast, the embracing and genuine flattery which ensues during the "loving interview" with Hector (IV.v.154) transform Ajax from a languageless churl into a diplomat and peacemaker. Hector embraces Ajax, saying "Cousin, all honor to thee!" (137). They also shake or hold hands, as Ajax introduces his cousin to the Greeks (156). Ajax returns Hector's compliments: "I thank thee, Hector./ Thou art too gentle and too free a man" (137-38). This is a rare occurrence in a play where insincerity and insults suffuse most male verbal interaction. In a dramatic reversal of the earlier scene in which Achilles intervenes in the violent quarrel between Ajax and Thersites (II.i.52-125), now it is Ajax who makes peace between Achilles and Hector: "Do not chafe thee, cousin;/ And you, Achilles, let these threats alone" (IV.v.259-60).[7]

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[7] Robert Kimbrough alludes to the possibility that Ajax has been cured, but seems disappointed that an aggressive display has been averted: "Either Ajax has been cured of his foolish pride and the point not emphasized, or Shakespeare has allowed his earlier characterization of Ajax to slip away unnoticed. In this new, gracious tone he asks Hector to visit the Greek camp... [and] the apparent climax of the plot comes to nought" (1964a 58-59). Kimbrough argues that a "new and more fitting climax" occurs when Hector and Achilles exchange violent threats in IV.v.229-69 (1964a 59).

This brief transformation of Ajax's narcissistic imbalance demonstrates that the rampant insecurity which fuels much masculine aggression in this play could be remedied by magnanimous, empathic measures. As Kenneth Palmer notes, unlike Achilles "Ajax is redeemable":

> When he is matched with Hector as a warrior, and faced by Hector's courtesy and generosity, Ajax himself becomes generous and courteous, free from pride, firm with Achilles, and gentle towards his cousin. He lapses once more only when, like Achilles, he seeks revenge, and 'foams at mouth' (81).

Ulysses is especially culpable in causing and perpetuating Ajax's earlier imbalances. Agamemnon says of Ajax, "He will be the physician that should be the patient" (II.iii.207-08). Yet this more accurately describes the Greek generals who make Ajax sick in their misguided attempts to cure Achilles's vanity. Ajax's recovery is reversed when he witnesses his new role-model, Hector, display the brutish behaviour of which Ajax has just been cured. The spectacle of Achilles and Hector exchanging insults at a peaceful banquet sets a damaging example for the more impressionable men present, Ajax and Troilus (IV.v.229-75). This incident reverses Ajax's cure, and the play closes with Ajax again mimicking Achilles's 'foolish pride' -- "now is the cur Ajax prouder than the cur Achilles and will not arm to-day" (V.iv.13-14) -- and then imitating Achilles's aggressive response to being cuckolded (V.v.30-47, V.vi.1-11).

CHAPTER 4

"Praise us as we are tasted":
Troy and Troilus

In the competitive environment of the Trojan War, men overcome feelings of insecurity by merging with admiring and idealized selfobjects. These selfobjects are sought and introjected with great intensity, and are as scarce as food during the seven-year siege. Admiring selfobject praise feeds man's hungry pride: characters are either starved of sustenance (insecure) or are glutted with it (vain). The Greeks stop feeding Achilles praise, "That were to enlard his fat-already pride", and instead feed Ajax, "how his silence drinks up his applause!" (II.iii.188-89; 195). As Girard puts it, the war "resembles some kind of permanent tournament fought primarily for vanity and personal prestige" (Envy 124). No self can exist in isolation: only interdependent, cooperative, mirroring responses can sustain one's self-esteem. Deprived of selfobject relationships, an ostracized adult, like an abandoned child, quickly starves.

Kohut uses similar images in his comments on one adolescent patient's need ("this hunger, this starvation, this addiction, this need to fill a void") for constant affirmation to regulate self-esteem (1987, 119). The Trojans

and Greeks, like Kohut's patient, rely on admiring selfobjects for praise.[1] Likewise, characters fashion themselves by imitating idealized figures. Kohut also describes dependence on idealized selfobjects as hunger:

> These are people who over and over again attach themselves to one idealized figure after another. They seem to be hungry for objects. But they are not hungry for objects; they are filling the void of something that they themselves do not have (1987, 41-42).

It is no coincidence that the dozens of images of food, drink and cooking listed by Caroline Spurgeon (Chart VII) occur in a play wracked with chronic hankering for praise. Spurgeon comments that "images of cooking seem so constantly with the speakers that they cannot refrain from using them even in the most far-fetched way" and cites II.iii.189 as an example (323-24). In the context of Kohut's self-psychology, images such as "to enlard his fat-already pride" no longer seem far-fetched. The god of this war is not Mars, but, as Ulysses suggests, "appetite, an universal wolf" (I.iii.121).

The men inside Troy depend on praise, and Gaudet calls Troilus and Cressida, "a play that emphasizes mirroring as the *actual* basis of identity" (142, italics his). During his commentary on the returning soldiers, Pandarus attempts to sell Troilus to Cressida by 'fattening him up' while 'starving' the

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[1] In Othello, Emilia comments on the difficult and thankless role of being an admiring selfobject, existing solely to service another's self: "They are all but stomachs, and we all but food;/ They eat us hungerly, and when they are full,/ They belch us" (III.iv.103-05).

others (I.ii.168-244). Aeneas, Antenor, Hector and Paris are all brave, but Troilus is braver: "Look you how his sword is bloodied and his helm more hacked than Hector's... Paris? Paris is dirt to him" (220-26). Here, Pandarus uses a rhetorical technique common throughout the play, "Dispraise" (IV.i.76): he asserts the quality of one person, by demeaning another. As Kohut writes, "Self-esteem is heightened by mutual confirmation of the lowness of others" (1987, 36-37). Pandarus dispraises the other soldiers, "Asses, fools, dolts; chaff and bran, chaff and bran; porridge after meat" (229-30), and makes Troilus appear more palatable, "Is not birth, beauty, good shape, discourse, manhood, learning, gentleness, virtue, youth, liberality, and such like, the spice and salt that season a man?" (239-42). While Girard recognizes Pandarus's mimetic strategy for intensifying Cressida's longing for Troilus by making him more 'valuable' (Envy 124-25), Girard does not recognize an undercurrent of *Pandarus's* desire for praise.

Pandarus wants to be an insider, providing Cressida with all the latest battlefield gossip. His low status in the Trojan community is suggested by his relation to Calchas the traitor priest, and his being hassled and outwitted by a servant (III.i.1-40) and humiliated by Paris and Helen (41-136).[2] By

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[2] Pandarus is teased and forced to sing by Paris and Helen in III.i., just as Troilus is teased by them about his beard (I.ii.88-160). This links the two as marginal characters desperate to overcome insecurity by boosting their importance.

exalting Troilus, Pandarus exalts himself, because "brave Troilus" will confirm Pandarus when he passes by: "I'll show you Troilus anon. If he see me, you shall see him nod at me" (I.ii.183-84). Pandarus even shouts to get his attention, "Hem! Brave Troilus, the prince of chivalry!" causing Cressida to hush him up, "Peace, for shame, peace!" (216-18). Yet Pandarus's self-promotion fails when the "sneaking fellow" passes without acknowledging him (214-23). Perhaps his virulent criticism of the other soldiers conceals his shame at Troilus's lack of response. While it is not unlikely that Troilus simply cannot hear Pandarus, who is standing "up here" at a great height (169), nevertheless, to Pandarus's own narcissistic perception of the situation, Troilus's inaction is a stinging refusal to confirm Pandarus's importance and validate his exhibitionistic display.

Wracked by insecurities, Troilus employs both dispraise to boost his self-worth, and preventive attacks to protect himself from injuries, in the two areas where he is most vulnerable: love and war. More than those of any other character, Troilus's experiences are the focal point of the play. He is the romantic lead named in the title, and figures prominently as either participant[3] or major topic of discussion[4] in every scene on the Trojan side and during one visit to the Greek camp (V.ii.). Also, perhaps male audiences or readers of the

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[3] I.i., II.ii., III.ii., IV.ii-iv., V.iii-iv., V.vi., V.x.

[4] I.ii., III.i., IV.i., IV.v.95-112.

play who identify vicariously with Troilus -- myself included -- share in his narcissistic perception of other characters primarily as they relate to him: Paris as his role-model in the realm of love, Aeneas and Hector as his role-models in the realm of war, Diomedes as his hated rival in both realms, Priam as his father, Cressida as his lover, *et cetera*.

Shakespeare's depiction of Troilus illustrates male dependence on admiring and idealized selfobjects during the perilous transition from youth to adulthood. Kohut points out that periods of "reshuffling of the self", such as the changes in social and sexual status experienced by Troilus, can be particularly dangerous to the self:

> its change, and its rebuilding, constitute emotional situations that reactivate the period of the formation of the self. The replacement of one long-term self-representation by another endangers a self whose earlier, nuclear establishment was faulty. (SFS 2: 623)

During his development Troilus regresses to many archaic modes of behaviour and dependence. The betrayal of Troilus by his admiring selfobject, Cressida, and his attempted mergers with narcissistically unbalanced idealized selfobjects, Paris and Hector, transform a romantic pacifist (I.i.1-100) into a cynical, bloodthirsty misogynist (V.ii.174-76, V.iii.44-49, V.x.4-34).

Troilus, "The youngest son of Priam.../ Not yet mature" (IV.v.96-97), is acutely conscious of his inexperience and of the opinions of him held by his brothers. He confides in Pandarus his fears:

> The Greeks are strong, and skillful to their strength,
> Fierce to their skill, and to their fierceness valiant;
> But I am weaker than a woman's tear,
> Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance,
> Less valiant than the virgin in the night,
> And skilless as unpracticed infancy. (I.i.7-12)

Troilus has not yet proven his 'manhood', either in battle or in bed. His male-chauvinistic comments, such as "weaker than a woman's tear", conceal deep-seated sexual insecurity. Troilus contrasts his perception of the Greeks' strength with his weakness. They are idealized figures whom he simultaneously envies and admires. In Girardian terms, he hates them as military rivals yet he wishes to be like them: strong, skillful, fierce, valiant. Later he hates them as sexual rivals, yet wishes he were more like them:

> The Grecian youths are full of quality;
> [They're loving, well composed, with gift of nature,] (sic)
> And swelling o'er with arts and exercise.
> . . . . . .
> [whereas] I cannot sing,
> Nor heel the high lavolt, nor sweeten talk
> Nor play at subtle games -- fair virtues all,
> To which the Grecians are most prompt and pregnant
> (IV.iv.75-87).

Ironically, no member of the Greek camp fits Troilus's description, and Diomedes's seduction of Cressida is less musical than brutish and opportunistic (V.ii.6-102).

Troilus mimics his brothers in order to become like them and be accepted by them as an equal, and no longer as their 'little brother'. He is acutely aware of their evaluations of him. When he sits "At Priam's royal table", he hides his lovesickness from them: "Lest Hector or my father should perceive me:/ I have, as when the sun doth light a-scorn,/ Buried this sigh in wrinkle of a smile" (I.i.34-36). While Troilus does share his secret with Pandarus in this scene, as soon as Aeneas arrives, Troilus performs the first *volte face* of the play. Although earlier he 'unarms' (1) and complains that he "cannot fight upon this argument" (88), he immediately changes his mind in order to join the soldiers going to "sport": "Are you bound thither?/[...]/ Come, go we then together" (111-12). With Pandarus he plays a lover: with Aeneas he plays a warrior. Troilus's complaint to Pandarus suggests that he fears the dangerous consequences of both roles: "instead of oil and balm,/ Thou lay'st in every gash that love hath given me/ The knife that made it" (58-60). Yet as Kohut writes,

> Certain types of individuals, lacking internal structure or lacking a sense of the continuity and the cohesiveness of themselves, continuously take on other people's personalities and shift from one person to another (1987, 97).

Desperate to be accepted, Troilus switches from one uncertain role to the other.

Kohut's description of a typical patient in constant need of idealized selfobjects may clarify Troilus's self-deprecation. Having renounced feelings of

omnipotence and perfection, usually associated with primary narcissism, Kohut's patient feels abject and vulnerable:

> 'I am nothing, but at least there is something great and perfect outside myself that is the carrier of what I formerly experienced. All I can do now is try to attach myself to it, even though I am nothing, and then I will become as great as it is' (Kohut 1987, 79).

Aeneas fulfils this "carrier" role for Troilus by allowing him to "mimic, imitate, and follow him around" (Kohut 1987, 83). In Aeneas's presence, Troilus displays tremendous self-control to hide his insecurity and immaturity. When Aeneas brings him the bad news that Cressida is to be exchanged for Antenor, Troilus puts on a brave face: "Is it concluded so?" (IV.ii.58-66). This coolness is frequently interpreted as his callousness towards Cressida, that he has 'used' her, and his next line does little to dispel this interpretation: "How my achievements mock me!" (69). Nevertheless, Troilus seems genuinely upset when he reappears to share with Cressida "a single famished kiss,/ Distasted with the salt of broken tears" (IV.iv.46-47). Immediately after, he regains his composure when Aeneas arrives:

> AENEAS: *[within]* My lord, is the lady ready?
> TROILUS: Hark! you are called... (48-49).

Likewise, after witnessing Diomedes's seduction of Cressida in V.ii., Troilus loses his temper and causes Ulysses to warn him, "O, contain yourself;/ Your passion draws ears hither" (176-77). Aeneas arrives and again Troilus regains

his composure: "Have with you, prince. My courteous lord, adieu" (181). Troilus consistently plays 'tough' in front of his peers because they will ridicule him if they discover the intensity of his attachment to her.[5] Only once does Troilus fail to hide his rage. Aeneas tries to stifle Troilus's reaction to the news of Hector's death: "My lord, you do discomfort all the host" (V.x.10). That Troilus does not heed the advice of the warrior he has hitherto respected, imitated and obeyed indicates the severity of his rage at the play's close.

The similarity of Troilus's *volte face* at the end of I.i. to Hector's many *volte faces* during other scenes suggests that Troilus is imitating his brother's example. In I.i., Troilus criticizes the war and places himself above the "Fools on both sides!" (I.i.86). Yet he leaves to "sport". In II.ii., Hector places himself above the other warriors desire to defend Helen, "'Tis mad idolatry" (56), yet he suddenly agrees, "In resolution to keep Helen still" (190). The frequency of such disingenuous rhetorical displays suggests that they are acceptable behaviour. In both cases, Troilus and Hector boost their self-esteem by maintaining moral high ground and opposing further bloodshed,

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[5] That the older brothers do not take Troilus's love seriously is suggested by their unsympathetic coda to the lovers' emotional farewell:

> PARIS: Hark! Hector's trumpet.
> AENEAS: How have we spent this morning!
> The prince must think me tardy and remiss,
> That swore to ride before him to the field.
> PARIS: 'Tis Troilus' fault. (IV.iv.139-42).

"Hector's opinion/ Is this in way of truth" (II.ii.188-89), yet they remain members of the group and participate in the glory of battle. Later Troilus witnesses another apparent *volte face* when Hector calls off the "maiden battle" with Ajax after only a few blows (IV.v.113-37). Again Hector maintains moral high ground and yet embraces his opponent as an equal. Perhaps the brothers have learned this behaviour from their father. Priam seems adamant in V.iii. that Hector should not fight, "thou shalt not go" (70) and yet he is persuaded by Hector and Troilus to "Go in and cheer the town" and gives Hector his blessing: "The gods with safety stand about thee" (92-94). While it is possible that the aging king cannot control his headstrong sons, it is also possible that he cannot resist the temptation to be included in the "deeds worth praise" that Hector promises to publicize that evening (91-93).[6]

That *volte faces* are motivated by cravings for affirmation is supported by Hector's sparing of Thersites (V.iv.29) and Achilles whose "arms are out of use" (V.vi.14-17) -- it is not glorious for a "lion" (V.iii.38) to kill such easy prey. Instead, Hector pursues the retreating "*one in armor*": "fly on, I'll hunt thee for thy hide" (V.vi.27-31). As Palmer notes, "Hector, contrary to his

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[6] Priam's ineffectual role is highlighted by his paucity of lines in the Trojan debate. While he does introduce the topic and intervenes once to scold Paris (II.ii.142-45), and once to start at Cassandra's "shriek" (97), Priam seems to confer his authority to Hector: "Hector, what say you to't?" (7; Adelman 43). Like Goneril and Regan flattering King Lear, Troilus and Hector seem willing to pay lip service only to "dread Priam" (II.ii.10).

thesis in II.ii., is now dealing with 'outsides' only -- with appearance, and not with intrinsic value" (295). Like this armour's "Most putrefied core, so fair without" (V.viii.1), unresolved needs for selfobject praise in Hector's "core" self propel him on to his inglorious death. A narcissistically unbalanced individual seeks praise in a similar manner: as armour to buttress a weak core self. Indiscriminate praise, like polish on the outer armour, does little to remedy the sickness within.

There is additional evidence that Hector performs an idealized selfobject role for Troilus. Troilus imitates Hector's lofty defense of marriage (II.ii.173-89) when he spouts in rage, "Cressid is mine, tied with the bonds of heaven" (V.ii.150). Hector neither respects the "law/ Of nature" (II.ii.176-77), nor is Cressida bound to Troilus by any "bonds". Troilus desperately wishes to be a part of the action, and is offended when Hector tells him to "doff thy harness youth;/.../ Let grow thy sinews till their knots be strong,/ And tempt not yet the brushes of the war" (V.iii.31-34). Troilus tries to persuade Hector that he is ready for "the brushes of war" by imitating Hector's rhetorical bravura. Troilus dares "fate", "obedience", Mars, Priamus, Hecuba and Hector to try and stop him from arming (51-58). It is no co-incidence that these are the elements that wish to prevent Hector from arming. They both seem motivated by sibling rivalry, and fear they will be left behind by their peers. When Priam enters to dissuade Hector, Hector complains that "Aeneas is a-field" as if to say 'why

can't I go too?' (68). As we have seen, Troilus also follows Aeneas on several occasions. Also, Pandarus's comparisons of I.ii. suggest that Troilus fashions himself after Hector. As his confidant, Pandarus knows Troilus intimately, and his repeated blurring of the two suggests that Troilus is undergoing similar problems differentiating himself from his idealized selfobject: "Troilus is Troilus", "Hector is not Troilus", yet Troilus is "not himself" and "Hector is not a better man than Troilus" (I.ii.60-76).

The Trojan debate of II.ii. is an important scene, for it is perhaps Troilus's first public function, as well as a prime venue for rival brothers to show-off for their peers. Troilus gets off to a shaky start when he follows Hector's lead in complementing old Priam, but inadvertently calls his father 'fat' instead:

> Will you with counters sum
> The past proportion of his infinite,
> And buckle in a waist most fathomless
> With spans and inches so diminutive
> As fears and reasons? Fie, for godly shame! (28-32)

Helenus quickly jumps in with *ad hominem* remarks about how Troilus is "so empty" of reasons, which Troilus answers with a remark about his brother's pacifism:

> You know an enemy intends you harm;
> You know a sword employed is perilous,
> And reason flies the object of all harm.
> Who marvels then, when Helenus beholds

> A Grecian and his sword, if he do set
> The very wings of reason to his heels
> And fly like chidden Mercury from Jove
> Or like a star disorbed? (39-46)

These insults disguise a complex preventive attack. Troilus fears that his own inexperience on the battlefield (and brief protest against the war, I.i.1-100) will be exposed and that he will not be admitted into 'the group' of warriors, but wander "like a star disorbed". At times this debate seems like a family squabble, and no brother misses a chance to insult his rivals: Troilus interrupts Hector, "Fie, fie, my brother!" (25) and implies that he has "the weakest spleen" (128). Likewise, Hector frequently insults Troilus by patronizing him: "Now youthful Troilus" (II.ii.113). The insults in this scene indicate the Trojan 'pecking order': Hector insults his inferiors, Paris and Troilus, Troilus insults Helenus, and everyone insults Cassandra -- the perfect scapegoat because she is "mad", a woman, and an unempathic mirror of their exploits.

Troilus's first lovelorn soliloquy serves as a kind of rehearsal for the Trojan debate. He says of Cressida:

> Her bed is India; there she lies, a pearl.
> Between our Ilium and where she resides
> Let it be called the wild and wand'ring flood,
> Ourself the merchant, and this sailing Pandar
> Our doubtful hope, our convoy and our bark.
> (I.i.96-100).

During his lengthiest contribution to the debate, beginning "I take to-day a wife..." (II.ii.61-96), he repeats these fanciful images to describe Helen: he echoes the navigation theme, "My will enkindled by mine eyes and ears,/ Two traded pilots 'twixt the dangerous shores/ Of will and judgment" (63-65); the merchant theme, "We turn not back the silks upon the merchant/ When we have soiled them" (69-70); and he also calls Helen "a pearl" (81). Troilus may be unconsciously thinking of Cressida throughout this speech.[7] Yet this is rhetorical display without deep convictions -- earlier Troilus considers Helen "too starved a subject for [his] sword" (I.i.89) -- which is well received because he is allowed to speak uninterrupted for 34 lines (II.ii.61-96).[8] He is annoyed when, instead of applause, his speech is answered by a "shriek": "'Tis our mad sister", he complains, which Hector promptly corrects, "It is Cassandra" (98-100).

Troilus's performance during the debate is motivated primarily by his craving for admiration and inclusion, as suggested by his account of Paris's reception after the abduction of Helen: "you all clapped your hands,/ And cried, 'Inestimable!'" (II.ii.87-88). Troilus also wants to be praised for bringing home a

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[7] Indeed, he says earlier that whenever he sits at Priam's table, "fair Cressid comes into my thoughts" (I.i.28). In the Cambridge, Oxford and Arden editions, he wonders, "When is she thence?" (Walker I.i.33; Muir I.i.31; Palmer I.i.31).

[8] Only Hector comes close to Troilus's ability to hold the floor, speaking for 31 lines (163-93).

"worthy prize" (86). While Hector and Aeneas serve as role-models in the realm of war, Paris is both admired and envied by Troilus for his prowess in the realm of love. Many of Troilus's attitudes about sexual relations are learned from Paris.[9] In a universe where a man is either a 'Paris' or a 'Menelaus', Troilus would rather be an abductor than a cuckold. Troilus attempts to merge with Paris and share in his sexual prowess, "O theft most base,/ That we have stol'n what we do fear to keep" (II.ii.93); just as he attempts to merge with Hector and share in his military strength, "Why, there you touched the life of our design" to which Hector replies, "I am yours,/ You valiant offspring of great Priamus" (II.ii.194, 206-07).[10]

Troilus's praise of Paris (II.ii.72-96) is analogous to Pandarus's praise of Troilus (I.ii.172-242); in both cases they gain stature by their close association with the person being praised. So when Paris echoes Troilus's line, "We turn not back the silks upon the merchant/ When we have soiled them"

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[9] Troilus does not idealize Hector's stable marriage to Andromache because Troilus, a prince, could never marry Cressida, the daughter of a traitor-priest. Their love is as socially forbidden as that of Prince Hamlet and his social inferior, Ophelia: "His greatness weighed, his will is not his own./ [For he himself is subject to his birth.]/ He may not, as unvalued persons do, Carve for himself" (Hamlet I.iii.17-20).

[10] Troilus witnesses the exchange of insults between Hector and Achilles (IV.v.229-59), so that at the play's close, Troilus's enraged lines, "I'll through and through you! And, thou great sized coward..." (V.x.26) echo Hector's insulting comment about Achilles's "great and portly size": "I'll not kill thee there, nor there, nor there/.../ I'll kill thee everywhere, yea, o'er and o'er" (IV.v.161, 253-55).

(II.ii.69-70), with his own line, "I would have the soil of her fair rape/ Wiped off in honorable keeping her" (148-49), he affirms Troilus. Hector then links the two: "Paris and Troilus, you have both said well" (163).

Troilus learns to boast from Paris and internalizes Paris's reasons for fighting: to defend a woman's (hence his own) honour from shame. To balk at defending a woman implies a "meanest spirit", "so degenerate a strain": whereas to fight for her is "noble" and takes "a heart to dare or a sword to draw" (II.ii.150-60). Paris confirms his brother's misgivings about cuckoldry:

> What treason were it to the ransacked queen,
> Disgrace to your great worths, and shame to me,
> Now to deliver her possession up
> On terms of base compulsion (150-53).

Troilus's rage after Diomedes's seduction of Cressida and Achilles's murder of Hector, echoes his brother's bombast. While Hecuba, Priam and the rest of Troy weep, Troilus threatens to destroy the Greek armies:

> You vile abominable tents,
> Thus proudly pight upon our Phrygian plains,
> Let Titan rise as early as he dare,
> I'll through and through you! (V.x.23-26)

These lines echo Paris's boast to single-handedly defend Helen from the Greeks:

> Were I alone to pass the difficulties,
> And had as ample power as I have will
> Paris should ne'er retract what he hath done

> Nor faint in the pursuit (II.ii.139-42).

The primary motive for these boasts is not to frighten the enemy, but to impress the boaster's peers and elicit a mirroring response. Troilus's final outbursts in V.x seem to exemplify the "variant of narcissistic rage wherein the dominant propelling motivation is less the revenge motif and more the wish to increase self-esteem" (ROS 194).

While Paris is Troilus's role-model in a Kohutian sense, he is also Troilus's "model" in a Girardian sense: the "subject" Troilus envies Paris's 'inestimable' prize, the common "object" Helen. The closer Troilus gets to his model's 'being', the closer he appears to get to cuckolding Paris. The first suggestion occurs in the opening scene, when Troilus scoffs, "Paris is gored with Menelaus' horn" (108). Pandarus's gossipy report of teasing about Troilus's beard in court portrays Troilus as a rival with Paris for Helen's affections. Troilus diverts the teasing with a preventive attack that makes Paris chafe:

> ...'Two and fifty hairs,' quoth he, 'and one white. That white hair is my father, and all the rest are his sons.' 'Jupiter!' quoth she, 'which of these hairs is Paris, my husband?' "The forked one,' quoth he; 'pluck't out, and give it him.' But there was such laughing, and Helen so blushed, and Paris so chafed, and all the rest so laughed, that it passed (I.ii.153-59).

The "forked hair" representing Paris suggests "a cuckold's horns" (Whitaker 40). The association of forked hairs and cuckoldry is repeated on other occasions. Paris indicates that he is still smarting from Troilus's "pretty answer" when he responds to Pandarus's request, "You'll remember your brother's excuse?" with the answer, "To a hair" (III.i.131-33). Helen jokes about her husband's revenge for being cuckolded: Paris will seduce Cressida, and "Falling in, after falling out, may make them three" (III.i.96). Cressida also recalls the cuckold's whisker in her protestation of faith: "If I be false or swerve a hair from truth" (III.ii.176).

Pandarus preys on Cressida's sexual insecurity to intensify her desire for Troilus. He insists that Helen loves Troilus, which would make Paris a cuckold and destroy Cressida's chances to win Troilus's love: "I swear to you, I think Helen loves him better than Paris" (I.ii.102-03, also 94, 113 & 121). Cressida reacts by insulting her rival, "Then she's a merry Greek indeed" (104), and by asking "Is he so young a man, and so old a lifter?" (112). A 'lifter' is a thief (Whitaker 38), a 'limb-lifter' is a fornicator (Walker 146), and cuckoldry is "sexual theft" (Kahn 141). Pandarus completes the picture of infidelity in a revealing parapraxis in which he mistakes Troilus for Deiphobus (I.ii.215). In the context of cuckoldry and revenge, Pandarus could not have picked a more relevant son of Priam: "[Deiphobus] married Helen after the death of Paris and was killed by Menelaus when Troy was sacked" (Homer 465, Glossary).

Girard correctly suggests that Pandarus is embellishing his report in order to create envy in Cressida. Cressida the "subject" envies Helen, the "model", because "Helen loves him", Troilus the "object" (I.ii.102). Yet Girard is entirely incorrect when he asserts that Pandarus, the "Universal Go-Between", creates the love affair: "Pandarus wants his niece Cressida and the young Troilus to have an affair, and he tries to instill in each one separately a burning desire for the other" (Envy 122). According to Girard, Pandarus praises each to the other, and employs Helen as the mediator of Cressida's desire:

> This imaginary desire of Helen [for Troilus] is the true incentive... Whatever Helen herself happens to desire -- especially in matters erotic, her special field of expertise -- is likely to be avidly imitated by all women who want to be desirable. Countless Cressidas want to *be* Helen (Envy 122-23, italics his).

While there is no question that the two young lovers consciously fashion themselves after their older, more experienced and beautiful "models", Paris and Helen, they are not so unwittingly manipulated as Girard suggests. Troilus already loves Cressida with great intensity *prior* to Pandarus's intervention: "I tell thee I am mad/ In Cressid's love; thou answer'st she is fair..." (I.i.48-49). Troilus actually resents his dependence on Pandarus:

> But Pandarus -- O gods, how do you plague me!
> I cannot come to Cressid but by Pandar;
> And he's as tetchy to be wooed to woo
> As she is stubborn, chaste, against all suit.
> (I.i.90-93).

Troilus is 'wooing him to woo', using Pandarus like a boat, "our convoy and our bark", to sail to Cressida (100).

Likewise, Cressida reveals the independence of her love from Pandarus: "more in Troilus thousandfold I see/ Than in the glass of Pandar's praise may be" (I.ii.270-71). Later she admits to Troilus that she fell in love with him independent of external mediation: "I was won, my lord,/ With the first glance" (III.ii.110-11). What Pandarus and Girard perceive as her inability to love without mediation is actually her strategy to attract Troilus: "though my heart's content firm love doth bear,/ Nothing of that shall from mine eyes appear" (280-81). Yet in spite of this textual evidence, Girard insists that, unlike a "pimp", "Instead of waiting for his customers to show up, [Pandarus] generates them through advertising, creates his own markets" (Envy 152). Girard goes too far in applying his triangular model of mediated envy. There is not always an "indispensable third party", the mediator, and he is wrong in asserting that, "On the map of erotic desire all roads lead to Pandarus" (Envy 125, 157). Pandarus does not create their desires, he intensifies them -- while inadvertently contributing to their paranoia about cuckoldry. His active role is more that of an idealized selfobject, a "powerful external supplier of self-esteem and other forms of emotional sustenance" (AOS 17), especially when he encourages Troilus before his first sexual encounter. As Troilus puts it, "fly with me to Cressid" (III.ii.14).

Troilus's first sexual "achievement" is a rite of passage for him, as frightening as his first taste of combat (IV.ii.69). As Kohut remarks, "For a young adolescent the early sexual experiences do not tend to be love experiences. They tend to be experiences that are self-confirming of one's masculinity" (1987, 151). Troilus's reliance on Pandarus for courage, and on Cressida for praise, enable him to overcome his fears, consummate their relationship, and confirm his masculinity.

Pandarus enters and exits III.ii. no fewer than four times, reassuring Troilus with his constant presence. Critical interpretations of Pandarus's role in this scene are sharply divided. Some view him as a doddering, impotent voyeur, titillated by the spectacle of their first kiss: "Pretty, i' faith" (127-28).[11] I prefer an empathic view of Pandarus as a protective uncle who ensures the privacy of their meeting (III.i.60-74); finds them a quiet bed, "I will show you a chamber which bed,...shall not speak of your pretty encounters" (III.ii.198-200); allows them to consummate their love alone, "*Exeunt [Troilus and Cressida]*" (201); and then attempts to protect them from the intrusion of Aeneas the following morning (IV.ii.44-57). While it is true that the speech of their "naughty mocking uncle" (IV.ii.25) is riddled with sexual puns and lewd innuendo, it may

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[11] Girard, for example, contends that Pandarus gets caught up in his own frenzied mediation, and vicariously seduces both lovers simultaneously (Envy 153-54). Jane Adamson holds a more sympathetic view of Pandarus's role during these scenes (80-114).

also be true that this is done to persuade the young lovers not to be ashamed or frightened of their burgeoning sexual urges. The night before, Troilus fears sex as "Death" or "Sounding destruction" (III.ii.20-21); after experience and Pandarus deflate Troilus's overinflated rhetoric, the sexual act becomes "to do" and Troilus laughs at sexual innuendo: "Ha, ha!" (IV.ii.25-39). Pandarus does not degrade their love, he liberates it.[12]

For Troilus, sexual performance is like a theatrical performance put on for his admiring selfobject: his exhibitionism will be either applauded by the warm gleam in Cressida's eyes, or criticized by the scrutiny of her gaze. Troilus fears an unempathic reception:

> My heart beats thicker than a feverous pulse,
> And all my powers do their bestowing lose,
> Like vassalage at unawares encount'ring
> The eye of majesty (III.ii.34-37).

She can either reassure him that his self is whole, or reject him and cause its fragmentation (his "powers their bestowing lose"). Earlier, Troilus assesses Helen's value according to the amount of praise her defense can generate:

> She is a theme of honor and renown,
> A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds,

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[12] As Jane Adamson notes, "his chuckling prose is like a burlesque version of the lovers' high-strung breathless expectancy" (85). Other critics -- whom Adamson would say engage in "derisory (ha ha ha) readings, or moralistic (tisk tisk) ones" (88) -- cite Pandarus's deflated language as evidence of immorality: "He is always present... turning poetry into prose and passion into lust" (McAlindon 214).

> Whose present courage may beat down our foes
> And fame in time to come canonize us (II.ii.199-202).

Now that Troilus is about to perform his first sexual "deed", he fears that he will lose control both of his actions and of Cressida's *re*-actions to his performance:

> I fear it much; and I do fear besides
> That I shall lose distinction in my joys,
> As doth a battle, when they charge on heaps
> The enemy flying (III.ii.24-27).

This image combines his insecurities in the realms of love and war; Troilus does not want to be mixed up with common soldiers who "charge on heaps". To "lose distinction" suggests both a loss of self-control, and also his admiring selfobject's inability to discern his performance. To reassure Troilus that 'blushing' Cressida is equally nervous about the encounter, and easily 'taken', Pandarus uses an image from falconry to suggest that a scolding gaze will end her coyness: "What! Are you gone again? You must be watched ere you be made tame, must you? ...Go to, go to" (40-50).

Troilus stalls and brags during this scene, using rhetorical displays to elicit praise that will shore up his confidence to carry out the act. As Kohut emphasizes, successful sexual performance can be a great boost to self-esteem (1987, 141), and Cressida knows that no amount of praise from her can generate as much confidence as her "deeds". She invites him to "walk in" twice (57, 92), then confesses her love and begs a kiss, "Stop my mouth" (122-26).

Her strategy is to feign loss of control caused by her overwhelming passion for Troilus: "My thoughts were like unbridled children grown/ Too headstrong for their mother. See, we fools!/ Why have I blabbed?" (115-17). All the while she flatters Troilus that he is in control: "See, see! your silence,/ Cunning in dumbness" (124-25). She even admits to her strategy but never stops flattering him: "Perchance, my lord, I show more craft than love,/ And fell so roundly to a large confession/ To angle for your thoughts. But you are wise..." (145-47). Her strategic seduction of Troilus does not make her one of the sluttish "daughters of the game" that Ulysses and critics like Girard claim (IV.v.64). Rather, Cressida allows Troilus to prove his manhood in the realm of love by encouraging him with real patience, affection and mature empathy, which is more than his squabbling brothers do in the realm of war.

Throughout this scene, Cressida tries to end Troilus's bragging and take him in to bed: "They say all lovers swear more performance than they are able... they that have the voice of lions and the act of hares, are they not monsters?" (78-83). Troilus shows signs of understanding her when he says, "Praise us as we are tasted, allow us as we prove; our head shall go bare till merit crown it" (84-86),[13] but this speech again regresses to hyperbole as he

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[13] In this environment where hungry insecurities are alleviated by the sustenance of praise, Troilus's rhetoric conjures up a cannibalistic circle: eat me, then feed me. Yet this is an apt metaphor for the compulsive introjection of others as selfobjects.

falls back on a more familiar talent to elicit praise from Cressida (86-91). He scorns the 'monstruosities in love' as if he would never display such boundless exhibitionism as those who "vow to weep seas, live in fire, eat rocks, tame tigers..." (71-77). Yet during his protestations of love, Troilus indulges in 'monstruosities':

> [O!] that persuasion could but thus convince me
> That my integrity and truth to you
> Might be affronted with the match and weight
> Of such a winnowed purity in love;
> How were I then uplifted! (150-60).

The unsavoury implication of this is that if she can match his "integrity" with her "purity", then Troilus will gain much praise. He uses Cressida as a tool to generate self-esteem. As the scene progresses, Troilus's grandiose-exhibitionistic displays increase until they seem boundless: "True swains in love shall in the world to come/ Approve their truth by Troilus" (165-66). He is indulged and admired by Cressida's mirroring response: "Prophet may you be!" (175). Then Pandarus affirms them both by echoing their vows (189-95), giving Troilus's confidence one final boost before packing them off to bed.

CHAPTER 5

"[She] edifies another with her deeds":
The Trojan Menelaus

Troilus does not perceive Cressida as an individual other, with an independent will: she is his admiring selfobject over which he expects total control. Perhaps she recognizes Troilus's narcissistic dependence on her when she warns him of her "unkind self" over which he has no control: "I have a kind of self resides with you;/ But an unkind self, that itself will leave/ To be another's fool" (III.ii.140-42). To Troilus, her worth is determined by her willingness to fill the 'hollow' where his missing self-structures should be. As Cressida says, "the strong base and building of my love/ Is as the very centre of the earth,/ Drawing all things to it" (IV.ii.102-04). She fortifies Troilus with her love, but she will fortify others as well. Similarly, Kohut uses "concrete terms in the language commonly used to describe the building of a house" (Hamilton 53-54) to evoke the reparative function of admiring selfobjects: these fortify "an absorbing structure so that you yourself absorb blows to your self-esteem without the aid of others" (Kohut 1987, 75). Troilus's self, like Troy, is under siege. He reveals his dependence on Cressida after he has been cuckolded and tears her letter: "My love with words and errors still she feeds,/ But edifies

another with her deeds" (V.iii.110-11). Now Cressida "edifies" (i.e., builds) Diomedes with her "deeds" (i.e., sexual favours) and admiration (OED s.v. "edify"; Partridge 95, s.v. "to do"). Troilus is not only betrayed by a lover, but by a mirroring other who helped create and maintain his identity, but whose departure tears a breach in his self.

When Diomedes arrives to take Cressida in exchange for Antenor in IV.iv., Troilus panics at the thought of losing her. Indeed, Troilus is more concerned about his loss, than any peril that Cressida may face in the enemy camp: "Grecian, thou dost not use me courteously" (IV.iv.120). Girard is correct in assessing the selfish nature of Troilus's love for Cressida, but wrong to assert that his love dies after he has seduced her, only to be rekindled by the arrival of a sexual rival:

> critics are blinded by their nineteenth-century myth of psychic continuity. They believe that Troilus's later jealousy must be rooted in his original desire for Cressida, but they are wrong. On that fateful morning this 'original' desire is completely dead (Envy 128).

Supposedly reacting like one of Girard's "Pavlovian dog[s]" or "puppets of mimetic desire", Troilus experiences a completely "new love ...[which] is inextricably enmeshed with his envy of the Greeks" (Envy 153, 54, 130). Yet there is no evidence to support Girard's assertions that Troilus's love dies the morning after, or that "this erotic triumph needs witnesses. Troilus yearns for a little boasting with his ninety-nine brothers" (Envy 127). Instead of boasting,

Troilus begs Aeneas to keep his tryst a secret: "We met by chance; you did not find me here" (IV.ii.71). The real boasting occurs when Troilus attempts to compensate for his impending loss. He puts on a brave face in front of Paris: "to this hand when I deliver her,/ Think it an altar, and thy brother Troilus/ A priest there off'ring to it his own heart" (IV.iii.7-9). He also challenges Diomedes (IV.iv.110-14, 120-28), claiming that "She is as far high-soaring o'er thy praises/ As thou unworthy to be called her servant" (123-24).[1]

Troilus's overestimation of Cressida suggests her selfobject function:

> the overestimation of the object... is not due to the heightened investment of object love or object libido. It is due, rather, to the narcissistic element in the love, in other words, to an old self-imagery that is projected onto the other individual (Kohut 1987, 28-29).

His rivalry with Diomedes is for a selfobject, as well as for a sexual object. The rivalry is doubly intense because it is rooted in deep psychic structural needs, as well as in socially-ingrained fears of cuckoldry. Troilus envies Diomedes's 'being', confident and self-sufficient, but he also desires the common object, Cressida. She is extrinsically valuable because another man desires her, but she is intrinsically valuable because of her selfobject function. She is never displaced by the rivalry.

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[1] His bravura in front of Diomedes, "If e'er thou stand at mercy of my sword,/ Name Cressid, and thy life shall be as safe/ As Priam is in Ilion" (IV.iv.112-14), echoes the "vice of mercy" of his idealized selfobject, Hector: "When many times the captive Grecian falls,/ Even in the fan and wind of your fair sword,/ You bid them rise and live" (V.iii.37, 40-43).

Although they are not married, Cressida's infidelity with Diomedes makes Troilus a cuckold: "[Cressida] becomes the new Helen... and renders Troilus the new Menelaus and Diomedes the new Paris" (Rockas 17). Troilus invokes traditional symbols of cuckoldry to describe his awkward situation. He vows that his love for her "shall be divulgèd well/ In characters as red as Mars his heart/ Inflamed with Venus" (V.ii.159-61). Here, Troilus compares himself to Vulcan, god of armour and war, but also an infamous cuckold. Troilus converts this figure of derision into one of strength when he boasts of destroying his rival's armour:

> ... as much as I do Cressid love,
> So much by weight hate I her Diomed;
> That sleeve is mine that he'll bear on his helm;
> Were it a casque composed by Vulcan's skill
> My sword should bite it (V.ii.165-67).

His invocation of "weight" to compare his love with his rival's recalls Diomedes's scorn for Paris and the cuckold Menelaus: "Both merits poised, each weighs nor less nor more/ But he as he, the heavier for a whore" (IV.i.65-66). Troilus is likely thinking of Menelaus's horn when he says, "Wert thou the devil, and wor'st it on thy horn,/ [My sleeve] should be challenged" (V.ii.91-92). It is no coincidence that Diomedes seduces Cressida "At Menelaus' tent" (IV.v.278; Rockas 24).

Betrayed by his admiring selfobject and afraid he will become the pariah cuckold he scorned in I.i.108, Troilus flies into a narcissistic rage. The cuckolding scene (V.ii.) provides a vivid illustration of Troilus's "helpless disconnection from [his] selfobjects" (Bacal 236). Joel Fineman argues that, in this scene, Troilus takes "refuge in an omnipotently solipsistic madness" (99). Yet his ensuing shame and humiliation (flight-instinct) are quickly converted into rage (fight-instinct): "to stave off further disintegration and to redress the hurt in some way, which may entail retaliation against and even destruction of the perpetrator of the injury" (Bacal 236). Ulysses's attempts to calm Troilus provide clues about the intensity of his rage (Stamm 70-71):

> You flow to great distraction; come, my lord (V.ii.38)
>
> You shake, my lord, at something. Will you go?
> You will break out. (48-49)
>
> O contain yourself;
> Your passion draws ears hither (176-77).

Troilus says the word, 'patience', six times in attempts to calm his temper (V.ii.28, 45, 52, 61, 65, 80). It is as if his earlier fears that he would lose "distinction" in his joys, has now become a loss of self-control in his sorrow and rage. This scene also suggests a symbolic reversal of I.ii., in which the admiring selfobject Cressida watched the returning soldiers. Now the soldier watches her as she turns her mirroring gaze elsewhere: "Troilus, farewell. One

eye yet looks on thee,/ But with my heart the other eye doth see" (V.ii.103-04). In his rage, Troilus's precarious self splits apart: "I will not be myself, nor have cognition/ Of what I feel" (V.ii.59-61). As his sense of self fragments, so does his narcissistic perception of Cressida.

If one accepts Cressida's selfobject function for Troilus, then this may help elucidate one of the most paradoxical and controversial passages in the play. Troilus complains:

> This she? No, this is Diomed's Cressida.
> If beauty have a soul, this is not she;
> If souls guide vows, if vows be sanctimonies,
> If sanctimony be the gods' delight,
> If there be rule in unity itself,
> This was not she (V.ii.133-38).

The "rule in unity" that held Troilus's self together is now holding Diomedes's self together: Troilus has lost his admiring selfobject, 'Troilus's Cressida', to Diomedes. That Cressida exists for Troilus as part of his self-structure is suggested by Ulysses's question: "May worthy Troilus be half attached/ With that which here his passion doth express?" (157-58). Troilus has lost "half" of his bi-polar self structure, his external mirroring supplier of self-esteem and confidence. When Cressida belonged to Troilus, his soul was "a thing inseparate": now it "Divides more wider than the sky and earth" (144-45), recalling the "wild and wand'ring flood" which separated the merchant from his

pearl before she performed this selfobject function (I.i.96-100). Now, as Troilus's self splits apart, so does his perception of the world:

> O madness of discourse,
> That cause sets up with and against itself;
> Bi-fold authority, where reason can revolt
> Without perdition, and loss assume all reason
> Without revolt. This is, and is not, Cressid.
> (V.ii.138-42).

Cressida no longer feeds Troilus praise, but instead feeds Diomedes the "fractions of her faith, orts of her love,/ The fragments, scraps, the bits, and greasy relics/ Of her o'er-eaten faith" (154-56), recalling the "remainder viands" that Troilus likens Helen to during the Trojan debate (II.ii.70). Troilus exits this scene uttering a terrible threat which links the cuckolding of Troilus to the impending fall of Troy itself: "Stand fast, and wear a castle on thy head!" (V.ii.182-83). While "castle" is glossed as an "extra strong helmet" (Muir 176), it also recalls the 'edifying' function that Cressida's 'deeds' perform for the protective armour of a man's self-esteem.

Cressida fulfils Troilus's re-activated need for a maternal admiring selfobject, and her betrayal of him is like a mother's abandonment of a child. This would explain Troilus's unexpected evocation of a maternal imago, during his rage: "Let it not be believed for womanhood!/ Think we had mothers" (V.ii.125-26). Ulysses is taken aback at this seemingly inappropriate comparison: "What hath she done, prince, that can soil our mothers?" (130).

Adult sexual rivalry over admiring selfobjects is rooted in sibling rivalry for the mother's affection. Troilus's cravings for "fragments, scraps, the bits and greasy relics" of Cressida's praise are rooted in his archaic dependence on his mother for food (Adelman 60). His fears of losing a lover, and of being ostracized as a cuckold, are likewise analogous to a child's greatest fear: abandonment.[2] The next time Troilus appears, his "savage" behaviour is directly linked to his break from his mother: "Let's leave the hermit pity with our mother" (V.iii.45). Troilus, the warrior, spurns all the figures on whom he previously depended for both admiring and idealized selfobject functions: his father and mother (V.iii.54),[3] Hector (56-57), Cressida (by tearing her letter, 108-11) and Pandarus: "Hence brother lackey!" (V.x.33).

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[2] During the exchange of oaths at the end of III.ii., Cressida evokes her maternal selfobject function for Troilus in the climax of a sequence of increasingly frightening similes:

> When they've said, 'as false
> As air, as water, wind or sandy earth,
> As fox to lamb, as wolf to heifer's calf,
> Pard to the hind, or *stepdame to her son*,'
> Yea, let them say, to stick the heart of falsehood,
> 'As false as Cressid.'" (183-88 italics mine).

[3] Hecuba does not appear on-stage during the play, and is mentioned only when she has "visions" about Hector's impending death, laughs at Troilus's "pretty answer" (I.ii.135-36) and when Achilles receives her letter (V.i.36-43). That Troilus craves additional maternal admiration is suggested by his rejection of her: "Not Priamus and Hecuba on knees,/ Their eyes o'ergallèd with recourse of tears..." (V.iii.54-55). While he would likely resent her interference, perhaps he also secretly wishes that she would pay more attention to her youngest son, instead of worrying about Hector and her daughter's relationship with Achilles.

Troilus compensates with outward aggression for inner feelings of emptiness and insecurity. As he puts it in his final frenzy of rage, "Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe" (V.x.31). Troilus's ability to describe rationally what is essentially an irrational process, narcissistic rage, proves that he is not psychotic at the play's close. He has a curable borderline disorder: he has not lost total control, which would be schizophrenia (Haber 720-22). His rage is a severe instance of temporary "limited swings toward the fragmentation of the self" (AOS 4-5). Kohut describes why a narcissistically enraged individual is still dangerous:

> The irrationality of the vengeful attitude becomes even more frightening in view of the fact that... the reasoning capacity, while totally under the domination and in the service of the overriding emotion, is often not only intact but even sharpened (SFS 2: 640).

The naive, lovelorn pacifist of I.i. has become a harder, coarser, more violent Troilus. He may never trust women or rival males again. Now he will depend on aggression on the battlefield to generate self-esteem (Haber 66). His rite of passage completed, Troilus emerges a cynical killer: a 'true' warrior.

Similarly, when Diomedes has 'full possession' of Cressida he too feels insecure about her faithfulness. His repeated angry demands to know who gave her "the sleeve" (V.ii.66-90) are analogous to Othello's jealous demands for "the handkerchief!" (Othello III.iv.51-98). Surely Diomedes remembers Troilus's parting threats, and assumes that he is the rival (IV.iv.120-

28). Yet Diomedes has seen Cressida kiss the Greek generals (IV.v.17-53), and it is well known in the camp that he "neither looks upon the heaven nor earth,/ But gives all gaze and bent of amorous view/ On the fair Cressid" (280-82). Diomedes fears that he will be cuckolded by a rival, and lose his source of self-esteem. His experience illustrates a major flaw in Girard's theory. Does Diomedes steal Cressida to be like Troilus; that is, like a cuckold? His earlier preventive attack has backfired. Now his insulting question about Paris and Menelaus applies to himself: which one deserves Cressida more, Diomedes or Troilus? (IV.i.65-66). The repetition of Troilus's situation in Diomedes suggests that no man is immune to sexual rivalry, needs for reliable admiring selfobjects, or fears of selfobject betrayal.

It is fitting that a play about the needs for admiration to boost self-esteem, should itself crave praise. The structure of Troilus and Cressida reflects its subject matter, especially the experiences of Troilus. The Prologue sets the tone when he admits that "hither am I come/ A prologue armed, but not in confidence" (22-23). He seems to dread an unempathic audience reaction: "Like or find fault; do as your pleasures are:/ Now good or bad, 'tis but the chance of war" (30-31). Girard argues that Troilus and Cressida was written to please "two different audiences watching the same play simultaneously": the

'boorish' groundlings and the more sophisticated "'happy few'" in the galleries (Envy 136; Girard 1985, 191-93; see also Tillyard 49). So, for example, the lovers swear oaths to be 'true as Troilus' or 'false as Cressida' (III.ii.174-95), "so that spectators disconcerted by what seems to them pointless complexities can rally round [them] and feel reassured" (Envy 136). Yet there is more to this "bizarre oath" than pleasing intellectuals while "keeping the conventional crowd happy" (137). Girard's division of audience reception into upper classes who understand mediated envy and lower classes who do not is reductive and snobbish (1985, 193). Troilus and Cressida shows that there are as many audiences -- individual and collective, within the play and without -- as there are performers craving applause for their narcissistic displays.

Yet Troilus and Cressida seems engineered deliberately to disappoint audiences and readers, in order to demonstrate the importance of overcoming constant needs for praise and the fulfillment of expectations. The characters' thwarted ambitions, unfulfilled selfobject needs, and fragmentation are all reflected in the structure of the play and the effect it has on an audience that becomes vicariously involved with the events and characters. Many scenes which abruptly change tone with the sudden arrival of characters or alarums,[4] and many *volte faces* by the characters themselves, suggest a play

[4] For example, I.i. changes from pacifism to sport with Aeneas's arrival (100); I.ii. changes from sexual banter to Cressida's confession of love after the boy's arrival and Pandarus's departure (257-67); I.iii. changes from

that is as tentative and lacking in firm resolve as its insecure hero, Troilus. The play frustrates audience members who anticipate the resolution of various plot elements. The Trojan debate is undermined by Hector's previous challenge to the Greeks; Hector's duel with Ajax is broken off because they are kin; the engineered snub of Achilles fails to rouse him to arm; Achilles's fight with Hector is thwarted by Hecuba's letter; Helen's much-anticipated appearance is as brief as it is anticlimactic; Paris's plan to have Helen "unarm great Hector" never comes to fruition; we never find out what happens to Cressida, because Troilus tears up her letter; Ajax takes Aeneas prisoner, yet we never see nor hear of Troilus's 'rescue' of him; and Troilus's fight with Diomedes, and Menelaus's fights with Paris are all left unresolved. Needless to say, we never see the fall of Troy. In the confusion of battle, the play disintegrates into the short scenes that resemble the "fragments, scraps, the bits, and greasy relics" of Cressida's "faith" or Troilus's self-esteem (V.ii.155).

Also, numerous metatheatric scenes suggest that Troilus and Cressida is a play about praise, performance and mirroring. Yet each internal performance is a disappointment: the returning Troilus fails to wave to Pandarus; the carefully performed 'snub' of Achilles ends in just fifteen lines; the many characters' "pageants" of other characters serve more as insults

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indecisiveness to a plan of action when Aeneas delivers Hector's challenge to the Greeks (215-309); *et cetera*.

(preventive attacks) than entertainment; and the dramatic intensity of Diomedes's seduction of Cressida is undermined by Thersites's lewdness and Ulysses's doltish misunderstanding of Troilus's anger. Even the narcissus myth, with its themes of mirroring, self-love and rejection, is degraded when the lovers spot "dregs" in the "fountain of [their] love" (III.ii.60-63). Instead of asking the audience for praise at the play's close, Pandarus clumsily insults them as "Brethren and sisters of the hold-door trade" and 'bequeaths' them his venereal diseases. As Joseph Westlund argues, in his discussion of the similarly ambiguous plot resolutions of All's Well that Ends Well, "by mirroring and confirming our need to find something extremely good [i.e., a happy ending, unambiguous characters], and then frustrating it so that we recognize [that] the wish is a wish... [the] play tempers the sort of near grandiose elation" that is symptomatic of the unrealistic expectations of narcissistically unbalanced performers and audiences alike (Westlund 145). Once unrealistic 'wishes' are exposed, the way is paved for 'working through' to more balanced expectations of one's self and others.

CONCLUSION

"Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe"

Troilus and Cressida cannot be classified as a tragedy, but it is 'tragic' in the broader senses of the word: "sorrowful, sad, melancholy, gloomy" (OED s.v.).[1] What is 'tragic' is the process of degradation and moral exhaustion that afflicts the participants of the protracted siege of Troy; indeed, Girard calls it "a treatise of mimetic decomposition" and "disintegration" (Envy 121). It is especially disturbing to compare the eloquence that Troilus and Hector demonstrate during the Trojan debate with the brutal bellowing of their final battle sequences. It is equally disheartening to see Ajax's confidence built up by cynical generals, only to be stripped away when he ceases to be useful to their machinations. Of course it is deplorable that female characters are treated so badly by males. Yet misogyny and male aggression are merely outer symptoms of great sadness and insecurity within men's selves: "Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe" (V.x.31).

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[1] Hector's role is too displaced by the play's focus on Troilus (who survives), for his death to qualify the play as a tragedy; although Muir has argued that he is "an heroic figure" and that the play is a "tragical satire" (Muir Introduction, 34-37). No other major character dies except Patroclus.

Una Ellis-Fermor writes that Troilus and Cressida is a play with "discord as the central theme", employing "a deliberately intended discord of form" to convey the "disjunction and disintegration of civilization" (122, 118). Ellis-Fermor seems to have adopted Troilus's narcissistic perception of the events as her own, when she suggests that Cressida's betrayal of him "affirm[s] the magnitude and universality of... evil": "when the base of the world, the centre of stability itself, is equated with Cressida's love, we have not much farther to seek for Shakespeare's comment upon that stability" (129). Yet Cressida's "evil" inconstancy and the play's structural disintegration merely suggest a more fundamental instability in the male characters' core selves. Masculine insecurity is projected outward onto the structure of the play.

Shakespeare's genius lies in showing the mundane psychological roots of national wars of epic grandeur, without either trivializing the events or resorting to 'great man' mythologyzing. As he depicts it, the Trojan War is largely caused and perpetuated by fraternal rivalry and dysfunctional interpersonal relations. These create a competitive environment in which masculine aggression and grandiose-exhibitionism are acceptable behaviour. While it is true that admiring selfobject failures cause the rage of Ajax, Achilles, Hector and especially Troilus, it is unfair to blame Thersites, Patroclus, Andromache or Cressida for this. Bacal emphasizes that "recurring selfobject failure is inevitable in human relationships" (234). Therefore, it is misleading to

blame the shortcomings of maternal figures such as Helen and Cressida for the war (as Ellis-Fermor does, 129); just as it is unfair to blame idealized selfobject figures such as Paris or Hector for Troilus's imitation of their less desirable qualities.[2] The source of a patient's propensity to blame selfobjects lies in his narcissistic perception of his caretakers' responses, or lack thereof (ROS 7-9). To paraphrase Donald Winnicott, it is impossible to be a perfect selfobject for another, only a 'good-enough' selfobject, and that only temporarily (Schapiro 12). An insecure adult hates being denied mirroring responses, and often resents the gradual weaning process imposed on him by a selfobject transference, whether with a caretaker, lover, role-model or analyst. Hecuba, Cassandra, Andromache, and even Patroclus all perform the thankless task of trying to wean male warriors of their exhibitionism and bloodlust.[3] For

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[2] John E. Gedo points out that Kohut is frequently criticized for blaming patients' disorders on "the failures of their caretakers" (420). One such critic of Kohut is Salmon Akhtar, who comments that "The problem with Kohut's view of the genesis of the narcissistic personality disorder is its undue, single-minded emphasis on one etiological factor, namely, deficient maternal empathy" (351). Yet Kohut insists that such failures are an inevitable, endurable, and necessary part of growing up and 'working through' narcissistic dependence on others. Rather than blame selfobjects for his patients' disorders, Kohut suggests practical ways to work through patients' unbalanced dependence on them.

[3] In The Iliad, Hecuba attempts to dissuade Hector from fighting Achilles by reminding her son of the admiring selfobject function she performed for him during his childhood -- a function inextricably linked with feeding:

> Thrusting her dress aside, she exposed one of her breasts in her other hand and implored him, with the tears running down her cheeks. 'Hector, my child,' she cried, 'have some regard for this,

example, Patroclus is made to regret the calming influence he has on his lover: "I stand condemned for this/ They think my little stomach to the war/ And your great love to me restrains you thus" (III.iii.219-21). Similarly, when Andromache refuses to admire Hector's aggressive behaviour, he berates her: "You train me to offend you; get you in" (V.iii.4).

The key to overcoming insecurities in the self is working through chronic dependence on selfobjects. Ajax's 'maiden battle' with Hector, and Troilus's successful tryst with Cressida, provide brief (and tragically foreshortened) examples of the restorative processes of confidence-building and maturation. Yet the example of Thersites shows that a wartime environment filled with insecure and aggressive men is largely unconducive to such a gradual, weaning process. He reveals the origins of his problems in an angry soliloquy:

> How now, Thersites? What, lost in the labyrinth of thy fury? Shall the elephant Ajax carry it thus? He beats me, and I rail at him. O worthy satisfaction! Would it were otherwise -- that I could beat him, whilst he railed at me. 'Sfoot, I'll learn to conjure and raise devils, but I'll see some issue of my spiteful execrations (II.iii.1-6).

The reciprocal hatred of Ajax and Thersites is comic exaggeration of the lack of empathy that plagues most inter-personal relations in the play. Instead of

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> and pity me. How often have I given you this breast and soothed you with its milk! Bear in mind those days, dear child... and do not go out to meet that man in single combat.' (Homer Book XXII, 399).

offering forgiveness, Thersites seeks vengeance for his injuries with ever-increasing intensity, until he rails, "Vengeance on the whole camp!" (16).

Interestingly, Thersites, who prays to the "devil Envy" (18-20), is largely ignored by Girard in his A Theater of Envy. Thersites does not fit into Girard's model of triangular desire: he does not want to *be* anyone else, and his desires are mediated by no-one. He insults everyone to protect his vulnerable self from attack. He is a "slave who coins slanders like a mint" (I.iii.193), but he is not a slave to mediated envy. Rather, he is a slave to his own chronic narcissistic rage, which "enslaves the ego and allows it to function only as its tool and rationalizer" (SFS 2: 646). Sadly, he is denied the selfobject mergers that would help him overcome this condition. Shunned and abused by Trojan and Greek alike, he lacks realistic self-esteem: "I am a rascal, a scurvy railing knave, a very filthy rogue" (V.iv.27). Contemptuous of even the most magnanimous gestures, he idealizes no-one: after Hector spares him, Thersites replies "a plague break thy neck -- for frighting me" (V.iv.30-31). Because of his isolation and "terrible pride in self and absolute loathing of all other creatures" (Kernan 194), perhaps it is Thersites, not Achilles, who is "so plaguy proud that the death-tokens of it/ Cry 'No recovery.'" (II.iii.171-72).

Masculine insecurity, with its origins in archaic fears of abandonment, may well be one of the organizing principles of Troilus and Cressida. A critical

examination of the play using the approaches of Girard and Kohut reveals the psychic origins of Shakespeare's image patterns: no allusion or image is used simply for decoration, but to elaborate the plot, characters and issues -- especially cuckoldry. The characters do seem to display 'childish' behaviour, but Shakespeare suggests that archaic needs for praise and guidance rule the 'adult' behaviour of men at war. The siege of Troy is an apt metaphor for the play's warriors, whose core selves are under siege and about to crumble at any moment. No wonder the violence and aggression seem interminable: even after seven years, there is no shortage of young men to initiate into a world where "Fears make devils of cherubins" (III.ii.64).

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