Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy

ELIZABETHAN REVENGE TRAGEDY

A STUDY OF THE SPANISH TRAGEDY AND TITUS ANDRONICUS

By

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A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

October, 1987

MASTER OF ARTS (1987)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy: A Study of The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus

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NUMBER OF PAGES: vii, 130

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to compare two early Elizabethan revenge tragedies, Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy and Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus, in light of the recent critical re-evaluation of these two plays. I have chosen to examine these plays according to three distinct topics: the images of nature used by Kyd and Shakespeare; the theme of justice; and the dramatic convention of the revenger's madness.

I propose that The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus are not simply the crudely constructed plays that they were once thought to have been, but that Kyd and Shakespeare present their audiences with a compelling portrait of the individual caught up in an age of crisis. The method used in this thesis is to focus primarily on the protagonists' vision of society in both plays and show how this vision changes substantially by the conclusion. Both Hieronimo and Titus undergo a radical psychological transformation during the course of their respective plays. Although it has frequently been said that the revenger's madness results from his excessive grief over the loss of his children, I think this is only part of the entire story. In both The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus the protagonists originally possess a belief in the benevolence of nature and also demonstrate their faith in earthly justice; but they are forced

to re-think these beliefs when they and their families become the victims of brutal crimes.

Through this thesis I hope to show that The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus are far from being mere entertainment for the masses, and that they present an artistic vision of the virtuous individual trying to come to some understanding of the nature of his own corrupt society.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with great pleasure that I record my sincere appreciation to Professor R. W. Vince, Professor A. S. Brennan and Professor A. D. Hammond for their careful consideration of this thesis and their helpful comments. I would also like to express my gratitude to the supervisor of my thesis, Professor Douglas Duncan. My association with Professor Duncan both as a graduate and undergraduate student at McMaster University has been very rewarding, and the completion of this thesis is largely due to his constant encouragement and kind words of advice.

Most of all I wish to thank my parents. Although they themselves never had the opportunity to attend a school of higher learning, they always understood the value of a liberal education and encouraged me to persevere in my studies.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis will examine various aspects of Thomas Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy and William Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus. Both plays are early examples of Elizabethan revenge tragedy, and consequently they share many similarities in plot and structure. However, it is hoped that this thesis will not simply be a recapitulation of the dramatic conventions associated with revenge tragedy, but that it will provide the student of Renaissance drama with some new ways of approaching The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus. Chapter I examines the imagery of nature found in both plays, and chapter II explores the theme of justice as it is developed by Kyd and Shakespeare respectively. The third and final chapter concerns the revengers' madness, and focusses primarily on various mad scenes in the two plays.

Before proceeding with a detailed discussion of any of these three subjects, I feel it is essential to give a brief historical account of Elizabethan revenge tragedy, and to place The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus within the context of this subgenre of English literature. In his comprehensive study of the subject, Fredson Bowers observes that the two decades between 1587 and 1607 constitute "the golden age of...revenge tragedy."[1] During this period, a number

of plays dealing specifically with the theme of revenge were performed on the Elizabethan stage.[2] To a large extent, these "revenge tragedies" were formulaic because they all followed a similar plot-line with some variations. In almost all revenge tragedies, the protagonist discovers through the course of the play that a blood relation--usually a father or son--has been murdered. But it is impossible for the protagonist to obtain justice from the sovereign because the sovereign or a member of his immediate family is responsible for the murder. This is the predicament in which Hieronimo and Titus find themselves.

After discovering his murdered son, Hieronimo seeks retribution within a legal framework but is invariably prevented from petitioning the king for justice because of Lorenzo's interference. In Titus' case, the possibility of receiving a fair hearing from the newly-crowned emperor does not exist. Tamora and the Goths have corrupted the Roman court irrevocably, and Titus realizes that Tamora's villainous sons will go unpunished unless he himself becomes the arbiter of justice.

"Revenge tragedy" and "the revenge play" are twentieth-century terms which owe their inception to A. H. Thorndike. Early in this century, Thorndike used the terms to categorize a number of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays "whose leading motive is revenge and whose main action deals with the progress of this revenge."[3] Bowers then popularized these terms in his important study entitled Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy.[4]

But while these terms may be convenient for the scholar or student, they are also somewhat restrictive because they classify under one all-encompassing heading such disparate plays as Shakespeare's Hamlet and Cyril Tourneur's The Revenger's Tragedy. Instead of looking at these

plays individually, the trend in scholarship in the first half of this century was to focus attention on the dramatic conventions common to all revenge tragedies.

Following Bowers' example, scholars viewed The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus primarily as seminal works in a distinct literary subgenre. Much work was done on such dramatic conventions as: the ghost; the play-within-a-play as a means of exposing or punishing the guilty; horrific crimes and bloodshed; Machiavellian intrigue and deceit; and the revenger's real or feigned madness. The influence of Seneca, especially on the early plays, was also thoroughly examined.[5] More recently, the moral and ethical problems posed by revenge tragedy have been approached through study of the technique of sixteenth-century rhetoric.[6]

Kyd is almost universally credited with inventing and popularizing the revenge play as a literary form. Not only did he write The Spanish Tragedy, but he is also reputed to be the author of the original version of Hamlet. The Spanish Tragedy, generally regarded as the prototype of revenge tragedy and arguably the most popular play of its day, was written and performed sometime between 1582 and 1592.[7] The theatrical and commercial success of this play led many other playwrights including the young Shakespeare to copy the "Kydian formula."

As with The Spanish Tragedy, the date of composition for Titus Andronicus is uncertain, but it is thought to have been written between 1591 and 1594.[8] What seems clear about Titus Andronicus is that it was modelled on The Spanish Tragedy, and that it first appeared no more than a few years after Kyd's play made its debut. Helen Gardner suggests that because Titus Andronicus was Shakespeare's first attempt at tragedy, he

consciously imitated Kyd's play. Gardner adds that Shakespeare tried to surpass Kyd's success by making the action in Titus Andronicus more violent and the crimes more bloody and horrific than those found in The Spanish Tragedy.[9]

That the two plays were immensely popular there can be no doubt. Dover Wilson says that The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus competed with one another for first-place in the hearts of Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences, and that this popularity extended well into the seventeenth century.[10] Indeed, Ben Jonson corroborates this assessment of the plays' appeal. In the Induction to Bartholomew Fair (1614), Jonson expresses his contempt for the popular taste of his age by disparaging those who still affectionately regard The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus as good theatre:

> He that will swear Jeronimo or Andronicus are the best plays yet, shall pass unexcepted at here as a man whose judgement shows it is constant, and hath stood still these five and twenty, or thirty years.[11]

Jonson is by no means alone in his disdain for these two plays, but for our purposes here it is significant that he links them. Jonson is one in a long line of the plays' detractors who see them as crude sensationalist tragedies that pander to the bloodlust of the "groundlings." This line of argument is not without some foundation for the 1602 Additions to The Spanish Tragedy evidently prove that audiences took great pleasure in seeing the mad Hieronimo on stage.[12] While Kyd's play has long been recognized as a significant work in the history of English dramaturgy, scholars have neglected to include it alongside the other great plays of the Elizabethan era until very recently. In The Cambridge History of

English Literature, Gregory Smith expresses what had been the standard view of The Spanish Tragedy until quite recently:

> The interest of Kyd's work is almost exclusively historical. Like Marlowe's, it takes its place in the development of English tragedy by revealing new possibilities and offering a model in technique; unlike Marlowe's, it does not make a second claim upon us as great literature.[13]

Bowers also sees The Spanish Tragedy as an inexpertly constructed play, and he feels that the first few scenes in the play involving Andrea's ghost and the Spanish court are cumbersome and extraneous to the main plot: that of Hieronimo's quest for revenge.[14]

Titus Andronicus has also attracted more than its share of negative commentary. Edward Ravenscroft, reflecting the middle- and late-seventeenth century view of Titus Andronicus, remarked that the play "seems rather a heap of Rubbish...."[15] More recently, Muriel Bradbrook has dismissed the play as a "Senecal exercise" which inappropriately mingles decorous imagery with horrific action.[16] Also, Dover Wilson claims that the play has no real structure, and that it is merely a compilation of scenes of madness and violence. Wilson observes that Titus Andronicus "seems to jolt and bump along like some broken-down cart, laden with bleeding corpses from an Elizabethan scaffold, and driven by an executioner from Bedlam dressed in cap and bells."[17]

There has been surprisingly little work done on The Spanish Tragedy, and even less scholarship has been devoted to Titus Andronicus. According to C. A. Hallett, that work which has been done is almost exclusively confined to a study of the plays as revenge tragedies, or to a discussion of the audience's reaction to the revengers.[18] Such works

as Clarence Boyer's The Villain as Hero in Elizabethan Tragedy, Fredson Bowers' Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy and Eleanor Prosser's Hamlet and Revenge are indispensable reading for the student interested in the revenge play because they explain the moral and ethical attitudes towards private revenge that existed in Elizabethan England. But while these works tell us much about the orthodox views of Church and State which prohibited revenge, they restrict any discussion of the plays to an historical context.

The last twenty or thirty years has witnessed a revival of interest in The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus, and along with this revival has come a more favourable assessment of the plays. Philip Edwards' analysis of The Spanish Tragedy illustrated that Kyd is a master of irony and suspense, and that his play has been under-estimated for many years.[19] Indeed, The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus continue to prove their worth as entertainment even today. Both plays have been performed at the British National Theatre over the last couple of decades, and both have received much critical acclaim. While the traditional complaint that these two plays are little more than bloody spectacles will undoubtedly continue to be voiced from time to time, it is hoped that respect for The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus will grow as more work on them is published.

It has long been recognized that the imagery of nature--and especially the image of the garden--figures prominently in the poetry of Renaissance England. This imagery is also found in the drama of this period as well, and there a number of rhetorical passages in The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus which contain images of nature and pastoral language. Moreover, the villainous acts which inaugurate the protagonists' search for

vengeance in both plays occur in a natural setting: Horatio is murdered in Hieronimo's garden or "sacred bower" and Lavinia is raped and mutilated in the forest. In chapter I, I suggest that the playwrights selected the natural settings not only because they are locations where crimes could conceivably be perpetrated, but also because a garden and a forest had important connotative meanings for the Elizabethans. For instance, a garden was a place where one could retreat from the world and meditate on man's relationship with God. Kyd clearly exploits this connotative meaning in The Spanish Tragedy, hence Hieronimo's description of his garden as a "sacred" place.

Chapter II looks at the theme of justice in the two plays. Perhaps it goes without saying that justice is a central issue in any revenge tragedy because in all revenge plays the temporal authorities responsible for meting out justice fail to do so, and it is precisely this failure in the judicial process which compels the protagonist to seek a private and extra-legal revenge. Hieronimo and Titus both conclude that justice is unavailable to them, and interestingly enough both characters allude to the classical myth of Astraea, the pagan goddess of justice who flees the earth during the Iron Age, leaving mortal man to fend for himself in a corrupt and imperfect world.

The third and final chapter of this study addresses the complex issue of the revengers' madness. Most scholars regard the revengers' madness either as a "Senecan element" which English playwrights adapted for the Elizabethan stage or as one of the formulaic conventions of the revenge play. No doubt, both views are valid, but there is more to the revengers' madness than this. The murder of Horatio and the rape of Lavinia are the

incidents which precipitate Hieronimo's and Titus' mental decline; but society's failure to redress their wrongs is what ultimately transforms a grief-stricken father into a murderous lunatic in both plays.

Although nature, justice and madness appear to be three distinct and separate topics, I believe that these subjects are related in The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus. The protagonists in both tragedies possess certain attitudes towards nature and justice. But during the course of both plays, these conceptions are radically altered. Following the murder of Horatio and the rape of Lavinia, Hieronimo and Titus no longer see nature as beneficent and they lose all faith in earthly justice. Indeed, Hieronimo begins to imagine that the landscape is populated with infernal fiends who "sally forth of hell/ And frame my steps to unfrequented paths,"[20] and Titus sees nature as defiled and corrupted like his daughter. These changes in Hieronimo's and Titus' view of nature and justice coincide with their slow and agonizing descent into madness.

INTRODUCTION: NOTES

[1]Fredson Bowers, Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy: 1587-1642 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971, 1st ed. 1940), p. 109.

[2]In A Study of Elizabethan and Jacobean Tragedy (Cambridge: University Press, 1964), T. B. Tomlinson observes that "revenge dominates Elizabethan play-writing as no motif has ever dominated a period of English literature" (p. 73). Eleanor Prosser also provides evidence that the revenge motif was the major theme in Elizabethan drama when she points out that every play in the Shakespearean canon (including the comedies) contains the element of revenge. Eleanor Prosser, Hamlet and Revenge (Stanford: University Press, 1957), p. 74.

[3]Ashley H. Thorndike, "The Relation of Hamlet to the Contemporary Revenge Play", Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, 12, (1902), p. 125.

[4]For a detailed discussion of the terms "revenge tragedy" and "the revenge play," see Ronald Broude, "Revenge and Revenge Tragedy in Renaissance England", Renaissance Quarterly, 28 (1975), pp. 38-55.

[5]The "Senecan influence" on Renaissance drama has been exhaustively researched with most scholars agreeing that the Elizabethan playwrights borrowed extensively from Seneca. H. B. Charlton says "when modern tragedy begins with the dawn of the Renaissance, Seneca is its first and only begetter." H. B. Charlton, The Senecan Tradition in Renaissance Tragedy: A Re-issue of an Essay published in 1921 (Manchester: University Press, 1946. rpt. Folcroft Library Editions, 1974), p. cxliv. J. W. Cunliffe also sees Seneca as having a profound influence on Elizabethan drama. J. W. Cunliffe, The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy (1893; rpt. Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1965).

[6]See Joel B. Altman, The Tudor Play of Mind: Rhetorical Enquiry and the Development of Elizabethan Drama (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978) and Cynthia Graham Eland, The Rhetoric of Revenge: The Use of Forensic Rhetoric in The Spanish Tragedy, Titus Andronicus and The Jew of Malta [Ph. D. thesis] (Hamilton, Canada: McMaster University, 1983).

[7]Philip Edwards, ed. The Spanish Tragedy, The Revels Plays (London: Methuen, 1959), p. xxvii.

[8]Frank Kermode, Introduction to Titus Andronicus in The Riverside Shakespeare ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974), pp. 1019-1020b. See also J. C. Maxwell, ed. Titus Andronicus, The Arden Shakespeare (London: Methuen, 1968, 1st ed. 1953), pp. xviii-xxvii.

[9]Helen Gardner, "Hamlet and the Tragedy of Revenge." Shakespeare: Modern Essays in Criticism ed. Leonard F. Dean (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 218.

[10]John Dover Wilson, ed. Titus Andronicus, The New Shakespeare (Cambridge: University Press, 1948), p. ix.

[11]Ben Jonson, Bartholomew Fair, The Yale Ben Jonson, ed. Eugene M. Waith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), Induction 11. 95-98.

[12]The five additional scenes that were added to The Spanish Tragedy in 1602 have been attributed to Ben Jonson. Although critics have recently disputed this, they do not dispute the fact that the 1602 Additions are definitely not Kyd's. For this reason, the 1602 Additions will **not** be considered in the discussion of The Spanish Tragedy. For a detailed discussion concerning the 1602 Additions, see Edwards, pp. lxi-lxvi.

[13]Gregory Smith, The Cambridge History of English Literature (Volume V, 1910, p. 163), quoted in Edwards' Introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, p. li.

[14]Bowers says that "the ghost has no real concern with the play" and that "the fundamental motive for the tragic action [the murder of Horatio]...is not conceived until midway in the play." Bowers, p. 71.

[15]Edward Ravenscroft quoted in Maxwell's Introduction to Titus Andronicus, p. xix.

[16]Muriel Bradbrook, Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy (Cambridge: University Press, 1980, revision of 1935 edition), p. 91.

[17]Dover Wilson, p. xii.

[18]Charles A. Hallett and Elaine S. Hallett, The Revenger's Madness: A Study of Revenge Tragedy Motifs (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1980), p. 4.

[19]Critical opinion of The Spanish Tragedy has been considerably more favourable since Edwards' edition of the play was published in 1959.

[20]Thomas Kyd, The Spanish Tragedy, The Revels Plays ed. Philip Edwards (London: Methuen, 1959), III.ii.16-17. All future references to The Spanish Tragedy will be taken from this edition of the play.

CHAPTER 1

NATURAL IMAGERY IN THE SPANISH TRAGEDY AND TITUS ANDRONICUS

i) Nature and the Elizabethans

Natural imagery and references to nature are found throughout The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus. In Kyd's play Hieronimo's garden serves as the setting for no less than three important scenes, including the pivotal scene in which the bloody corpse of Horatio is discovered hanging from a bower by his father. Titus Andronicus also employs a natural setting as the scene of criminal activity, for Lavinia is savagely raped and mutilated and her husband is murdered while the two are walking in the forest. Also, Marcus and Titus use pastoral language in their descriptions of the handless Lavinia, comparing her to a fountain spewing forth blood and to a tree with its branches lopped off. These natural images are not included in the two plays for ornamentation; rather, I feel that Kyd and Shakespeare include these images because nature had many connotations for their audience. To most Elizabethans, the natural and unspoiled world was God's handiwork, and nature was seen as a benificent force in the world. The image of defiled nature which is presented in both The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus would undoubtedly have had a shocking dramatic impact on Kyd's and Shakespeare's audiences.

The Renaissance concept of nature differs vastly from that of the

twentieth century. According to Isabel Rivers, the modern scholar or student approaches Renaissance literature with an obvious disadvantage because he does not share the same views, beliefs and preconceptions as the Renaissance poet or playwright. Moreover, Rivers adds that "though he may use the same vocabulary, he does not assign to it the same meaning."[1] This is especially true with respect to the word "nature."

Generally, the Elizabethans still subscribed to the harmonic world-view of the medievals. According to this view of the universe, God created the heavens and the earth, and He established "natural laws" by which everything on earth worked towards harmony and perfection. If man simply observed the natural world he could discern these divinely-ordained laws, and by following them he could live in harmony with nature. It was assumed that the farther one got from the corrupt court or city and the closer he came to the countryside, the more apt he was to discover God's immanence in the world. Thus, in Robert Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Margaret "the fair maid of Fressingfield" embodies moral as well as physical beauty.[2]

In contrast to this view of nature and the natural world was the idea of "art." Quite simply put, if nature was God's handiwork then art was what man did with nature. Ideally, art and nature should be in accord, and man's function on earth was to improve and regulate nature through art. The Elizabethans saw the court as a primary symbol of art. The sovereign should observe and obey God's natural laws, but ruling the kingdom was an art. If the king followed God's laws and also improved on the natural world, his kingdom would be governed peacefully and successfully. The

monarch was also responsible for cultivating virtue and nobility in the court, but if he neglected his duties the court could very easily become a place of corruption and iniquity.

In Richard II Shakespeare presents the famous image of England as the "sea-walled garden" which King Richard has failed to cultivate properly. In this play a gardener comes forth and metaphorically compares Richard II to an unskilled gardener who, instead of cultivating his kingdom through art and thereby regulating and improving it, has let the nation go to seed:

> ...our sea-walled garden, the whole land,
> Is full of weeds, her fairest flowers chok'd up,
> Her fruit-trees all unprun'd, her hedges ruin'd
> Her knots disordered, and her wholesome herbs
> Swarming with caterpillars.[3]

According to the gardener, if Richard would have pruned away such "superfluous branches" as Bushy, Green and the Earl of Wiltshire from the court, he would never have been deposed (III.iv.63-65). But by neglecting his duties as king, Richard has permitted the court to become corrupt and unmanageable.

Like Richard, the Spanish king in The Spanish Tragedy and the Roman emperor in Titus Andronicus also fail to cultivate their courts properly. The Spanish king is basically a good man, but he is so preoccupied with concluding a peace with the Portuguese that he neglects all internal matters. Such "weeds" as Lorenzo and Balthazar are allowed to flourish and infiltrate Hieronimo's garden, and there they murder that flower of chivalry, Horatio. Similarly, the Roman emperor stands idly by as Tamora and the other Goths descend on the Andronici in the forest like a pack of ravenous wolves.

Although individuals could not always venture forth into the countryside to enjoy the peace and tranquility of nature, the Elizabethans felt that man could bring nature closer to him by cultivating a garden in his own environment. The harmony and pleasure lacking in human society could be experienced in this garden, and therefore the garden represented the perfect union of art and nature. In The Spanish Tragedy Hieronimo is an educated man, a judge and a courtier, and his fondness for his garden exemplifies the ideal relationship of art and nature. Another outdoor pursuit which the Elizabethans viewed in a similar way was hunting, a sport particularly associated with the court. Like gardening, hunting not only refreshed the courtier by bringing him into contact with nature, but also symbolized his control over nature, an extension of the basic symbol of the rider's control over his horse. So when Titus makes his ill-fated proposal to celebrate the emperor's wedding with a royal hunt, another hint of the ideal relationship of art and nature is distinctly given.

The garden as a place of refuge from the corruption of the world enjoyed a long poetic tradition among Christian and classical writers alike. In the classical tradition, retreating into the garden became a symbolic attempt to recapture the Golden Age when men lived in a world free from strife and injustice. The garden in classical literature, according to A. Bartlett Giamatti, was a setting that implied "the presence of inner harmony or ideal love or behavior."[4] Christian writers saw the garden as a place of retreat where man could meditate on his relationship with God. The garden became a type of "earthly paradise," and the joy felt by the individual in this setting was the closest that fallen man could come to experiencing that prelap-

sarian bliss and contentment which Adam experienced in Eden.[5] Hence, both classical and Christian writers viewed the garden as a place where harmony and peace existed, and where man could seek this harmony. The motif of the retreat into the garden in Western literature came to represent man's quest for a perfect state of existence.

One example of a poem which discusses an individual's retreat into a garden as a means of communing with nature is Andrew Marvell's "The Garden." Though this poem was written long after The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus, Marvell takes his main image--that of the garden--from a long poetical tradition that was unquestionably familiar to Kyd and Shakespeare. In Marvell's poem the persona shuns the "rude" society of men, and seeks "Fair Quiet" and "Innocence" in a garden.[6] The garden in this poem is obviously a place of spiritual contemplation, and the persona believes that by being in a natural setting and observing nature he will come closer to a spiritual understanding of his relationship with God.

But the garden did not always figure as a place of spiritual meditation in secular poetry. Frequently, the garden served as a locus for sensuous pleasures of various kinds. Such is the case in Guillaume de Lorris' Roman de la Rose and Chaucer's The Merchant's Tale where the garden becomes a setting for erotic love.[7] These gardens were considered "false paradises" because although they resembled the earthly paradises they were dedicated not to spiritual pursuits but to the pursuits of inferior forms of pleasure.[8]

In general, then, the Elizabethans believed that nature was beneficent and that evil in the world was attributable to man's innate depravity. But as H. B. Parkes observes, such a view did not always resolve the Eliza-

bethans' doubts concerning these natural laws which supposedly governed the world:

> On the one hand they [the Elizabethans] had been taught that nature was fundamentally good, that evil was a mere imperfection or aberration, and that the maintenance of moral and political order depended upon this belief in the identity of natural and divine law. On the other hand they were confused by the natural world in which the central reality was not reason or morality, but power, and the manifestations of power were, by traditional standards, evil.[9]

Hieronimo and Titus both experience this confusion concerning natural laws in their respective plays. Although both characters apparently believe in the beneficence of nature, they come to realize that it is the powerful and ruthless individual who prevails in this world. Lorenzo in The Spanish Tragedy and Aaron in Titus Andronicus are unconscionable villains who use art and cunning to pervert nature for their own criminal objectives. When Hieronimo and Titus see that these villains have corrupted or defiled nature and are evidently going to go unpunished, they begin to doubt whether natural laws really do exist or whether the only law operating in this world is "might makes right." In fact, Titus and Hieronimo eventually despair at ever finding retributive justice, and in their quest for vengeance they become as ruthless and predatory as their tormentors.

ii) Hieronimo's Garden

Kyd evidently drew upon the various meanings associated with the garden when he composed The Spanish Tragedy. Hieronimo's garden is a central image in Kyd's play, and many of the play's characters--including Hieronimo, Isabella, Horatio, Bel-imperia, Lorenzo, Balthazar, Pedringano and Serberine--appear in the garden at least once during the course of the

play. The garden functions as a veritable microcosm or "mirror" of the world, for in this natural setting the audience finds a whole array of characters including lovers, villains and virtuous men.

The symbolic importance of Hieronimo's garden is that each character who enters it assigns to it a different meaning. Hieronimo declares at one point that his garden "was made for pleasure" (II.v.12), and while he does not elaborate on what he means by "pleasure," I think it can be assumed that the just and noble knight marshal sees his garden as a place of repose and relaxation. On the other hand, the libidinous Bel-imperia and her consort Horatio regard the garden simply as a convenient location in which to carry on an illicit sexual relationship. But Lorenzo and Balthazar find yet another use for the garden. To them, it is a secluded area and therefore a perfect location in which to murder Horatio and escape undetected. In a way, then, Hieronimo's garden is an effective Rorschach test because the characters' disparate views and conceptions of the garden reveal more about their own personalities than they tell us about any innate qualities of the garden itself.

Although the garden is a central image in The Spanish Tragedy, there is no mention of it in the first act. Act One consists almost entirely of background information to the conflict between Spain and Portugal. Several characters including the ghost of Andrea provide the audience with their versions of what transpired on the battlefield. But another significant feature in Act One is the relationship established between Bel-imperia and Horatio because their relationship has a direct bearing on the image of Hieronimo's garden.

In Act One, Scene Four, Horatio recalls the events leading up to

Andrea's death. He informs Bel-imperia that Balthazar killed the valiant Andrea in cowardly fashion, and that he, Horatio, was so incensed by his friend's death that he boldly attacked and captured Balthazar. Horatio's account of the battle and of his courageous exploits endears him to Bel-imperia, and when he exits Bel-imperia confesses that he is now the man she loves.

Bel-imperia's emotions at this point are somewhat confused, to say the least. She has just received word of her first lover's death, and yet already she conceives a passion for Horatio, thinking of him as her "second love" (I.iv.61). She struggles with conflicting emotions, trying to rationalize this attraction she feels for Horatio:

> Had he not lov'd Andrea as he did,
> He could not sit in Bel-imperia's thoughts.
> But how can love find harbour in my breast
> Till I revenge the death of my beloved? (I.iv.62-65)

Finally, Bel-imperia concludes that if she loves Horatio she may be able to use him to exact vengeance on Balthazar:

> Yes, second love shall further my revenge.
> I'll love Horatio, my Andrea's friend,
> The more to spite the prince that wrought his end. (I.iv.66-68)

The question of how an audience would have reacted to Bel-imperia and Horatio's relationship is a difficult one. Clearly, she and Don Andrea had been intimate, and there are several suggestions in the play that they had had a sexual liason.[10] But no sooner does Bel-imperia learn of the circumstances surrounding her lover's death than she considers taking another lover. Philip Edwards comments that Kyd's plot required that Bel-imperia and Horatio be brought together somehow, and Kyd maneuvred around this problem by making Bel-imperia "a certain kind of woman" (p. liv), thereby making

their union seem credible. Unquestionably, Bel-imperia is a woman given to sensuous pleasure, and as Donald Wineke points out, most audiences would have viewed Bel-imperia and Horatio's tryst as a "hole-and-corner affair conducted in stealth and secrecy" (p. 68).

The passion that Horatio and Bel-imperia feel for one another is in evidence in Act Two, Scene Two. As Horatio explains it, their "hidden smoke is turn'd to open flame" (II.ii.2). Horatio asks Bel-imperia to "appoint the field" where they may consummate their love (l. 39), and she responds, "then be thy father's pleasant bower the field,/ Where first we vow'd a mutual amity" (ll. 42-43). Here, then, is the play's first reference to Hieronimo's garden.

Bel-imperia conceives of the garden as a place designed for purely physical pleasures. She even explains that the garden is an appropriate location for an amorous encounter because "the court were dangerous, that place is safe" (l. 44). In Nature and Love in the Late Middle Ages Aldo Scaglione remarks that the garden was a conventional literary setting for sexual relationships, and that lovers withdrew to the garden to avoid the prying eyes of the Church.[11] In The Spanish Tragedy, however, it is not the Church from which the lovers wish to escape but the court. Bel-imperia in particular has reason to hide because her father, the Duke of Castile, had already discovered her clandestine affair with Don Andrea and put an end to that relationship.

Bel-imperia looks forward to her appointed meeting with Horatio, and she believes that nature will provide them with a romantic setting:

> There none shall hear us but the harmless birds,
> Happily the gentle nightingale

> Shall carol us asleep ere we be ware,
> And singing with the prickle at her breast,
> Tell our delight and mirthful dalliance. (II.ii.47-51)

There is no discussion of an engagement or marriage in Bel-imperia's speech, and yet she beleves that nature will not only condone but approve of her illicit affair with Horatio.

The diction Bel-imperia employs in her conversation with Horatio suggests that she subjectively interprets nature as sanctioning her lascivious desires. She sees Hieronimo's garden as a Renaissance garden of love filled with the sweet music of "harmless birds" and "gentle nightingales." Nowhere in her conversation does she even consider the morality of her actions, and like an infatuated school-girl, she believes that the world is made for lovers.

However, Lorenzo does not share his sister's opinion, and he refuses to stand by while she and Horatio engage in erotic pleasure. Lorenzo learns of his sister's planned rendezvous while eavesdropping on her, and he intends to use the garden for his own sinister purposes. It is never explicitly stated why Lorenzo loathes Horatio or why he so desires a marriage between his sister and Balthazar. But since the king pledged to make Bel-imperia's first-born heir to the Spanish throne if she marry Balthazar (II.iii.20-21), it may be that Lorenzo wants to raise the House of Castile in rank by affecting such a union. He might also be extremely jealous of Horatio because the knight marshal's son proved that he was the better man on the field of battle. But as with Iago and Othello, the motive for Lorenzo's hatred of Horatio is unimportant. What does matter is that he harbours a bitter enmity towards Horatio, and he will do everything in his power to eliminate him as a potential rival to Balthazar.

Bel-imperia and Horatio enter Hieronimo's garden in Act Two, Scene Four. It is uncertain how the garden was represented on the unlocalized Elizabethan stage, but a few suggestions have been made as to how it probably appeared. The text does not clearly specify whether the stage-property in the center of the stage was actually an "arbour" (a tree) or a "bower" (a trellis-work arch adorned with leaves) as it is alternately called. Hieronimo says later in the play that he found his son "hanging on a tree" (IV.iv.111), and the author of the "Painter scene" clearly had a tree in mind when he wrote the 1602 Additions to The Spanish Tragedy. However, the title-page of the 1612 edition of the text includes an illustration showing Hieronimo hanging from a leafy arch or bower.[12] Whether the stage-property was a tree or a bower--or possibly even both--is relatively unimportant. It is sufficient to say that whatever was on stage during this scene was meant to emblematize an Elizabethan garden.

Like Bel-imperia, Horatio also expresses his belief that nature is sympathetic to lovers. In fact, Horatio sees the night as abetting them in their tryst:

> Now that the night begins with sable wings
> To overcloud the brightness of the sun,
> And that in darkness pleasures may be done,
> Come Bel-imperia, let us to the bower,
> And there in safety pass a pleasant hour. (II.iv.1-5)

A few lines later, he adds, "heavens have shut up day to pleasure us" (l. 17), and finally, Horatio observes how the birds sing "by night" (l. 28).

Horatio's seeming preoccupation with the night is interesting. It is possible that his repetitions of the word "night" is merely intended to convey to the audience what time of day this scene is supposedly taking place because the Elizabethans obviously had no stage-lighting to create the illusion

of night-time. But it is also possible that the word "night" is repeated because of its ironic effect. Hieronimo interprets the night as a benevolent time because darkness will keep others from discovering Bel-imperia and himself in the garden. But to the Elizabethans, night was anything but a time for "pleasure" and "safety." Indeed, it was just the opposite. In the Renaissance night was considered a time when demonic ghosts and hobgoblins roamed the earth. Shakespeare's Hamlet opens with a night scene which exemplifies the typical attitude towards night. Barnardo and Francisco, the night-watchmen, stand guard in fear and trembling. For two consecutive nights they have seen what appears to be the ghost of the old Danish king, and the atmosphere in this opening scene is charged with fear and uncertainty. In The Spanish Tragedy Horatio's opinion that pleasures may be had at night is his own subjective view which runs counter to the common attitude among the Elizabethans. Again, this is yet another example of the lovers interpreting nature to fit their own preconceived notions of it.

In their dialogue Bel-imperia and Horatio engage in what might appropriately be called verbal foreplay. Using martial imagery, they liken their amorous encounter to "combat" or "peaceful war" in which the opposing parties dart kisses at one another (II.iv.39-41). Their conversation ends in Horatio's desire to "die" with Bel-imperia. "Die" continues the martial imagery of the preceding lines, but in Renaissance England this word also carried with it the secondary meaning of experiencing sexual gratification. Horatio expresses a desire to die in Bel-imperia's arms, but ironically he dies in a literal sense as Lorenzo and Balthazar invade the garden and stab him.

Horatio and Bel-imperia transform Hieronimo's garden into a garden

consecrated to erotic love, and then imagistically transform it once more into a field of battle. But the irony in this scene is that the garden is transformed yet again--this time by Balthazar and Lorenzo--into an actual battlefield in which the villains kill Horatio and hang his corpse from a tree and take Bel-imperia captive. The very tree which stood in the midst of the lovers' pleasurable garden now becomes an instrument of villainy.

Having heard Bel-imperia's cries for help, Hieronimo rushes into his garden dressed only in his nightshirt. When he sees the corpse of a man hanging from the bower, he suspects that someone is trying to implicate him in a crime. The horror of this scene finally hits Hieronimo when he recognizes that the dead man is his very own son. Donald Wineke astutely points out that "the real impact of the murder, and of the violation of the garden [my italics] falls on Hieronimo" (p. 69).

Hieronimo's concept of the garden is unlike that of either the lovers or the villains. After realizing that his son has been murdered in the garden, Hieronimo bewails his son's fate:

> O heavens, why made you night to cover sin?
> By day this deed of darkness had not been
> O earth, why didst thou not in time devour
> The vile profaner of this sacred bower. (II.v.24-27)

Hieronimo's diction in this speech (especially the words "sacred," "sin" and "profaner") is unmistakably Christian, and this suggests that he thought of his garden as a place of spiritual contemplation. As Wineke notes:

> Hieronimo's complaint to the heavens and the earth suggests that his conception of the "sacred bower" has been a mystical religious one. He has thought of the garden as an inviolable temple of God.... It would...be too much to say that it was his terrestrial paradise, but his disillusionment does indicate that for him the garden signified a connection between man and God. (p. 69)

But with the murder of his son and the defilement of his garden, Hieronimo becomes a changed man and his vision of a benevolent world is shattered. In spite of the confused theology in the play, Hieronimo is evidently a man of Christian principles and ethics who believes in Providential Justice. But in this scene he has already begun to question why a just God should suffer murderers to go unpunished in the world, and this question continues to haunt him throughout the remainder of the play. Horatio's murder has unquestionably altered Hieronimo's conception of his garden. Whereas his garden had once been a source of pleasure, Hieronimo now regards it as a "cursed place" (II.v.65). For him, the garden has become a "false paradise." Giamatti's definition of a false paradise has particular relevance to Hieronimo's garden:

> As symbol and setting, the false paradise embodies the split between what seems and what is; it looks like the true earthly paradise, but in the end it is not. It looks like the image of all a man thinks he has sought in his spiritual wanderings, but in the end it is the scene wherein he learns he was wrong. (p. 85)

Hieronimo is not only grief-stricken by the murder of his son, but he is also profoundly disillusioned with the world. He had thought that his garden was a sacred place, but now he sees that he is wrong. Not surprisingly, he never returns to the garden in the rest of the play following this scene.[13] The murder of Horatio and the desecration of his garden cause Hieronimo to despair that heaven will avenge his son, and eventually he turns to the infernal gods of the underworld for assistance.

Although Hieronimo never enters his garden again after discovering his dead son, his wife Isabella does. Like Hieronimo, she too had believed that heaven would avenge their son and ultimately she goes insane while wait-

ing for this divine justice to be meted out. Her reactions in this scene parallel her husband's responses to the murder but also exaggerate them. Whereas Hieronimo has been ruminating on the whys and hows of the murder since discovering his son's body, Isabella has been conspicuously absent from the stage. When she finally does appear in Act Three, Scene Seven, she shows obvious signs that she has gone mad with grief. But in Act Four, Scene Two, her madness is even more pronounced and her anguished grief has turned to a destructive rage. Isabella's change is stark. She instinctually swings from a secure knowledge that "the heavens are just" (II.v.57)--implying that there is no need to take action--to a profound disillusionment and this disillusionment finds expression in her senseless and irrational attack on the arbour. Because "neither piety nor pity moves/ The king to justice or compassion," Isabella vows to take vengeance against the garden which she calls the "accursed complot of my misery" (IV.ii.2-3, 13). As the stage-directions indicate, she "cuts down the arbour," and defoliates the garden, hoping to turn it into a barren wasteland (IV.ii.5 o.s.d.). Also, she exclaims in no uncertain terms that her objective is to destroy the garden:

> Down with these branches and these loathsome boughs
> Of this unfortunate and fatal pine:
> Down with them Isabella, rent them up
> And burn the roots from whence the rest is sprung:
> I will not leave a root, a stalk, a tree,
> A bough, a branch, a blossom, nor a leaf,
> No not an herb within this garden plot. (IV.ii.6-12)

The scene is certainly one of the most remarkable in the play--if only for its seeming irrelevance to the plot--and its powerful dramatic effect cannot be overlooked. Isabella enters the garden firmly resolved to destroy it. In a stage performance, her lines describing the defolia-

tion of the garden would be accompanied with some type of physical activity to produce a striking visual effect. The actress playing Isabella would either cut down the tree or, perhaps more likely, she would strip the arbour or bower of its leaves. Isabella's defoliation of the garden is symbolically "a vivid renunciation of the world gone bad," and it serves as a perfect corollary to Hieronimo's decimation of the Spanish court.[14] Together, the lunatic knight marshal and his equally insane wife destroy the garden and the court--the two main symbols of that ideal ordering of nature by art which the self-serving art of Lorenzo has spoiled. Isabella concludes her speech by cursing the tree once more, and then commits suicide by stabbing herself.[15]

There is yet another "garden scene" in The Spanish Tragedy which perhaps deserves some comment, and that is Act Three, Scene Three. Suspecting that Serberine has told Hieronimo who it was that killed his son, Lorenzo commisions his servant, Pedringano, to meet Serberine in Saint Luigi's Park and murder him there. This "park" is not unlike Hieronimo's garden for it, too, is a cultivated plot of land located in an urban environment. Lorenzo makes this clear when he tells Pedringano that the park is "behind the house" (III.ii.84). Act Three, Scene Three is in apparent contrast to the scene in Hieronimo's garden. Serberine enters the park to keep an appointed meeting just as Horatio enters the garden to meet Bel-imperia. Both men are totally oblivious to the actual peril they are in, and mistakenly believe they are in a safe place. Serberine actually draws attention to the parallel between the park and Hieronimo's garden when he remarks how fitting the park would be for a rendezvous:

> How fit a place, if one were so dispos'd
> Methinks this corner is to close with one. (III.iii.26-27)

These lines are somewhat vague and do not tell us exactly what Serberine is thinking. However, I detect a sexual undertone in Serberine's observation that the park is a fitting place to "close with one." If this is the case, then Serberine's remarks remind the audience of that other park--Hieronimo's garden--which had earlier been the proposed setting of erotic pleasure.

Like Horatio, Serberine is unaware of any danger just before he is slain. But whereas Horatio's murderers escape, Serberine's assassin is promptly arrested, tried and executed for his crime. Pedringano's arrest and execution illustrate that divine and earthly justice still function in the world even though Hieronimo has doubts of this when considering his son's case. Nevertheless, the scene in Saint Luigi's Park illustrates to the audience that justice will eventually be served, and in fact it is the arrest of Pedringano and the letter found in his possession which provides Hieronimo with irrefutable evidence of Lorenzo's guilt. Possibly, then, the scene in Saint Luigi's Park is included to show that although a Machiavel can use guile and cunning to manipulate nature for his own ends, he cannot manipulate the divine justice of the Almighty who will expose and punish the wicked in due time.

iii) Titus Andronicus and the "Wilderness of Tigers"

Not unlike Hieronimo in The Spanish Tragedy, Titus Andronicus initially possesses an idealized view of the natural world. Believing that nature is beneficent, Titus thinks an excursion into the forest by

the court is an appropriate way of celebrating the newly-crowned Emperor's engagement to Tamora. But as in The Spanish Tragedy, this natural setting becomes the scene of heinous crimes against the protagonist's family. As with Hieronimo's garden, the Roman forest is exploited by villains who transform a place of pleasure into a scene of death and destruction. Consequently, Titus' ideal vision of the forest and of Rome itself is fundamentally altered following the murder of Bassianus and the rape of Lavinia.

There are two distinguishable groups of natural images in Titus Andronicus. The first of these groups consists of images associated with a pastoral setting. These pastoral images--such as trees and fountains--are used when describing Lavinia to suggest that, like the forest, she was the embodiment of beauty and innocence before her defilement by Chiron and Demetrius. The second group consists of animal or bestial images which are almost exclusively associated with the barbarous Goths. Throughout the play, Tamora and her children are compared to tigers, bears and other predatory creatures. These animalistic images imply that the Goths possess no human values whatsoever, and that theirs is an appetitive existence. Having entered Rome as Titus' prisoners, Tamora and the Goths manage to corrupt the court and turn Rome into a "wilderness of tigers" in which the Andronici have become the hunted prey.[16]

Like Kyd, Shakespeare includes the motif of the retreat into nature in his play. However, it is not until the second act that Titus and the other major characters journey into the forest to participate in a recreational hunt, and the first act of Titus Andronicus is set before the Roman Senate-house. Returning home after conquering the Goths in war, the victorious Titus discovers that the late emperor's two sons, Saturninus and

Bassianus, are contesting the succession to the throne. Titus becomes embroiled in this power struggle when the tribunes of the people offer to make him emperor. But Titus rejects their offer, and gives his support to the emperor's eldest son, Saturninus. Grateful for Titus' support, Saturninus promises to make Titus' daughter, Lavinia, his empress. But when Bassianus claims Lavinia as his betrothed, the scene erupts into chaos: Lavinia is ushered away by Basianus; Titus pursues them and kills his son in a rage because the boy dared stand in his father's way; and in all the confusion Saturninus takes Tamora as his bride-to-be. When some semblance of order is finally restored, Tamora deceitfully asks that a peace be made between Saturninus and the members of the Andronicus clan.

It is at this point in the play that Titus proposes a royal hunt in the forest to celebrate Saturninus' engagement to Tamora. It is also intimated that Titus sees the retreat into nature as a remedy for discord. Titus asks the emperor if he would like "to hunt the panther and the hart with me" (I.i.493), and it is an offer that Saturninus readily accepts. Clearly, Titus associates nature with pleasure and recreation, and he is hoping that a hunt might help to restore harmony and goodwill to the Roman court.

Howard Baker offers a very practical suggestion concerning the reason why Shakespeare chose the hunt as Titus' method of reconciling with the emperor. According to Baker, Shakespeare realized that he had to have Lavinia fall into the hands of the wicked Goths somehow, and a woodland scene in which Lavinia was raped was "the most natural of devices."[17] Another possible reason why Shakespeare included the woodland scene in Titus Andronicus is that he borrowed the idea from Ovid. The parallel

between the rape of Lavinia in Shakespeare's play and the rape of Philomela in Ovid's Metamorphoses has been commented on by several critics and does not need to be discussed at any length here. It is sufficient to point out that in Book VI of the Metamorphoses Tereus rapes Philomela in a hut in a wooded area and afterwards cuts out her tongue so she cannot name her assailant, and anyone familiar with this story can see how Shakespeare patterned the rape of Lavinia after Ovid's tale.[18] Indeed, Shakespeare makes explicit reference to the Tereus-Philomela story later on in his play (IV. i.52), and a copy of the Metamorphoses is even brought on stage by Lavinia in Act Four, Scene One.

However, I feel that there is another perhaps less obvious reason why Shakespeare chose to include the hunt in his play. For the Elizabethans, hunting was accepted as an appropriate pastime for the court and the aristocracy because it not only provided exercise and sport but it also brought man into direct contact with nature. Indeed, the image of the hunter on horseback symbolized art and nature in accord. Furthermore, hunting exhibited man's ability to control and keep nature in check through art. God had given man dominion over the beasts, and hunting was a means of harvesting nature's bounty while at the same time keeping the animal population down.

But for Titus the hunt turns into a disaster. The bestial Goths, set free in the Roman forest, revert to their barbaric natures and begin to prey on Titus and his family. The forest becomes a nightmare world in which the Goths become the hunters and the civilized and virtuous Andronici are the hunted.

There have been several suggestions made by critics concerning the Roman forest and its symbolic significance. Both G. K. Hunter and Alan

Sommers see the forest as "wild" and "uncivilized" and therefore it serves as a perfect location in which the barbaric Goths can attack Titus and his family.[19] Sommers especially sees the forest as malevolent, commenting that "the forest is itself a power, or is home of powers, active within the play, and it actively defines the threat to civilization" (p. 284).

But initially, Marcus and Titus do not see the forest as a threat to their civilized world. In fact, they see the "forest" as a cultivated natural setting not unlike a Renaissance garden. Albert Tricomi argues convincingly that the "Roman forest" in Titus Andronicus is not a forest at all in the modern sense of the word. He points out that in the early acts of the play the forest is depicted as a "pastoral haven" and "idyllic retreat," and even Tamora and her black paramour, Aaron, view it as such.[20] Alone in a secluded part of the forest with Aaron, Tamora remarks that this is a convenient place to engage in an illicit sexual affair:

> My lovely Aaron, wherefore look'st thou sad
> When everything doth make a gleeful boast?
> The birds chant melody on every bush,
> The snake lies rolled in the cheerful sun,
> The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind,
> And make a chequer'd shadow on the ground;
> Under their sweet shade, Aaron, let us sit,
> ...
> ...each wreathed in the other's arms. (II.iii.10-25)

Tricomi remarks that the forest in Titus Andronicus "is much more like an English park than a wild forest, and at one point Marcus calls it just that, 'a park'" (III.i.88).[21] This park or forest bears some striking similarities to Hieronimo's garden. Hieronimo's garden is an example of nature improved through art and good husbandry, and so too were the forests and parks attached to royal palaces and great houses in Shakespeare's England. They were "cultivated" by their keepers to provide sport for the nobility.

Ideally, the gardener and the huntsman both master nature through art. But like Lorenzo and Balthazar in The Spanish Tragedy, the Machiavels in Titus Andronicus do not use art to improve or cultivate nature; rather, they employ guile and cunning to defile it.

Aaron and Tamora function alternately as the central villain in the play. In Act Two, Aaron suggests that the forest can be used to the Goths' advantage, and that instead of hunting deer Chiron and Demetrius should prey upon the virtuous and chaste Lavinia. Act Two opens with Demetrius and Chiron quarrelling over "Lavinia's love" (II.i.36). Yet Aaron observes that the faithful Lavinia could never love anyone but her husband. Upon further questioning, Aaron discovers that it is not love but lust that the two brothers feel for Lavinia, and they are both determined to have her. According to Demetrius, Lavinia can be forcefully taken, and he compares the ravishing of a girl to the poaching of a deer:

> What, hast not thou full often stroke a doe,
> And borne her cleanly by the keeper's nose? (II.i.93-94)

In these two lines, Demetrius has established an imagistic relationship between Lavinia and a hunted doe, and this is an image that will continue to appear throughout the remainder of the play. Demetrius' reference to deer-poaching evidently inspires the villainous Aaron to formulate a plan by which the brothers will stalk Lavinia in the forest. He counsels them to rape Lavinia during the royal hunt:

> My lords, a solemn hunting is in hand;
> There will the lovely Roman ladies troop:
> The forest walks are wide and spacious,
> And many unfrequented plots there are
> Fitted by kind for rape and villainy:
> Single you thither then this dainty doe,
> And strike her home by force, if not by words. (II.i.112-118)

Later in this same speech, Aaron explains why the rape should take place in the forest:

> The emperor's court is like the house of Fame,
> The palace full of tongues, of eyes and ears:
> The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf, and dull:
> There speak, and strike, brave boys, and take your turns;
> There serve your lust.... (II.i.126-130)

Aaron's reasons for selecting the forest over the court as a place for sexual activity are remarkably similar to Bel-imperia's (see above, p. 20). Like Bel-imperia, Aaron does not trust the court and advises the brothers to satisfy their lust in a secluded area away from the palace. However, there is an important distinction that must be made between Bel-imperia's affair with Horatio and the Gothic brothers' rape of Lavinia. Bel-imperia and Horatio's tryst is unquestionably sinful in the eyes of the Church and probably in the eyes of Kyd's audience as well. But while their relationship is contrary to the moral standards of the day, Bel-imperia and Horatio never intended to injure anyone. On the other hand, Aaron's malicious plot to rape Lavinia in the "ruthless" and "dreadful" woods is unspeakably evil. Moreover, Aaron's description of the forest is a subjective one, showing that he considers nature a tool to be used against one's enemies. Clearly, his view of the forest is juxtaposed to that of Titus and Marcus.

Following this scene, Marcus and Titus enter on stage with three of Titus' sons "making a noise with hounds and horns" (II.ii.1. o.s.d.) Eager for the hunt to begin, Titus exclaims "The hunt is up, the morn is bright and grey,/ The fields are fragrant and the woods are green" (II.ii.1-2). When Saturninus joins the hunting party a few moments later, he also expresses his enthusiasm for the "Roman hunting" (II.ii.20). There is a pun here which Shakespeare might have intended. In the scenes that follow, the Goths

do not participate in the Roman hunting, but rather they hunt Romans: namely Lavinia and her brothers. Demetrius once again likens the proposed rape of Lavinia to hunting deer when he tells his brother, "Chiron, we hunt not, we, with horse nor hound,/ But hope to pluck a dainty doe to ground" (II.ii.25-26).

This contrast between Roman hunting and the hunting of Romans represents the dialectical antagonism in Titus Andronicus. The Andronici embody and epitomize the Roman values of virtue, honour, justice and, in Lavinia's case, chastity. In spite of what we in the twentieth century might think of the "sport" of hunting, Marcus' and Titus' participation in the royal hunt would have been seen as an expression of their civilized natures, for hunting was regarded as an appropriate pastime in which the nobility should partake. But by bringing the Goths into the forest, Titus inadvertently unleashes their bestial natures and provides them with the perfect opportunity to turn on their captors. Although Titus and the Roman soldiers defeated the Goths in war, the forest becomes a second battlefield, and it is here that "the virtues of Roman civilization...encounter with barbarism and barbarism wins.[22]

Just as Lorenzo and Balthazar exploited Hieronimo's garden for their own criminal ends in The Spanish Tragedy, the Goths in Shakespeare's play transform a verdant forest into "an engine of destruction."[23] As Tamora and Aaron converse in the forest, they are interrupted by the approach of Lavinia and Bassianus. Aaron excuses himself so that he may alert Tamora's sons that the trap is ready to be sprung, and as he does so he advises Tamora to start a quarrel with Bassianus. Bassianus compliments Tamora by comparing her to Diana, the Roman goddess of the hunt, but this only brings a sharp rebuke from Tamora:

> Saucy comptroller of my private steps!
> Had I the pow'r that some say Dian had,
> Thy temples should be planted presently
> With horns, as was Actaeon's; and the hounds
> Should drive upon thy new-transformed limbs,
> Unmannerly intruder as thou art. (II.iii.60-65)

Philip Edwards says that Tamora's allusion to Actaeon leads up to the never-failing joke about the cuckold's horns (II.iii.63. f.n.). In fact, Lavinia responds sardonically to Tamora by telling her "you have a goodly gift in horning" (II.iii.67). But I think that perhaps there is more to Tamora's allusion to the myth of Actaeon than simply a hackneyed joke. In the myth Tamora refers to, Actaeon, a huntsman, is transformed into a stag by Diana as punishment for seeing her and her nymphs bathing in a stream. While in the form of a stag, Actaeon is set upon by his own hounds and torn to pieces. It would, I think, be stretching a point to suggest that what happens to Bassianus parallels Actaeon's fate, but there are some unmistakeable similarities between the two. Like Actaeon, Bassianus is a noble huntsman, and he inadvertently comes upon Tamora in the woods while she is in a potentially embarrassing situation. As a result of this, Bassianus is set upon and murdered by Tamora's two "hounds," Demetrius and Chiron. Thus, Tamora's desire to plant Bassianus' temples with horns so that hounds/ Should drive upon thy new-transformed limbs" (II.iii.63-64) is ultimately fulfilled when her sons fatally stab him and throw his body into a pit.

That the hounds or villains should attack and murder the Roman emperor's brother shows how the Goths have managed to reverse the natural ordering of society. Just before commanding her sons to kill Bassianus, Tamora depicts the forest as a place of death. Whereas she had previously told Aaron that

this location is fit for love, now she describes it as a valley of death:

> A barren detested vale you see it is;
> The trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean
> Overcome with moss and baleful mistletoe:
> Here never shines the sun: here nothing breeds,
> Unless the nightly owl or fatal raven:
> And when they show'd me this abhorred pit,
> They told me, here, at dead time of the night,
> A thousand fiends, a thousand hissing snakes,
> Ten thousand swelling toads, as many urchins,
> Would make such fearful and confused cries,
> As any mortal body hearing it
> Should straight fall mad, or else die suddenly. (II.iii.93-104)

Tamora's portrait of the forest in this speech directly contradicts her earlier description of it, and this exemplifies her changing mood. No longer interested in her affair with Aaron, she now channels her energies towards revenge against the Andronici. At their mother's instigation, Chiron and Demetrius seize Bassianus and murder him.

Tamora is also about to slay Lavinia when her sons pursuade her to let them take care of her themselves. They vow to rape Lavinia, and Tamora consents to their request. Lavinia pleads for mercy but the Goths refuse to listen to her appeals. Realizing that to beg mercy of the Goths is an exercise in futility, Lavinia berates Tamora and her sons, comparing them metaphorically to animals. Tamora is called a "raven" (1. 149), and a "beastly creature" (1. 182), and her sons are described as the "tiger's young ones" (1. 142). Also, when Marcus discovers his niece with her hands cut off and her tongue cut out in the very next scene, he exclaims that he wished he knew the "beast" that committed these atrocities so that he could take revenge (II.iv.34).

Aaron contrives to implicate two of Titus' sons in the murder of Bassianus, and this scheme effectively demonstrates how the Moor not only exploits the forest but manipulates the very elements within it to suit his

evil objectives. He leads Martius and Quintus to a "loathsome pit" where he claims to have spied a sleeping panther (II.iii.193-194). Martius stumbles into the "unhallow'd and blood-stained hole" and discovers the bloody corpse of Bassianus. While attempting to rescue his brother, Quintus also falls into the "devouring receptacle," and the two are thereby ensnared in Aaron's trap. Aaron then discloses the hole containing Quintus, Martius and Bassianus' corpse to a seemingly horrified Saturninus.[24]

When Tamora and Titus enter the scene moments later, Tamora feigns horror at the thought of Bassianus' murder, and she produces a forged letter, claiming that it describes "the complot of this timeless tragedy" (II.iii.265) Tamora says that the "fatal writ" or letter that Aaron furtively arranged for Titus to find provides the motive behind the murder. The letter is therefore introduced as evidence against the brothers. Supposedly written by one of Titus' sons, the letter reveals that one brother promised to reward the other with a bag of gold if he would kill Bassianus, and the bag has been hidden "Among the nettles at the elder-tree/ Which overshades the mouth of that same pit/ Where we decreed to bury Bassianus" (II.iii.271-273). Aaron then conveniently produces the bag of gold as further evidence of the brothers' guilt.

This entire forest scene takes on the aspect of what William Slights calls "an inverted pastoralism."[25] Titus and the members of his family have gone into the forest hoping to experience the peace and tranquility of nature, but instead they encounter chaos and devastation. As a direct result of the events in the forest, the Andronici family is literally torn asunder: Bassianus is killed; his wife, Lavinia is raped and mutilated; in a later scene Quintus and Martius are beheaded as punishment for a crime they did not commit; Titus assents willingly to the amputation of his hand, having been duped by

Aaron into believing this sacrifice will win the release of his sons; and Lucius is banished from Rome. All this has happened because Saturninus, a very weak-minded emperor, cannot control his court, thereby enabling Tamora and Aaron to plot against the Andronici.

In my view, there is perhaps an interesting parallel existing between the Spanish king in The Spanish Tragedy and Saturninus in Titus Andronicus. Metaphorically, the king or sovereign was the "gardener" of his kingdom because through good husbandry he cultivated the virtues in the court (see above, p. 14). But the Spanish king neglects this aspect of his duties as king, and enables such weeds as Lorenzo and Balthazar to grow and flourish. Similarly, Saturninus as emperor is supposed to exert his control over his court just as a huntsman is supposed to control the wild beasts of the forest. However, Saturninus proves to be a very poor ruler who allows the animalistic Goths to hold sway over Rome, and they commit a number of horrific abuses including rape and murder. Instead of being controlled by the wisdom and prudence of a just emperor, Rome becomes transformed into a primitive and barbaric world by the Goths in which the only law is the "law of the jungle."

When Lavinia appears on stage in Act Two, Scene Four, she is no longer a vision of beauty and innocence. She appears "with her hands cut off, and her tongue cut out and ravish'd" (II.iv.1. o.s.d.). Demetrius and Chiron savagely mock their victim before leaving her "to her silent walks" (II.iv.8). Marcus then enter "from hunting" (II.iv.10. o.s.d.), and as H. T. Price remarks, this stage direction implies that Marcus' entrance is marked by "that mood of hearty cheerfulness which is always produced by a day's hunting in the forest."[26] Marcus' joy immediately turns to extreme horror

when he sees his mutilated niece, evidently bleeding from her mouth and stumps. Unable to believe his eyes, he wonders if this nightmarish vision is but a dream. However, he soon realizes that it is all too real, and using pastoral images he compares the handless and tongueless Lavinia to a number of natural objects. The first of these objects is that of a tree whose branches have been hacked off:

> Speak, gentle niece, what stern ungentle hands
> Hath lopp'd and hew'd and made thy body bare
> Of her two branches, those sweet ornaments,
> Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in. (II.iv.16-20)

After this, he compares her to a fountain from whose source flows a river of blood, and then Marcus likens Lavinia to a conduit with three spouts:

> Alas, a crimson river of warm blood,
> Like to a bubbling fountain stirr'd with wind,
> Doth rise and fall between thy rosed lips,
> Coming and going with thy honey breath.
> But sure some Tereus hath deflow'red thee,
> And, lest thou should'st detect him, cut thy tongue.
> Ah, now thou turn'st away thy face for shame;
> And, notwithstanding all this loss of blood,
> As from a conduit with three issuing spouts,
> Yet do thy cheeks look red as Titan's face
> Blushing to be encount'red with a cloud. (II.iv.23-32)

Marcus' description of Lavinia is notorious among critics of Titus Andronicus who see the mingling of pastoral language and Senecan horror as incongruous and inappropriate.[27] Wolfgang Clemen comments that the passage is most unsuitable to the situation being presented on stage:

> It is not only that a human being at sight of such atrocities can burst forth into a long speech full of images and comparisons which appear so unsuitable and inorganic; but it is rather the...almost wanton playfulness [of these images] which reveals the incongruity.[28]

Even Eugene Waith, who defends Marcus Andronicus' speech, concedes that it is "the most unpalatable passage in the play."[29]

But Albert Tricomi sees these images as being integral to the imagistic structure of the play. He remarks that this "Ovidian monologue" is designed to focus the audience's undivided attention on the horror of the situation by making us see "detail by descriptive detail, the spectacle that we [the audience] are already beholding."[30] Furthermore, Tricomi adds that these images reveal Shakespeare's endeavour to out-do Seneca and "reach the utmost verge of realizable horror."[31] Eugene Waith agrees, saying that because the images of trees and fountains are "pleasant and familiar," the horror of this scene is brought "within the range of comprehension," and Lavinia's suffering is made an object of contemplation.[32]

Marcus' description of Lavinia also establishes the connection between his niece and what was once an idyllic forest. Tricomi points out that throughout the play Lavinia and the forest "are intimately associated with one another" and that they "share the same fate."[33] Just as the forest is abused, corrupted and defiled by the villainous Goths, so too is Lavinia. As Tricomi says, "the metamorphosis of the pastoral forest is the metamorphosis of Lavinia writ large."[34] Near the end of Marcus' rhetorical speech, he says that if only the attacker had heard Lavinia sing or play the lute that "heavenly harmony" would have made him desist from his crime and fall asleep (II.iv.45-50). Marcus' reference to Lavinia's musical prowess suggests that for him the world had once been a beautiful place filled with sweet and harmonious music. But now, the only sound issuing from Lavinia's lips is the gurgling of blood, and Marcus understands that the arrival of the Goths has changed Rome irrevocably.

Like his brother, Titus also realizes that the idyllic and idealized world he once envisioned has been defiled and corrupted by the Goths. The

unjust sentence of death imposed on his two sons, Martius and Quintus, and the exile of his other son, Lucius, has also led Titus to conclude that Rome has been fundamentally altered for the worse. Instead of being the paragon of the civilized world, Rome has become a jungle:

> ...Rome is but a wilderness of tigers[;]
> Tigers must prey, and Rome affords no prey
> But me and mine.... (III.i.54-56)

The "tigers" which Titus alludes to are the predatory Goths who feed upon the sufferings of the Andronici. It is important to note that Titus says Rome has become a wilderness of tigers. The Goths have corrupted the city itself, and not just the forest. As G. K. Hunter puts it, under the barbarous influence of the Goths "Rome clearly has forgotten how to be Rome."[35] Only when the Goths are extirpated from the Roman court can Rome be restored to its former greatness.

When Marcus brings the disfigured Lavinia before her father he once again equates her with a hunted animal, explaining "thus I found her straying in the park,/ Seeking to hide herself, as doth the deer/ That hath receiv'd some unrecuring wound" (III.i.88-90). On seeing Lavinia, Titus breaks out into two lengthy rhetorical speeches. In his lamentations, he re-introduces the image of the fountain. Titus says that he and his family should all "sit round about some fountain" and "in the fountain shall we gaze so long/ Till the fresh taste be taken from the clearness,/ And made a brine-pit with our bitter tears" (III.i.123, 127-129). In this context, the fountain becomes a mirror of Titus' grief, reflecting his extreme agony because of all he has suffered.

In Act Four, Lavinia enters on stage chasing Lucius' son. When Marcus and Titus try to communicate with Lavinia, they notice that she has a copy of Ovid's Metamorphoses, and is trying to turn the pages with her stumps.

Stopping at Book VI of the Metamorphoses, she points to the story of the rape of Philomela by Tereus. Through this device she reveals to her father precisely what happened to her in the forest, and he perceives the relationship between Ovid's story and Lavinia's situation:

> Lavinia, wert thou thus surpris'd, sweet girl,
> Ravish'd and wrong'd, as Philomela was,
> Forc'd in the ruthless, vast, and gloomy woods? (IV.i.51-53)

Evidently, Titus no longer associates the forest with pleasure and sport as he did in the earlier acts. To him, the forest is now a "ruthless, vast, and gloomy woods" fit "for murthers and rapes" (IV.i.58). Titus' profound disillusionment with the natural world in this scene is not unlike Hieronimo's altered conception of his garden. Both men initially regard nature as beneficent, but when the natural settings that had once afforded them pleasure and enjoyment become the scenes of murder Titus and Hieronimo ultimately come to see nature as in league with the criminals who have wronged them.

Eventually, Lavinia identifies her assailants. By holding a staff between her teeth and guiding it with her arms, she scrawls the names of Chiron and Demetrius in the soft sand. The names of the rapists now known, Titus and Marcus affirm their intention to see that the villains do not escape punishment, and Marcus swears "mortal revenge upon these traitorous Goths" (IV.i.93).

But Titus knows that the Goths are as dangerous as wild beasts, and he compares the members of the court to predatory creatures. Describing Tamora as a bear, her two sons as her whelps and Saturninus as a lion, Titus issues a caveat to Marcus and Lucius concerning their desire to exact vengeance against Demetrius and Chiron:

> ...if you hunt these bear-whelps, then beware:
> The dam will wake, and if she wind ye once:

She's with the lion deeply still in league,
And lulls him whilst she playeth on her back. (IV.i.96-99)

Titus is determined to rid the court of the bestial Goths; but unlike the initial hunt in the forest, this hunt is not for sport or recreation but is in deadly earnest. If Rome has indeed become a wilderness of tigers, then Titus must become just as fierce and brutish as his adversaries if he is to defeat them.

Ironically, though, Titus does not hunt the Goths for they come to him. Tamora has learned that Lucius has raised an army amongst the Goths and intends to attack Rome with it.[36] Also, she has heard that Titus has gone mad with grief, and therefore she devises a plan. She goes to Titus' home disguised as "Revenge," and promises to assist Titus in his desire for retribution. She is accompanied by her sons who are disguised as "Rape" and "Murder," and Tamora tells Titus that they are her ministers who take revenge on those who commit such crimes.[37] Titus agrees to arrange a meeting between Lucius and the Emperor provided that Tamora leave her two sons behind. Mistakingly believing that the mad Titus is harmless, Lavinia assents to this request. But once she leaves, Titus calls forth his relatives and orders them to seize the villains. He cuts their throats but not before telling them of his plan to feed them to Tamora baked in a pie. Clearly, this Thyestean banquet shows that Titus has degenerated into a madman, and that he has become as depraved and inhuman as those villains whom he seeks to punish.

It is during this banquet scene that Titus and his family purge the court of its corruption. Titus enters dressed "like a cook" (V.iii.25. o.s.d.), and serves Tamora and Saturninus the pie baked with Demetrius and Chiron. He then stabs Lavinia so that her shame might die with her (V.iii.46), and from here the scene degenerates into a veritable blood-bath. After

disclosing to Tamora that she has eaten of the pie in which her own sons are baked, Titus fatally stabs her. He is then almost instantaneously stabbed by the outraged emperor, who is in turn killed by Lucius. With the killing of Saturninus, the last of the predatory animals has been eliminated from the court, and it is intimated that now order and justice can return to Rome.

In his oration following these chaotic events, Marcus pleads for unity among the Romans, and he employs several images from nature in his speech:

> You sad-fac'd men, people and sons of Rome,
> By uproars sever'd as a flight of fowl
> Scatter'd by winds and high tempestuous gusts,
> O, let me teach you how to knit again
> This scattered corn into one mutual sheaf,
> These broken limbs again into one body. (V.iii.67-71)

Marcus says that under Saturninus' reign Rome had been divided like so many birds flying about in a tempestuous wind, or like scattered grains of wheat. What Rome needs is a man who can unite the people under his leadership into one flock, one "mutual sheaf" of grain. He also remarks that the Goths have hacked and mutilated Rome as one would a tree, but these "broken limbs" can be brought together again under Lucius, the last of the Andonici. Through these images, Marcus inextricably links the idea of the regeneration of nature with the regeneration of the state. Though the Goths have done great harm to Rome, the injury is not irreparable; and under the guidance of Lucius Rome may may begin to grow once again.

Lucius is determined to restore Rome to its previous position before the Goths arrived. In order to do this, he must eradicate all traces of them from the Roman court. Lucius begins by ordering the soldiers to bury Aaron

breast-deep in the ground and allow him to perish. He also protests that "that ravenous tiger, Tamora" (V.iii.195) does not deserve a proper burial because hers was a life of cruelty and bestial passion. Therefore, Lucius commands that her body be thrown to the vultures and other animals to feed upon:

> No funeral rite, nor man in mourning weed,
> No mournful bell shall ring her burial;
> But throw her forth to beasts and birds to prey.
> Her life was beastly and devoid of pity;
> And being dead, let birds on her take pity. (V.iii.196-200)

Through the play's animal imagery, Shakespeare illustrates what will inevitably happen when appetite and power are allowed to rule instead of justice and prudence. Tamora and the Goths turn Rome into a wilderness of tigers where no values, not even justice, can exist. Their transformation of Rome from a civilized state into a jungle demonstrates exactly what Ulysses in Troilus and Cressida warned would occur if power alone became the basis of a civilization:

> Force should be right, or rather, right and wrong
> (Between whose endless jar justice resides)
> Should lose their names, and so should justice too!
> Then everything include itself in power,
> Power into will, will into appetite,
> And appetite, an universal wolf
> ...
> Must make perforce an universal prey,
> And last eat up himself.[38]

Tamora's unappeasable desire to injure Titus and his family does indeed turn into "an universal wolf" that devours itself because her insatiable appetite for revenge ultimately culminates in the banquet scene in which Tamora feeds upon her own sons--flesh of her own flesh.

In both The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus, the protagonists evidently possess an idealized vision of nature at the outset of their re-

spective plays. But after the crimes perpetrated against their families, Hieronimo and Titus see the falsity of this vision. Hieronimo realizes that the garden is not simply a place of repose, but that Machiavels can use it for their villainous purposes as well. Similarly, Titus realizes that the recreational hunt that was intended to repair the rupture between himself and the emperor does not restore harmony to the court. If anything, the trip to the forest plunges the court into further turmoil and confusion by providing the Goths with an opportunity to avenge themselves on the Andronici.

In both plays, then, the natural settings are initially construed by the protagonists as pleasant and attractive. But as the play progresses, it becomes clear that nature, and indeed the world, is not what Hieronimo and Titus had thought it was. Hieronimo and Titus eventually discover--albeit too late--that the world contains Machiavels as well as virtuous men, villainy as well as justice. In short, they learn that in every garden there lurks a serpent, and in every forest, a predator; and for this dearly-bought lesson, they pay with their lives.

CHAPTER 1: NOTES

[1]Isabel Rivers, Classical and Christian Ideas in English Renaissance Poetry (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979), p. 1.

[2]Robert Greene, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, Regents Renaissance Drama Series, ed. David Seltzer (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1963). Margaret of Fressingfield is only one of countless pastoral characters (i.e. milkmaids and sherperdesses) whose purity and innocence is attributed to the fact that they were raised in the countryside. The country maiden is a conventional character familiar to students and scholars of Renaissance literature and need not be discussed at length here.

[3]William Shakespeare, Richard II in The Riverside Shakespeare ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974), III.iv.43-47.

[4]A. Bartlett Giamatti, The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966, reprinted 1969), p. 33.

[5]Donald Wineke, "Hieronimo's Garden and 'the fall of Babylon': Culture and Anarchy in The Spanish Tragedy" in Aeolian Harps ed. Donna G. and Douglas C. Fricke (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University Press, 1976), p. 66.

[6]Andrew Marvell, "The Garden" in Seventeenth-Century Prose and Poetry, Second Edition, ed. Alexander M. Witherspoon and Frank J. Warnke (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1982), ll. 9-10.

[7]For an examination of the image of the Renaissance garden of love in Western literature, see Giamatti, passim, and Rivers, p. 12-13.

[8]Giamatti, passim, and Wineke, p. 68.

[9]H. B. Parkes, "Nature's Diverse Laws: the Double Vision of the Elizabethans," Sewanee Review, lviii (1950), pp. 403-404, quoted by Cynthia Eland, p. 255, f. n. 21.

[10]Philip Edwards (p. liv) points out that there are at least four distinct references in The Spanish Tragedy that suggest that Andrea and Bel-imperia were sexually involved, and he cites the following lines as evidence of this: I.i.10; II.i.47; III.x.54-55; and III.xiv.111-112.

[11]Aldo D. Scaglione, Nature and Love in the Late Middle Ages (Berkely and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963), pp. 64-65, cited by Wineke, p. 78, f. n. 6.

[12]For the discussion of the stage-property (the arbour or bower) in The Spanish Tragedy, I am indebted to Edwards' analysis of it in his footnote to II.iv.53. See also Appendix A for a picture of the 1615 title-page which depicts Hieronimo hanging from an arched trellis-work adorned with leaves.

[13]Wineke, p. 69.

[14]Wineke, p. 65.

[15]Isabella's extraordinary speech includes all three subjects dealt with in this thesis. Not only does she condemn the garden as an accomplice in Horatio's murder and seek to destroy it, but she also complains of the lack of justice in Spain and her curses and laments clearly illustrate her insanity.

[16]William Shakespeare, Titus Andronicus, The Arden Shakespeare, ed. J. C. Maxwell (London: Methuen & Company, 1968, 1st printed 1953), III.i.54. All future references to Titus Andronicus will be taken from this edition of the play.

[17]Howard Baker, Induction to Tragedy: A Study in the Development of Form in Gorbuduc, The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus (: Louisiana State University Press, 1939, reprinted New York: Russell & Russell, 1965), p. 137.

[18]For a comprehensive discussion of the Ovidian influence in Titus Andronicus see Eugene M. Waith, "The Metamorphosis of Violence in Titus Andronicus," Shakespeare Survey, 10 (1957), pp. 39-49. See also Albert H. Tricomi, "The Aesthetics of Mutilation in Titus Andronicus," Shakespeare Survey, 27 (1974), pp. 16a-17b, and Maxwell, p. 31-33.

[19]G. K. Hunter, "Shakespeare's Earliest Tragedies: Titus Andronicus and Romeo and Juliet," Shakespeare Survey, 27 (1974), p. 6b-7a, and Alan Sommers, "'Wilderness of Tigers': Structure and Symbolism in Titus Andronicus," Essays in Criticism, 10 (1960), pp. 284-286.

[20]Albert H. Tricomi, "The Mutilated Garden in Titus Andronicus," Shakespeare Studies, IX (1976), p. 92.

[21]Tricomi, "The Mutilated Garden in Titus Andronicus," p. 92.

[22]Sommers, p. 286.

[23]William E. Slights, "The Sacrificial Crisis in Titus Andronicus," University of Toronto Quarterly, 49 (1979-80), p. 23.

[24]In my reading of the text, there is no reason to believe that Saturninus is anything but genuinely horrified to find his brother savagely murdered. Saturninus is a weak-minded ruler with few if any redeeming qualities. However, he is not a murderer, and I think his astonishment in this scene is meant to be seen as sincere.

[25]Slights, p. 22.

[26]Hereward T. Price, "The Authorship of Titus Andronicus," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 42 (1943), p. 61.

[27]Muriel Bradbrook, pp. 98-99, and Wolfgang Clemen, The Development of Shakespeare's Imagery (New York: Hill & Wang, 1951), pp. 24-26, are two critics who possess such a view of Marcus Andronicus' speech. However, recent scholarship on the play's language done by critics such as Eugene Waith have caused many to re-assess their attitudes towards the imagery in Titus Andronicus.

[28]Clemen, p. 26.

[29]Waith, p. 47.

[30]Tricomi, "The Aesthetics of Mutilation in Titus Andronicus," p. 17a.

[31]Tricomi, "The Aesthetics of Mutilation in Titus Andronicus," p. 17b.

[32]Waith, p. 47.

[33]Tricomi, "The Mutilated Garden in Titus Andronicus," p. 93.

[34]Tricomi, "The Mutilated Garden in Titus Andronicus," p. 94.

[35]G. K. Hunter, "Shakespeare's Earliest Tragedies: Titus Andronicus and Romeo and Juliet," p. 6a.

[36]Why the Goths would pledge allegiance to their arch-enemy, Lucius, is an enigma I have yet to solve. Interestingly enough, though, Shakespeare presents this peculiar situation again in Coriolanus. Seeking to avenge himself against ingrateful Rome, Coriolanus forges an alliance with his enemies, the Volscians, and prepares to sack Rome.

[37]I am in total agreement with R. F. Hill, "The Composition of Titus Andronicus," Shakespeare Survey, 10 (1957), when he says that Tamora and her sons' visit to the Andronicus house in the disguises of Revenge, Rape and Murder makes little sense, and is "a foolishly elaborate means of putting Chiron and Demetrius into the hands of Titus" (p. 63).

[38]William Shakespeare, Troilus and Cressida in The Riverside Shakespeare ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), I.iii.116-124.

CHAPTER 2

THE THEME OF JUSTICE IN THE SPANISH TRAGEDY AND TITUS ANDRONICUS

i) Attitudes Towards Revenge in Elizabethan England

No discussion of the theme of justice in The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus would be complete without examining the prevalent views in Elizabethan England concerning revenge. At present, many schools of literary thought reject historical or socio-cultural interpretations of literature, claiming that it is virtually impossible to reconstruct the ideas and concepts of a former age. Nevertheless, I feel that a survey of the predominant attitudes towards revenge is valuable and will enable us to understand why The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus--and all revenge tragedies for that matter--enjoyed such immense popularity in their time. Also, these views on revenge may shed light on how Kyd's and Shakespeare's audiences responded to Hieronimo and Titus.

Eleanor Prosser remarks that by 1607 no fewer than fifteen plays had been produced in which the protagonist's dilemma was analogous to that of Hieronimo and Hamlet (p. 40). In these revenge tragedies, a basically good and virtuous man has been wronged, and the nature of the offence is so great that if the villain were brought before the courts and convicted of the crime, he would most assuredly be executed as punishment. But the honest hero cannot obtain justice from the sovereign either because there is a general malaise at court or because the sovereign himself is too corrupt to see that justice is served. Also, the villain may try to prevent

the injured party from gaining access to the king, thereby hindering his appeals for justice. This is precisely what Lorenzo does in The Spanish Tragedy. After being frustrated in their search for justice, the protagonists ultimately conclude that their attempts at legal recourse are futile, and if the villains are to be punished then the protagonist himself must become judge, jury and executioner in his own case. In essence, the protagonists reject the judicial authority of the sovereign, choosing to pursue a private and extra-legal revenge instead.

Hieronimo and Titus continually express their passionate desire for vengeance throughout their respective plays. But according to Ronald Broude, it is inaccurate to regard the revenger in revenge tragedy as a maliciously vindictive character bent on retaliation. As Broude says, the word "revenge" was equivalent to "punishment" or "retributive justice" in the Elizabethan age, and Hieronimo and Titus are merely expressing a desire for justice when they speak of revenge.[1] While this is true up to a point, it appears obvious to me that in the latter half of both The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus, Hieronimo and Titus no longer equate revenge with punishment by law. Indeed, there are several instances in both plays when Hieronimo and Titus emphatically demand vengeance, and they demonstrate a seemingly insatiable desire to "even the score" with the villains. Unable to cope with these intense emotions, both characters inevitably go outside the law in order to retaliate against the criminals.

Like Broude, Lily Campbell comments that the concept of revenge in Elizabethan England was much broader than it is now in the twentieth century. She says that revenge in the Elizabethan age "must be reckoned as including God's revenge, public revenge committed to the rulers by God, and private

revenge forbidden alike by God and by the state as his representative."[2] In The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus, all three types of revenge are presented. After discovering that their children have been killed or maimed, Hieronimo and Titus initially look to "the heavens" to avenge their grievances. Also, both characters appeal to the temporal rulers to hear their appeals for justice; yet in both plays these appeals go unheard. Finally, when Hieronimo and Titus conclude that the heavens have forsaken them and their sovereigns will not redress their grievances, both characters decide to take the law into their own hands, thereby instituting their own form of vigilante justice.

But the orthodox view of Church and State in Elizabethan England was that private revenge was unequivocally sinful and criminal.[3] Eleanor Prosser summarizes this view of revenge when she says:

> revenge was a sin against God, a defiance of the State, [and] a cancer that could destroy mind, body and soul. (p. 72)

The Elizabethans were at least nominally Christian, and even those individuals who did not or could not read the Scriptures must have been relatively familiar with the Biblical injunctions against private revenge. According to Christian doctrine, God is the ultimate judge of all our actions on earth, and He will select the time and place when the wicked are punished. The Book of Psalms contains a number of references to God's divine judgement,[4] and the Preacher in Ecclesiastes makes it perfectly clear that God will judge each and every individual in His own time when he says "For God will bring every deed into judgement, with every secret thing, whether good or evil" (Ecclesiastes XII: 14). But the Biblical passage prohibiting revenge which was most familiar to the Elizabethans is found in Paul's Epistle to

the Romans. In his letter Paul strictly commands that Christians refrain from the practice of revenge:

> Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.... Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. (Romans XII: 17-19)[5]

Under no circumstances was an individual to take revenge, and the orthodox view in Elizabethan England was that the man who felt that sometimes you had to go above the written law was committing a grievous sin against God. Prosser notes that revenge was "a reprehensible blasphemy" against God because the individual who sought revenge was , in actuality, rebelling against Divine Providence, and trying to usurp Christ's office as a judge (pp. 6-7). Those who contemplated revenge were also invariably questioning God's promise to requite virtue and wickedness accordingly. By seeking revenge, the individual endangered his very soul, and the Church argued that even a righteous man--like Hieronimo--would be seen by God as evil once he began plotting his enemies' demise. Prosser sums up this argument when she says "no matter how righteous a man might think his motives, the act of revenge would inevitably make him as evil as his injurer in the eyes of God" (p. 7).

The monarchy also emphatically opposed private revenge, fearing that such activity would undermine its authority. Prosser says that "the Establishment's denunciation of revenge was related to its recurrent fears of civil disorder" (p. 5). Private revenge could easily lead to outright feuding between families which would promote chaos and disorder in the realm. Thus, the revenger's actions were unlawful as well as immoral because revenge contravened the law of the land as well as the Word of God.

Theoretically, the monarch was God's "divine agent" on earth and was therefore responsible for dispensing justice either by himself or through his appointed magistrates.[6] If a citizen felt he had been wronged or maligned in any way, there was only one avenue open to him according to English law: he could plead his case to the king and hope that justice would prevail. It was recognized that earthly justice is imperfect because the sovereign is only human and therefore fallible. But while mistakes might be made from time to time, the citizen had to accept his sovereign's decision. According to Tudor-Stuart propaganda, the obedient and pious individual must suffer patiently in adversity until the time when the Lord will vindicate him.[7]

While a number of scholars have pointed out that Elizabethan orthodoxy unanimously condemned private revenge, some critics--and most notably Fredson Bowers--maintain that a popular code approving of revenge existed in Elizabethan England.[8] The code of blood revenge dictated that if a man was murdered and the murderer eluded detection, then it was the duty of the next of kin to avenge his slain relative by bringing the murderer to trial or, if that proved impossible, to execute the criminal himself. Bowers contends that revenge was the primary form of justice in primitive societies, and even Francis Bacon--although denouncing the practise of revenge--recognized that it was "a kind of wild justice."[9] The code of blood revenge survived well into the Renaissance, and even Christianity with its directives to leave vengeance to God did not eliminate the belief in revenge as a form of crude justice. The belief in revenge as retributive justice and the Christian teachings of forgiveness clearly existed side by side in Elizabethan England, and Shakespeare himself portrays this curious situation in

Romeo and Juliet. In this play two families are obviously living in a Christian society--Friar Lawrence is a man of God who tries to bring peace to Verona--and yet the Montagues and Capulets persist in feuding openly over an "ancient grudge."[10] Also, Escalus the Prince of Verona represents the secular authority who fears that the warring families will undermine his own authority in the land, and therefore prohibits the families from continuing with the vendetta.

The moral and ethical question of whether or not an individual was ever justified in seeking a private vengeance was presented vividly in such revenge tragedies as The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus. Both Hieronimo and Titus are good and just men whose loyalty to their respective sovereigns is never in any doubt during the earlier half of both plays. Hieronimo is the Knight Marshal of Spain, responsible for administering justice at court, and he is evidently a fair and equitable judge. Castile even mentions later on in the play that Hieronimo's performance of his official duties has earned him the respect and admiration of the Spanish court (III.xiv.61-63). Similarly, Titus has also shown steadfast loyalty to Rome, and in the play's first act he is referred to as a "patron of virtue" and "Rome's best champion" (I.i.65). Titus has fought in the Roman army against the Goths for ten years, and in that time he has lost twenty-two sons in battle. When he returns from the wars, his first concern is to do what is in Rome's best interest.

But after Horatio is murdered and Lavinia is raped, their fathers doubt the efficacy of earthly justice, and consider taking revenge on their own. Such an act would, by Elizabethan standards, turn them into veritable outlaws because they would essentially be challenging the judicial authority

of those rulers whom they have pledged to serve. Therefore, Hieronimo and Titus are caught in the midst of a dilemma, and they must decide whether or not they are justified in going outside the law in their efforts to exact vengeance against the villains.

It seems as though every critic on The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus has an opinion on how Elizabethan audiences would have reacted to the revengers. If Hieronimo and Titus were judged according to the doctrinaire views propagated by the Establishment then the two characters would have been seen exactly as the Spanish king views Hieronimo in the conclusion to Kyd's play: as "damned, bloody murderer[s]" (IV.i.163). But surely not everyone subscribed to these attitudes, and Bowers is probably correct when he says that the average Elizabethan would not have condemned a man who took vengeance against his son's murderer (p. 40). If the Elizabethans were anything like their modern counterparts, then there must have been a variety of responses to Hieronimo and Titus ranging from outright condemnation to a sympathetic approval of their actions.

But the question which primarily concerns us in this chapter is not necessarily how audiences might have reacted to Hieronimo and Titus, but how Kyd and Shakespeare develop the theme of justice in their respective plays. In my opinion, both playwrights present an artistic vision of justice which condemns private revenge as excessive and barbaric. The protagonists do indeed exact vengeance on the villains but not before losing their sanity and engaging in unspeakable cruelties themselves. Before proceeding to a discussion of the theme of justice in each of the two plays, we should note some major differences between The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus which affect this issue.

In spite of the fact that Kyd mingles Christian and pagan references throughout his play, Hieronimo is recognizably a man of Christian ethics and principles. When he speaks to the heavens in moments of abject despair, Hieronimo is undoubtedly addressing a Providential God. Moreover, there are at least four distinct allusions to Christianity in the play.[11] But the infernal gods of the classical underworld also appear in The Spanish Tragedy, and critics of the play have understandably been more than a little confused by this mingling of Christian and pagan theologies.

Bowers says that Kyd's handling of the two systems of belief is rather awkward and I would tend to agree with this view.[12] However, I believe that Kyd's purpose for including the Christian and pagan systems seems clear. Hieronimo and Isabella initially believe that Divine Providence will intervene on their behalf after they discover Horatio has been murdered. But as the play progresses both characters begin to doubt whether a Providential God will assist them in their search for justice, and ultimately both Hieronimo and Isabella turn to the infernal gods of the underworld for aid. Symbolically, the two systems of belief represent the moral choice that Hieronimo has to make. He can either endure his suffering and hope for God to act, or he can revert to that primitive form of wild justice of which Francis Bacon speaks (see above, p. 56). Hieronimo's ambivalence towards the two systems of belief illustrates the moral dilemma from which he tries to extricate himself. But Hieronimo cannot escape his predicament; a decision has to be made, and he is the one that must make it. He can either suffer patiently or he can strike back with force against Lorenzo and Balthazar. Ultimately, Hieronimo turns to the infernal gods of the Roman underworld, where the figure of Revenge has his orign, and this rever-

sion to the pagan form of justice--revenge--coincides with his rejection of the Pauline directive to leave vengeance to God.

The moral dilemma is not as evident in Titus Andronicus. Shakespeare's play is set in pagan Rome, and Titus is obviously not a Christian. Yet I find that the very absence of Christianity in the play to be highly significant. Unlike Hieronimo, Titus is never faced with the option of choosing between two theologies, two systems of belief. He practises the "Roman rites" of his forefathers and is rigid in his observance of them. In a very real sense, Titus instigates Tamora's desire for revenge when he refuses her pleas for mercy and allows the sacrifice of her son, Alarbus. Titus does not know the Christian message of forgiveness and mercy; like Shylock, these words are not part of his vocabulary. Titus' inflexible adherence to his Roman values is what enrages the Gothic queen who cannot forget the butchering of her son, and seeks vengeance against the Andronici. Had Titus shown a little Christian charity, had he permitted Alarbus to live, he and his family would not have suffered the way they did.

Therefore, Titus is not a play that lauds the concept of Romanitas as Hunter contends,[13] but rather a play that subjects this concept to scrutiny and criticism. R. F. Hill says that "it seems a gratuitous refinement to say that there is an implied moral judgement in the portrayal of an un-Christian society in which evil begets evil" (p. 64), but I feel that Hill is much too hasty in rejecting this interpretation of Titus Andronicus. Indeed, it appears to me that Titus Andronicus is a play that demands its audience make moral judgements, not only about the Goths but about the Romans as well. It is a satire in the true sense of the word because it exposes the values of both Roman and Goth to criticism. Granted, the values

of civilized Rome are far more preferable to those of the barbaric Goths. But can the senseless killing of Alarbus be seen as anything less than barbaric?

ii) Hieronimo's Quest for Justice

The Spanish Tragedy is largely concerned with the theme of justice, and in the play Kyd examines the three forms of justice known to his audience: heavenly or divine retribution; earthly justice and private revenge. The play itself contains a number of scenes both in the Spanish and Portuguese courts in which judgements or decisions are rendered. But the main focus of The Spanish Tragedy is unquestionably Horatio's murder and Hieronimo's subsequent quest for justice. When Hieronimo and Isabella find their murdered son hanging from the bower, their shock is tempered by a tacit belief that the heavens will inevitably expose the villains and bring about their punishment. Later in the play when Bel-imperia's miraculous letter identifying the murderers falls from above, it appears that the heavens have indeed intervened on Hieronimo's behalf.

After receiving corroborative evidence that proves Lorenzo's and Balthazar's guilt, Hieronimo takes appropriate measures, and goes to the king to present his case. But the king is involved in delicate negotiations with the Portuguese, and his involvement in these proceedings is evidently what has caused him to neglect his duties as the chief justice in Spain. Hieronimo is prevented from explaining his case to the king, and he lapses into a fit of madness, and runs frantically from the court. Having lost this opportunity to obtain a fair hearing, Hieronimo concludes that earthly justice no longer exists, saying "justice is exiled from the earth" (III.

xiii.140).

But if Hieronimo is correct and there is no hope of punishing the villains by law, then how is Hieronimo to fulfill his obligation to his murdered son whom he swore to avenge? This is the predicament in which Hieronimo finds himself throughout the latter half of the play. For the Elizabethans, Hieronimo's options are clear. He can either continue to wait for God to act and pray that the king will listen to his appeals for justice, or he can seek revenge on his own. To anyone reading or seeing the play for the first time, it is clear what option Hieronimo chooses: in a court performance of Soliman and Perseda--a play which Hieronimo has written himself while a student in Toledo--he fatally stabs Lorenzo and Bel-imperia kills Balthazar in similar fashion. No doubt, this elaborate scheme satisfies Hieronimo's desire for revenge, but critics are sharply divided over the meaning of this final scene. The question which most divides them is whether or not Hieronimo's actions are justified.

One group of scholars including Fredson Bowers and Eleanor Prosser maintain that Hieronimo's revenge cannot be justified under any circumstances. Bowers, whose opinions have come under severe attack in the last couple of decades, believes that once Hieronimo adopts "Italianate Machiavellian tactics" to bring about the deaths of his foes he becomes "a villain to the English audience" (pp. 80, 82). Prosser agrees, arguing that Hieronimo's premeditated decision to kill Lorenzo ran counter to everything that the Elizabethans were taught to believe (pp. 51-52). Joel Altman also feels that Hieronimo's revenge is morally wrong, and he asks rhetorically "how are we to regard the hero who abandons Christian ethics, deliberately adopts the Machiavellian tactics of his enemy, and is responsible for the deaths of

five people, including his own?" (p. 268). However, Altman stops short of categorizing Hieronimo as a villain, saying "his decline into Machiavellianism is neither wicked nor triumphant but tragic" (p. 274).

Yet there is a second group of scholars who take a completely opposite view of Hieronimo. John Ratliff feels that the knight marshal is "an honorable, justified revenger,"[14] and Einer Jensen and Ernst de Chickera point to the fact that Hieronimo is not punished in the play's conclusion as evidence that his revenge has been sanctioned by Providence.[15] Still other critics contend that The Spanish Tragedy embodies the idea that truth and justice will be realized in due time, and that Hieronimo is an instrument of divine providence for bringing about this resolution; therefore, his is a just revenge.[16] Finally, S. F. Johnson[17] and Donald Wineke see the play as symbolically portraying the fall of Babylon. They point out that the Elizabethans equated Babylon with Catholic Spain. The fact that the Pope was frequently called "the whore of Babylon" by Protestant leaders such as Martin Luther and that many Renaissance Popes were of Spanish descent lends credence to this idea that Spain and Babylon were equated in the minds of the Elizabethans. According to Johnson and Wineke, The Spanish Tragedy depicted that divine judgement which inevitably awaits all corrupt societies that fail to uphold God's laws.[18]

Those critics who feel Hieronimo's revenge is justified also regard him as a "public avenger," and believe he is within his rights as knight marshal of Spain to judge and punish Lorenzo and Balthazar.[19] But I disagree with this view of Hieronimo for it appears to me that his main concern in seeking revenge is the emotional relief it will give him. True, Hieronimo is a judge and is obsessively concerned with seeing justice done;

but as the play progresses he slowly degenerates into a homicidal lunatic intent on killing Lorenzo by whatever means are available to him. His cleverly contrived play gives him the opportunity to slay Lorenzo but after stabbing his victim Hieronimo never tries to justify his actions. He goes into an extremely long speech--the longest in the play--and while he explains that Lorenzo murdered Horatio in his garden not once does he, Hieronimo, remark that his retaliatory actions were morally right. As Prosser says, the importance of this final speech is that Hieronimo talks only of his suffering and seems emotionally satisfied by the killing of Lorenzo:

> his defense to the court makes no mention of the law's failure, or of his duty to his son, or his authorisation as marshal to punish or of any other conceivable justification. He speaks only of his own pain. (p. 51)

While it is true that Hieronimo is a "tool of destiny" because he ultimately fulfills the will of providence by punishing the wicked, it is also true that he becomes as ruthless and bloodthirsty as the villains he seeks to punish in his quest for justice.

The play opens with the ghost of Andrea coming forward with Revenge by his side, explaining how he died in battle and how his ghost wandered around in the underworld. Andrea says that in the underworld he encountered the three judges--Minos, Aeacus and Rhadamanth--who are responsible for assigning the ghosts to various locations in the underworld. The judges disagree on where to send Andrea; Aeacus wants to convey him to the "fields of love" because he had been a lover in life (I.i.42), but Rhadamanth points out that Andrea was a soldier and therefore belongs in the "martial fields" (1. 47). Finally, the judges decide to refer Andrea's case to a higher judge, Pluto,

the god of the underworld. When Andrea finally appears at Pluto's court, Pluto's wife, Proserpina, asks if she may pass judgement on him. Pluto acquiesces and Andrea is then sent back to earth with Revenge as his travelling companion. Andrea and Revenge presumably remain on stage throughout the entire play.[20] Revenge concludes the scene by telling Andrea that together they will see Andrea's killer, Balthazar, put to death by Bel-imperia:

> Then know, Andrea, that thou art arriv'd
> Where thou shalt see the author of thy death,
> Don Balthazar the prince of Portingale,
> Depriv'd of life by Bel-imperia:
> Here sit we down to see the mystery,
> And serve for chorus in this tragedy. (I.i.86-91)

This opening scene poses a number of problems over which scholars continue to argue. One problem is that Revenge's speech gives the play a sense of a foreordained conclusion. If it is foreordained that Bel-imperia will slay Balthazar, is it also foreordained that Hieronimo will go mad and stab Lorenzo? If this is the case, then Hieronimo is just a plaything of the gods, and his actions--like those of Oedipus--cannot be condemned because they were predestined to occur. But in the play Kyd shows that Hieronimo <u>does</u> have choices or options and this seems to contradict the idea that events are ordered by a providential power. The Elizabethans would not have worried too much over this question and neither should we. Predestination and free will, although they seem diametrically opposed, nevertheless were both accepted doctrines, and indeed the teachings of the Church of England recognized that although God had the final word concerning our destiny on earth, individuals still had to exercise their free will when making decisions.

Another problem is that Andrea's ghost does not come back to earth

actively seeking revenge against Balthazar, and nowhere in his opening speech does Andrea even hint that he was slain in a cowardly fashion. This bit of information is not revealed until Horatio's account of the battle in Act One, Scene Four. Edwards and John Kerrigan suggest that Hieronimo's revenge is inextricably linked with that of Andrea, and that by killing Balthazar and Lorenzo, Hieronimo satisfies not only his own passion for revenge but Andrea's as well.[21] While this seems reasonable to me, we must still wonder what is Revenge's role in all of this. In my opinion, Revenge emblematizes that desire for retribution that is within all men. As he sits on stage, he exerts an influence on Hieronimo who seeks to punish Horatio's assassins. Revenge is from the nether regions, and therefore I think he is associated with evil. Indeed, his maleficent influence is felt not only by Hieronimo but also by Andrea who, by the end of the play, has thoroughly enjoyed the bloody pageant that has been performed.

One final problem that has been touched on briefly in this thesis (see above, p. 59) is what Edwards calls the "rather muddled" mythology in the play (p. lvi). Andrea introduces the pagan mythology in the play with his references to Pluto, the three judges and the classical underworld. In fact, his description of the underworld appears to have been borrowed from Book VI of Virgil's Aeneid. Yet later on in the play there are some obvious references to Christianity (see below, p. 107, f. n. 11), and even Edwards recognizes that Hieronimo's allusions to Providence seem to be Christian (p. lix). Thus, we are faced with a clash of beliefs in the play which seem to be existing side by side.

Edwards believes that The Spanish Tragedy is not intended to espouse

any specific message, be it Christian or otherwise, and he maintains that "the moral world of the play is a make-believe world; the gods are make-believe gods" (p. lix). Moreover, he adds that the two systems in the play illustrate Kyd's inconsistency and lack of skill in handling his material rather than a conscious effort on his part to create two recognizable systems in the play. According to Edwards, "we could...make no sense out of a dualism which meant that every reference to powers below was a reference to evil and every reference to powers above a reference to good" (p. lix).

But I think such an explanation makes perfectly good sense. When Hieronimo and Isabella express their view that the heavens are just and will revenge they are obviously remembering the Christian directives to wait upon the Lord and your patience shall be rewarded. "Rest in the Lord," say the Scriptures, "and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of...the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth" (Psalms: XXXVII: 7-9). But the tragic irony in the play is that Hieronimo does not wait for the Lord, and that he finds the pagan justice of private revenge more appealing. As John Scott Colley observes, "Hieronimo turns to the heavens, but fears there will be no response.... He begs for justice, yet has no faith that justice will be given to him."[22]

The pagan gods in the play symbolically represent Hieronimo's alternative to the Christian belief that individuals must suffer adversity in patience while waiting for God to make his judgement manifest. They offer emotional satisfaction, and it is to these infernal gods that Hieronimo turns

in the final scenes of the play.

Not only Hieronimo and Isabella but several of the other characters in the play believe in providential justice. Spain's king and the Duke of Castile believe that their military victory over the Portuguese was due to the fact that their cause was just. When the king is told Portugal has been defeated and has agreed to pay tribute, he exclaims "Then blest be heaven, and guider of the heavens,/ From whose fair influence such justice flows" (I.ii.10-11). Castile's subsequent response in Latin also shows his belief in providential justice, although it is doubtful Kyd's audience would have understood the lines:

> O multum dilecte Deo, tibi militat aether,
> Et conjuratae curvato poplite gentes
> Succumbunt: recti soror est victoria juris. (I.ii.12-14)
>
> [O man much loved of God, for you the heavens fight,
> And the conspiring peoples fall on bended knee:
> Victory is the sister of just rights.]

Incidentally, the Portuguese viceroy also believes in providential justice, and he accepts full responsibility for the crushing defeat of his troops. The viceroy initially rails against "despiteful chance" when he receives word of the Portuguese defeat (I.iii.22), but he soon concludes that he is ultimately to blame for the loss. He believes it was his "ambition" and "breach of faith" towards the Spanish that put him out of favour with the heavens (I.iii.33-34), and as a result he erroneously concludes that the supposed death of his son is his divine punishment.

Kyd provides the audience with an important example of earthly justice in Act One, Scene Two. The Spanish army returns triumphantly from war, and marches past the Spanish court. Noticing that Balthazar, the prince of Portugal, is held captive by Lorenzo and Horatio, the king orders that the

three men be brought before him. Horatio and Lorenzo both claim to have captured Balthazar, and both hope to enjoy the privilege of ransoming him to his father for a large sum of money. But obviously Horatio and Lorenzo cannot both be right, and the king asks them if he rules in the matter will they abide by his decision. Horatio and Lorenzo agree, and the king begins his enquiry. He has already heard the two Spaniards' abbreviated versions of the events (I.ii.155-158), and so he questions Balthazar about the circumstances surrounding his capture. Balthazar's evasive reply that he yielded "to both" does not help matters much. Although it seems apparent that Horatio was the one who actually captured Balthazar while Lorenzo was a Johnny-come-lately who seized his horse and weapons, the king rules that both men should be rewarded for their part in Balthazar's capture:

> You both deserve and both shall have reward.
> Nephew, though took'st his weapon and his horse,
> His weapons and his horse are thy reward.
> Horatio, thou didst force him first to yield,
> His ransom therefore is thy valour's fee:
> Appoint the sum as you shall both agree. (I.ii.179-184)

The king's judgement has drawn two distinct reactions from critics. Some see his decision tinged with nepotism while others view it as a fair decision.[23] In my opinion the king's judgement is scrupulously fair under the circumstances. He was not at the battle and therefore the king must weigh the evidence presented to him at court. The judgement he renders may not be perfect, but earthly justice never is. This scene shows that the king is a fair and equitable judge, and it also illustrates that earthly justice is never perfect.

Kyd introduces the Portguese sub-plot following this scene at the Spanish court. In spite of Edwards' contention that the sub-plot "is very

hard to justify" (p. liii), I find the Portuguese scenes of great relevance in Kyd's examination of the theme of justice. Believing that his son has been killed in battle, the Portuguese viceroy laments his presumedly dead son. His faithful attendant, Alexandro, tries to comfort him with the hope that Balthazar might still be alive and is being held captive in Spain. But Villuppo, seeing the distraught condition of the viceroy, seizes this opportunity to malign Alexandro. He lies to the viceroy by claiming to have seen Alexandro shoot Balthazar in the back. In contrast to the scene in the Spanish court, the viceroy proves to be a very poor judge because he refuses to allow Alexandro to speak in his defence, and he condemns his loyal subject to death on the unsubstantiated testimony of a villain. When all the characters leave the stage save Villuppo, the villain confesses to the audience that he has counterfeited the entire story in the hopes that he will be rewarded (I.iii.90-92).

The conclusion to the Portuguese sub-plot takes place in Act Three, Scene One. Villuppo appears secure in his newly-acquired position as the viceroy's favourite attendant, and it seems that Alexandro will burn for his alleged treason. But before Alexandro is tied to the stake, there is an intriguing conversation between Alexandro and one of the nobles. They discuss what can be done in such "extremes" as Alexandro has found himself in:

> 2 Nob. In such extremes will naught but patience serve.
> Alex. But in extremes what patience shall I use?
> Nor discontents it me to leave this world,
> With whom there nothing can prevail but wrong.
> 2 Nob. Yet hope the best.
> Alex. 'Tis Heaven is my hope.
> As for the earth, it is too much infect
> To yield me hope of any of her mould. (III.i.31-37)

Alexandro's Christian attitude towards death is unmistakeable in this scene.

He is resigned to death, and yet he faces his fate with an unshakeable faith in God's justice. His curious comment that "Heaven is my hope" carries with it a double meaning that becomes apparent moments later. The phrase can mean that the only thing Alexandro can hope for now is to make it to heaven because his life is near its end. But it can also mean that Alexandro hopes that heaven will vindicate him. He is not hoping to be saved by divine intervention, but rather Alexandro wishes that his name will be cleared in the future after he is gone. As he tells the viceroy, his only regret is that he dies "suspected of a sin/ Whereof, as heavens have known my secret thoughts,/ So am I free from this suggestion" (III.i.44-46). Alexandro faces death knowing in his heart that he is free from the imputation of treason, and more importantly he knows that Villuppo will one day be brought to account for his wickedness because nothing can be hidden from the unsleeping eye of God.

Alexandro is physically bound to the stake and is just seconds away from being burned to death. Yet not once does he condemn his sovereign for being unjust; instead, he remains fiercely loyal to the ruler who has sentenced him to death for a crime he did not commit. His apparent last words are directed towards Villuppo:

> My guiltless death will be aveng'd on thee,
> On thee, Villuppo, that hath malic'd thus. (III.i.51-52)

The significance of these two lines is that Alexandro has promised that his death will be avenged; but who, we may ask, will be the avenger? There is no suggestion anywhere in the play that, like Horatio, Alexandro has a blood relative who will exact vengeance on his behalf. The undeniable implication in Alexandro's words is that God will be his avenger. An enraged

Villuppo is just about to light the fire himself when the Portuguese ambassador with the timing of the American calvary enters on stage to save the day. Here, then, is the instrument of God's revenge. The ambassador produces letters from Spain--evidence of Balthazar's safety--and he himself testifies that he saw Balthazar while in Spain. Alexandro is ordered released, and Villupo is then condemned to death for his treasonous lies.

This whole episode is intended to be seen as an demonstration in the workings of divine providence. Although the Portuguese scenes show that rulers are fallible and often do make mistakes in judgements, they also illustrate that God will ultimately avenge the righteous. The climax to the Portuguese sub-plot is interestingly placed in the play. It directly follows the scene in which Horatio is murdered in the garden, and evidently it is intended to show that Horatio's murder will also be avenged in due time. Alexandro also serves as a foil to Hieronimo because whereas Alexandro displays patience and unswerving faith in heavenly justice, Hieronimo continuously questions why the heavens have allowed murder to go unpunished. Inevitably, Hieronimo goes mad from grief and frustration, and devises a cruel and bloody plot to take revenge on Lorenzo and Balthazar. He is, as Colley says, "a spectacle of despair and wrong action" (p. 251).

The Portuguese sub-plot and the early scenes in the Spanish court examine divine and earthly justice, but it is not until Horatio's murder in the second act that Kyd begins to explore private revenge. Private revenge is not simply the desire to see that justice is meted out; it is also an emotional and passionate urge to inflict pain on the guilty party. Bel-imperia is the first character to display this irrational urge in The Spanish Tragedy. She is clearly a woman of strong passions, and after

Horatio describes the cowardly manner in which Andrea was killed, she feels nothing but contempt and hatred for Balthazar. Her impulse is to strike back at Balthazar, and she plans to use Horatio to further her revenge (I. iv.66-68).

In the conclusion to Act One, the Spanish king and the Portuguese emissary celebrate the successful completion of the peace negotiations with a banquet. The ghost of Andrea, who has witnessed the events of the first act as he sits on stage with Revenge, now speaks. He expresses his displeasure at seeing Balthazar enjoying himself, and asks Revenge "Come we for this from depth of underground,/ To see him feast that gave me my death's wound?" (I.v.1-2). Revenge's response is most interesting because he promises that in time he will bring chaos and confusion to the Spanish court:

> Be still Andrea, ere we go from hence,
> I'll turn their friendship into fell despite,
> Their love to mortal hate, their day to night,
> Their hope into despair, their peace to war,
> Their joys to pain, their bliss to misery. (I.v.5-9)

The speech illustrates that once the desire for revenge seizes an individual the whole world is altered. Revenge says that he will exert his malignant influence over the Spanish court, thereby turning love into hate, hope into despair. His statement that he will turn hope into despair is especially relevant to Hieronimo. When Hieronimo believes that the heavens will avenge his son's death he displays a guarded hope that he can obtain justice. But as the play progresses and his desire for revenge becomes more pronounced, he turns to the gods of the underworld, and this hope ultimately changes to despair. Revenge could also have told Andrea that he will turn life to death, because this too also happens. Every character who contemplates revenge in

The Spanish Tragedy perishes before the play's conclusion.

Hieronimo's role in the first act is minor, and he only comes to dominate the play after discovering his murdered son. Responding to Belimperia's cries for help, Hieronimo runs into his garden trembling with fear. At first, he wonders if he were not dreaming:

> Who calls Hieronimo? Speak, here I am.
> I did not slumber, therefore 'twas no dream,
> No, no, it was some woman cried for help,
> And here within this garden did she cry,
> And in this garden must I rescue her: (II.v.4-8)

Hieronimo's first impulse on entering his garden is to help a woman in distress, but when he sees the body of a man hanging from his bower he understandably concludes that someone has tried to frame him for murder. But upon discovering that the murdered man is his son, Hieronimo breaks into a series of lametations. Addressing the heavens, he asks "why made you night to cover sin?" (II.v.24).

Hieronimo is then joined in the garden by Isabella, and her first question to her husband is where is "the author of this endless woe?" (1. 39). Hieronimo replies that if he only knew the identities of the killers this would provide him with some emotional relief:

> To know the author were some ease of grief,
> For in revenge my heart would find relief. (II.v.40-41)

As he and Isabella stand over the body, Hieronimo swears that he will seek revenge:

> Seest thou this handkercher besmear'd with blood?
> It shall not from me till I take revenge:
> Seest thou those wounds that yet are bleeding fresh?
> I'll not entomb them till I have reveng'd. (II.v.51-54)

Hieronimo's desire for revenge in this scene should not be read as anything

but a desire for justice. However, the fact that he keeps Horatio's body from entombment to remind him of his duty is cause for concern.

Francis Bacon remarks that "a man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well."[24] Clearly, Hieronimo's calculated decision to leave his son unburied shows that he has every intention of keeping his wounds green until the murderers are caught and punished for their crime. Moreover, Hieronimo cherishes the bloody handkerchief as a memento of his son, but as Kerrigan observes this "gory napkin" is charged with remembrance of the murder and Hieronimo keeps it by his side always to remind him of his vow to avenge his son (p. 107). Thus, Horatio's corpse and the blood-stained handkerchief become physical representations of Hieronimo's oath.[25]

Isabella provides the ideal Christian response to the death of her son. She does not despair, but believes that a providential God will see that the wicked do not escape unpunished:

> The heavens are just, murder cannot be hid,
> Time is the author both of truth and right,
> And time will bring this treachery to light. (II.v.57-59)[26]

Hieronimo tells his wife that they must "dissemble...awhile" until they discover the identities of the murderers (II.v.60-63). After saying a dirge for his son, Hieronimo and Isabella bear the body away.

The next time we see Hieronimo on stage is following the resolution of the Portuguese sub-plot. Hieronimo's despair is meant to contrast Alexandro's steadfast belief that the heavens will ultimately vindicate the righteous. In his soliloquy Hieronimo questions why a supposedly just God would permit murderers to go unpunished:

> O sacred heavens! if this unhallow'd deed,
> If this inhuman and barbarous attempt,
> If this incomparable murder thus

> Of mine, but now no more my son,
> Shall unreveal'd and unrevenged pass,
> How should we term your dealings to be just,
> If you unjustly deal with those that in your justice trust.
> (III.ii.5-11)

Hieronimo's doubts concerning divine justice in this scene are not only understandable, they are very human. For centuries, individuals have wondered why a loving Heavenly Father would permit the unrelieved suffering of so many of his children. What has shaken Hieronimo's faith is obviously the murder of his son, and as C. A. Hallett says, "the doubt of an invisible Eternal Good is never more intense than at moments of undeserved suffering" (p. 139). Later in this same soliloquy, Hieronimo says that the murder of his son has filled his mind with hellish thoughts, remarking that "The ugly fiends do sally forth of hell,/ And frame my steps to unfrequented paths,/ And fear my heart with fierce inflamed thoughts" (III.ii.16-18). These "fierce inflamed thoughts" probably refer to Hieronimo's longing for revenge, thereby linking his desire for revenge with the "ugly fiends" of hell. Hieronimo then begs that the heavens might send him a sign to tell him what to do, and his request is not even completed when, as the stage direction notes, a letter from Bel-imperia falls to him from above (III.ii.23, o.s.d.)

Bel-imperia's letter reveals that Lorenzo and Balthazar are Horatio's murderers, yet the discerning knight marshal decides that he must have corroborative evidence of this before he acts. He decides that he must remain calm and gather as much evidence as possible in order to confirm that Lorenzo and Balthazar are guilty of killing Horatio. Yet his composure and cool exterior leads Lorenzo to suspect that Hieronimo has somehow discovered his secret. Suspecting that Serberine has turned informant, Lorenzo arranges to

have him killed.

Lorenzo shows absolutely no regard for human life. He pays his servant, Pedringano, to shoot Serberine in Saint Luigi's Park, but he also arranges to have Pedringano arrested for the crime, hoping to kill two birds with one stone. But what he cannot possibly foresee is that his ingenious scheme will backfire on him. Lorenzo takes pride in his villainy, and boasts of the "trap" he has laid for Pedringano (III.iv.41). But ironically, Lorenzo is caught in the trap of his own construction because just before Pedringano is hanged, he writes a letter to Lorenzo, recalling how he assisted him and Balthazar in Horatio's murder. The letter is discovered by the hangman who then turns it over to Hieronimo, thereby providing the knight marshal with incontrovertible proof of Lorenzo's guilt.

Pedringano's trial shows that the law is still an effective way of punishing the wicked. Pedringano's arrest, confession, conviction and execution illustrates that the legal system continues to function in Spain, and yet Hieronimo cannot help but realize the irony of his situation. He is a judge, dedicated to the ideal of justice, and yet he himself cannot obtain justice in his own case. As he says,

> Thus must we toil in other men's extremes,
> That know not how to remedy our own,
> And do them justice, when unjustly we,
> For all our wrongs, can compass no redress. (III.vi.1-4)

This trial scene also indicates that the heavens have not forgotten Hieronimo's cause, and that Providence is working to bring about Lorenzo's punishment. That Lorenzo's guilt should inadvertently be exposed through his plan to have Pedringano sent to the gallows is highly significant. The idea that villains will ultimately be ensnared in their own transgressions is a Christian concept specifically associated with the belief in a Providential

God. This idea is expressed quite clearly in the Scriptures:

> The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made:
> in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.
> The LORD is known by the judgement which he executeth:
> The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.
> (Psalms: IX: 15-16)[27]

It is highly unlikely that Kyd was consciously aware of this passage when composing The Spanish Tragedy, but it is interesting to note that in Hieronimo's lengthy speech following the Soliman and Perseda play, he tells Castile that when Lorenzo murdered Horatio he "march'd in a net and thought himself unseen," [my italics] (IV.iv.118). But the conclusion to the play indicates that heaven did see Lorenzo's crime and inevitably punished him for it.

Having acquired enough evidence to convince himself of Lorenzo's guilt, Hieronimo prepares to present his case to the king, saying "I will go plain me to my lord the king,/ And cry aloud for justice through the court" (III.vii.69-70). Hieronimo's decision to proceed through law is the only proper course of action available to him. He conceives of prosecuting Lorenzo through a court of law, and hopes to achieve his revenge within a legal framework.

But only a few scenes later, Hieronimo enters with a rope in one hand and a poniard in the other: the traditional symbols of despair in the Renaissance. Hieronimo has apparently been considering suicide as a way out of his dilemma, and the objects in his hands reveal that he has been thinking of hanging himself or stabbing himself. Hieronimo expresses his anxiety that the king will not listen to his petition for justice, and he appears to be on the verge of madness in this scene if he is not already mad. In his distraught condition, Hieronimo imagines there exists a judge who

lives in a "fiery tower" that is located by "the lake where hell doth stand" (III.xii.8-11). Hieronimo believes that this infernal judge will see to it that he receive "justice for Horatio's death" (l. 13). It is unclear who this judge is supposed to be, but it is possible that Hieronimo is thinking of one of the three judges of the pagan underworld--Aeacus, Minos or Rhadamanth. It is also possible the judge is simply a product of Hieronimo's lunatic imagination. Whatever the case may be, it is clear that Hieronimo is thinking of asking this judge for justice because he despairs in receiving justice from heaven. But the only way Hieronimo can locate this infernal judge is if he commits suicide. As he says, he must "Turn down this path...or this" (ll. 14-15), and as he speaks these lines he holds up the rope and dagger respectively.

But Hieronimo comes to his senses finally, and realizes that if he kills himself there will be no one left on earth to revenge Horatio's death (ll. 17-18). He therefore flings away the rope and dagger, choosing to wait for the king and follow his original course of action. But when the king enters along with Castile and Lorenzo, he is so absorbed in his discussions with the Portuguese ambassador to pay any attention to Hieronimo. The knight marshal selects a most inopportune moment to launch his appeals for justice, and begins exclaiming "Justice, O justice to Hieronimo" (III.xii.27). Lorenzo steps forward and physically restrains Hieronimo from approaching the king, and realizing that now is not the time to explain his case to the king Hieronimo remains silent. The king and the ambassador discuss the proposed marriage of Balthazar and Bel-imperia, and some thirty lines go by before Hieronimo speaks again. Hieronimo has remained in the background all this while, and is prompted to speak when the ambassador

mentions Horatio's name in relation to the ransom money due him. Hieronimo can no longer contain his grief, and he breaks out in an irrational and incoherent plea:

> Justice, O justice, justice, gentle king!
> ...
> Justice, O justice! O my son, my son,
> My son, whom naught can ransom or redeem! (III.xii.63-66)

When Lorenzo tries to restrain him once more, Hieronimo's madness is exacerbated:

> Away Lorenzo, hinder me no more,
> For thou hast made me bankrupt of my bliss.
> Give me my son! You shall not ransom him.
> Away! I'll rip the bowels of the earth,
> And ferry over to th'Elysian plains,
> And bring my son to show his deadly wounds. (III.xii.68-73)

When he speaks these lines, Hieronimo is on his knees, digging at the earth with his dagger in a mad attempt to burrow through to the underworld. In my view, this is undeniably the most powerful scene in the play for it shows Hieronimo at the height of madness. But it is precisely this madness that prevents him from giving the king a rational and logical account of what happened to his son. Surprisingly, the king does not even realize that Horatio is missing, let alone dead, and because of his ignorance of this situation he cannot possibly make any sense out of Hieronimo's mad ravings. Hieronimo ends his speech by exclaiming that he will surrender his position of knight marshal and afterwards "marshal up the fiends in hell,/ To be avenged on you all for this" (III.xii.76-77). The significance of these last lines is that Hieronimo renounces his responsibilities as a judge, thereby repudiating his belief in earthly justice. Instead, he will call upon the hellish fiends for assistance in his revenge. Also, the scope of Hieronimo's revenge has widened for he not only wants to see Lorenzo

punished but also tells the members of the Spanish court that he will take revenge "on you all." Following this promise, Hieronimo flees the stage.

The next time the audience sees Hieronimo is Act Three, Scene Thirteen, and he is holding a book of Seneca's plays in his hand and seems in control of himself. Hieronimo's soliloquy in this scene indicates he is well aware of the moral implications concerning revenge. His first sentence--"Vindicta Mihi" [Vengeance is mine] (III.xiii.1)--is undoubtedly an allusion to the Biblical "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord" found in Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Romans XII: 19). This injunction forbids any Christian from pursuing a private revenge, and in his Epistle, Paul counsels all believers to let God appoint the time and place for the punishment of the wicked. Christian doctrine maintained that God's will would eventually be fulfilled by the temporal authorities who were entrusted with dispensing justice on earth, and individuals could not simply decide to go outside the law to seek revenge. That Hieronimo understands that God demands patience from individuals is made perfectly clear in the first few lines of his soliloquy:

> Vindicta Mihi!
> Ay, heaven will be reveng'd of every ill,
> Nor will they suffer murder unrepaid:
> Then stay, Hieronimo, attend their will,
> For mortal men may not appoint their time. (III.xiii.1-5)

Hieronimo then proceeds to quote a line from Seneca's Agamemnon, saying "Per scelus semper tutum est sceleribus iter" [The safe way for crime is always through crime] (1. 6). Hieronimo is not contemplating criminal activity here, but rather he is reflecting on the philosophy of villains who deem it necessary to hide one crime with another. Lorenzo especially believes that one must commit crimes to hide another, and this

is exemplified when he arranges the deaths of Serberine and Pedringano to prevent them from revealing who killed Horatio. Hieronimo considers Paul's instructions to be patient and leave vengeance to God, but he ultimately rejects this counsel. He feels that the man who waits patiently for God to act gives his enemies the opportunity to strike. According to Hieronimo, the man who exercises patience in the face of adversity shall lose his life because of his inaction (III.xiii.10-11). Colley correctly observes that the knight marshal understands that the heavens require him to be patient in his pursuit of justice; but Hieronimo refuses to comply with this demand because he is overcome with the impulse for immediate satisfaction (p. 250). Although his plan to appeal for justice from the king fails the first time, Hieronimo never considers returning to him, and as Colley points out he passes up a perfect opportunity to state his grievance to Castile in Act Three, Scene Fourteen (pp. 250-251). Instead, Hieronimo chooses a course of action which affords immediate satisfaction; he chooses private revenge. In the last half of his soliloquy he explains how he intends to achieve this revenge by feigning a reconciliation with Lorenzo, and seizing an opportunity when it arises.

Kyd has brilliantly constructed Hieronimo's Vindicta Mihi speech. In it, Hieronimo refers distinctly to Seneca and Saint Paul, men who represent two antithetical cultures and systems of belief. One of the fathers of the early Christian church, Paul professes patience and faith in the will of God when individuals struggle with adversity. But Seneca, a pagan playwright, affords an alternative to this belief because his plays involve the ethic of blood revenge. Hieronimo's references to Saint Paul and Seneca illustrate in vivid terms the options open to him. He can either wait pa-

tiently and hope for another opportunity to appeal to God's agent, the king, or he can embrace pagan justice and slay Lorenzo outside the legal framework of Spain. Ultimately, Hieronimo chooses the pagan justice of blood revenge.

Immediately following his soliloquy, Hieronimo welcomes three citizens and an old man who have come to him for legal advice. The three men have heard of Hieronimo's reputation as a fair judge, and they ask him to "plead their cases to the king" (III.xiii.48). But their complaints pale in comparison to those of the old man, and when Hieronimo inquires about his problem the old man hands him a written statement that reads "The humble supplication/ Of Don Bazulto for his murder'd son" (11. 78-79). Bazulto's supplication for justice causes Hieronimo to recall Horatio's untimely death, and his fits of madness return once again as he exclaims "No sir, it was my murder'd son,/ O my son, my son, O my son Horatio! (11. 80-81). Bazulto's situation is meant to parallel Hieronimo's, and it is clear that Kyd intends Bazulto to be a dramatic foil to the knight marshal. Indeed, Hieronimo draws the parallel between himself and the old man when he calls him "the lively portrait of my dying self" (1. 85) and later on "the lively image of my grief" (1. 162).

As with Hieronimo, Bazulto's son has also been murdered and the old man desperately seeks justice. However, there is an important distinction to be made between the two characters. Bazulto takes the only proper course open to him by appealing to Hieronimo who is a judge and therefore a representative of earthly justice. Moreover, Bazulto presents his case in a calm and rational manner; he does not rant and rave for justice as Hieronimo did when in the presence of the king in the previous scene. But whereas Bazulto seeks to punish his son's murderer or murderers by law, it is apparent that

Hieronimo is gradually but steadily moving towards private revenge as his method of bringing retribution to Horatio's killers.

That this revenge is associated with the underworld, and hence with evil, is made apparent in Hieronimo's address to Bazulto. He tells the old man that although justice cannot be found on earth, he will go to the underworld and demand that Pluto assist him in his revenge:

> Though on this earth justice will not be found,
> I'll down to earth and in this passion
> Knock at the dismal gates of Pluto's court,
> Getting by force, as once Alcides did,
> A troop of Furies and tormenting hags
> To torture Don Lorenzo and the rest. (III.xiii.108-113)

The last two lines quoted here are of particular significance because they show that Hieronimo's desire for revenge has become excessive and cruel. Hieronimo now wants to "torture Don Lorenzo and the rest," not simply bring them to justice. Also, when Hieronimo finally achieves his revenge it is not directed solely at his son's murderers but also includes Castile, the king and the Portuguese viceroy--they are "the rest" of whom he speaks in this passage. Hieronimo actually tortures the king and the viceroy by showing them the deaths of their children in what is supposed to be a play and then revealing that their children are indeed dead.

In his madness, Hieronimo tears up the citizens' legal documents, pretending they are the limbs of his foes, and then he runs off stage only to return moments later and confront Bazulto again. He imagines that the old man is the ghost of his murdered son, returning to the earth to complain of Hieronimo's failure to take revenge. When Bazulto insists that he is not Horatio, the mentally distracted Hieronimo then thinks he is "a fury.../ Sent from the empty kingdom of black night" (III.xiii.153-154). Hieronimo

has already concluded that "justice is exiled from the earth" (1. 140), and therefore he intends to make a supplication for justice to the judges of the underworld. Also, he notes that Isabella--who once possessed a strong convinction that the heavens are just--now pleads for justice from "righteous Rhadamanth" (1. 142). Thus, Kyd illustrates that both Isabella and Hieronimo are abandoning their faith in the justice of the heavens in favour of the immediate satisfaction offered by pagan revenge as represented in The Spanish Tragedy by the infernal judges of the underworld.

In Act IV, Bel-imperia chides Hieronimo for neglecting his duty to avenge his murdered son. But when Bel-imperia declares that she will take the responsibility for revenging Horatio's death if Hieronimo is unwilling to do so, Hieronimo is inspired to take action against the villains. He claims that heaven is encouraging his desire to avenge his son, saying:

> Why then, I see that heaven applies our drift,
> And all the saints do sit soliciting
> For vengeance on those cursed murderers. (IV.i.32-34)

While some critics have argued that these lines show that Hieronimo now has divine authority to pursue his revenge, I feel this argument overlooks the fact that Hieronimo is insane at this point.[28] Kyd has shown us in the previous scene that Hieronimo is mentally unstable, and according to C. A. Hallett, one sure symptom of madness is to think of one's self as fulfilling God's will through your actions (p. 27). Are we then to take the words of a lunatic at face value and believe that Hieronimo has divine sanction in his desire to kill Lorenzo? Clearly, the answer is no.

After having feigned reconciliation with Lorenzo and Balthazar, Hieronimo is asked by them if he can supply the court with some entertainment to mark the arrival of the Portuguese viceroy. Hieronimo conveniently produces

a book containing a play which he had written while a student. He suggests that they perform the play, and that Bel-imperia, Lorenzo and Balthazar each play a part in the tragedy. Although Balthazar is somewhat skeptical about the whole idea, he is pursuaded to participate.

When Bel-imperia, Balthazar and Lorenzo leave the stage, Hieronimo remains to speak a few lines concerning the impending performance of his play:

> Now shall I see the fall of Babylon,
> Wrought by the heavens in this confusion.
> And if the world like not this tragedy,
> Hard is the hap of old Hieronimo. (IV.i.195-198)

According to Edwards and Johnson, the reference to the fall of Babylon in these lines suggests that Hieronimo has in mind the tower of Babel (i.e. Babylon), and they point to the play which is spoken "in sundry languages" (IV.iv.10) as evidence of this.[29] However, I agree with Wineke that Hieronimo alludes to the Biblical prophecy that God will destroy the wicked nations or Babylon in the last days before Armageddon.[30] But unlike Wineke, I do not think that the allusion to Babylon is intended to show that the catastrophe of The Spanish Tragedy is a symbolic representation of the fall of a wicked state. Rather, Hieronimo seems to suggest that he will assume a god-like stature during the performance and witness the destruction of his enemies. In essence, the knight marshal will usurp the authority of the heavens by contriving the deaths of Lorenzo and Balthazar in the play. If all the world is indeed a stage, Hieronimo does not want to be simply a bit-part actor. As Colley observes, Hieronimo wants to control his own destiny; "he wants to be a playwright rather than a mere actor, to play God rather than man" (p. 252). As we shall see, Hieronimo gets this break

in the court performance of Soliman and Perseda.

But before this performance is staged, Kyd includes one final scene in his play involving Isabella. As discussed earlier in this thesis (see above, pp. 25-27), Isabella destroys the garden and curses the tree from further fruit. In the Renaissance, curses were associated with witches and the black arts, and Isabella's curses suggest she has adopted an uncharacteristically anti-Christian attitude in this scene.[31] Following the discovery of her dead son, she had professed a resolute belief in the justice of heaven; but now she despairs of ever finding justice on earth, ultimately committing suicide so she can join Horatio and "plead with Rhadamanth" (IV. ii.28). Isabella's despair and her turning away from a belief in the just heavens in favour of the judges of the underworld is meant to highlight Hieronimo's similar reactions for he, too, has stopped appealing to the heavens for justice, choosing instead to adopt his own policy of private revenge.

In Hieronimo's play, each character is assigned a role. Bel-imperia is given the part of the "chaste and resolute" Perseda, and she is married to Erasto, played by her brother Lorenzo. Balthazar is given the role of the jealous Soliman who wants to have Perseda all to himself, and thus commissions one of his "bashaws" to kill Erasto. Curious to know what part Hieronimo will assume in all this, Lorenzo questions the knight marshal about his role. Hieronimo responds "make no doubt of it:/ I'll play the murderer, I warrant you" (IV.i.132-133). But Hieronimo does not just play the murderer; he becomes the murderer and arranges to have Bel-imperia stab Balthazar while he kills Lorenzo.

Hieronimo's scheme to kill both Balthazar and Lorenzo in his play is

successful. However, his revenge is not a just one for he employs deceit and Machiavellian tactics in his efforts to bring about their deaths, never realizing that what he is doing is morally culpable. John Scott Colley's discussion of the knight marshal's actions is, in my view, one of the more perceptive accounts of Hieronimo's plan to play the murderer. According to Colley, Hieronimo does not see the irony of his actions, and fails to perceive that by killing Lorenzo and Balthazar in cold blood he is virtually no better than they are:

> Hieronimo's "Bashaw" duplicates Lorenzo's role in the original crime. Hieronimo becomes, through his acting, another Lorenzo, and his mad thirst for blood is no more justifiable than was Lorenzo's plot against Horatio and Bel-imperia. Indeed, Hieronimo rivals Lorenzo's villainy, for Hieronimo strikes even at those with whom he has no grievance: Castile's death is perfectly gratuitous and is by no means demanded in the plot of Hieronimo's tragedia cothurnata. (p. 249)

Ironically, the king, the viceroy and Castile thoroughly enjoy the play and do not suspect that the killings they have witnessed are real. After Hieronimo kills Lorenzo, he steps forward to address his audience. But instead of delivering a conventional speech requesting applause, Hieronimo draws back a curtain to reveal the corpse of his son. In the explanation that follows, Hieronimo tells how he plotted the deaths of Lorenzo and Balthazar because they had murdered Horatio (IV.iv.98-107). But now that he has revenged his son, Hieronimo runs to hang himself.

However, Hieronimo is apprehended by the king, the viceroy and Castile, and they demand to know more details. Hieronimo refuses to answer, and bites out his tongue so he cannot reply to their questions. He is then given a pen and ordered to write out what has happened. Hieronimo is also given a knife with which to sharpen his quill, and using this weapon he stabs Castile and

then himself. Castile's death is gratuitous and entirely unjustified, and this incident vividly illustrates how the noble and just knight marshal has degenerated into a homicidal madman during the course of the play because of his desire for revenge. What had began as a noble quest for justice has become a cruel and barbarous revenge towards which the lives of three people (Isabella, Castile and Bel-imperia) have been sacrificed.

Any examination of the theme of justice in The Spanish Tragedy must inevitably address the issue of Hieronimo's actions in the play-within-a-play. Hieronimo obviously feels justified in taking the lives of the two murderers; but it must be remembered that Hieronimo is mad when he decides to stage the play. When Hieronimo delivers his final speech to his stage audience, he says that his "heart is satisfied" (IV.iv.129) now that he has avenged his son, and he also remarks that he is "pleas'd with their [Lorenzo and Balthazar's] deaths, and eas'd with their revenge" (IV.iv.190).

Those critics who argue that Hieronimo is a just avenger point to the fact that he is performing the will of Providence by punishing the wicked. Also, they maintain that Hieronimo is a public avenger whose revenge rids the court of its corruption. But the knight marshal's concluding speech to his astonished audience clearly shows that he is not functioning in his official capacity of a judge when he exacts vengeance but is acting as a grieved father obsessed with the thought of retaliating against his son's killers. Joel Altman is quite correct when he says that as an illustration of public justice the Soliman and Perseda play is a "terrible failure" because no one on stage comprehends why Hieronimo has done this.[32]

In my view, Hieronimo's revenge is intended to seem cruel and excessive. His obsessive desire for justice drives him mad, and this madness finds expres-

sion in Hieronimo's play-within-a-play. In fact, the concluding scene in the play seems to reinforce this interpretation of Hieronimo's revenge. With great satisfaction and sadistic pleasure, the ghost of Andrea tells Revenge that this bloody play provided him with "spectacles to please my soul" (IV.v.12). Like Hieronimo, the ghost has also felt the maleficent and corrupting influence of Revenge, and the once-noble Andrea now revels in the death and destruction perpetrated in the name of justice.

I feel that Colley's interpretation of The Spanish Tragedy is correct when he calls it "a kind of emblematic mystery, or moral pageant, which presents a mirror of the mysterious workings of heavenly will and finally affirms the biblical injunction, Vindicta mihi" (p. 243). Hieronimo is, after all, a "tool of destiny" because it is through him that the wicked are punished. But Hieronimo has deliberately rejected the Biblical injunction to leave vengeance to God by seeking a private revenge. Therefore, he must also be punished. If the heavens have decreed that the wicked must perish, then so too must the avenger for he has sullied his hands with their blood. The fact that Andrea wants to pardon Hieronimo by leading him to Elysium where "good Hieronimo" can enjoy "sweet pleasures" for eternity should be seen as ironic because the members of Kyd's audience knew that the final judgement rests not with a splenetic ghost but with the Almighty.

But perhaps the final irony in this play about justice is that each individual who reads the text, each member of an audience who sees the play performed, ultimately becomes a judge of the knight marshal's actions and must render his own verdict concerning Hieronimo's quest for justice.

iii) Titus, Tamora and Revenge

Whereas The Spanish Tragedy presents one man's quest for justice in an unjust world, William Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus depicts a world in which all of its inhabitants embrace the code of blood revenge as a form of justice. In the play both Roman and Goth alike practise the vendetta, and the Goths in particular are ruthless and unspeakably malicious in their desire to injure the Andronici. However, the noble Titus and his family are not entirely without fault for in their own way they also practise a ritualized form of revenge. Having returned home from the wars against the Goths, Titus' sons clamor for a human sacrifice, ostensibly to appease the spirits of their dead brothers:

> Give us the proudest of the Goths,
> That we may hew his limbs and on a pile
> Ad manes fratrum sacrifice his flesh
> ...
> That so the shadows be not unappeas'd,
> Nor we disturbed with prodigies on earth. (I.i.96-101)

But there is a suggestion that this sacrifice is not simply a "Roman rite" but that it also serves as a form of reprisal against the Goths. Surely, the killing and mutilation of Alarbus has just as much to do with appeasing the wrath of Titus' remaining sons as it does with appeasing the spirits of those sons killed in battle.

In one of the most important articles written on Titus Andronicus in recent years, Alan Sommers claims that the play is structured so as to juxtapose the civilized values of the Romans to the "barbarism of primitive nature" as represented by the Goths (p. 276). On the whole, this interpretation seems convincing except for one major problem: the human sacrifice. As an audience we may well ask ourselves if the Romans are acting nobly when they sacrifice Alarbus. Furthermore, it is ironic that the supposedly "civilized" Romans

are not very civil in the opening act. Indeed, Saturninus and Bassianus enter with their supporters and appear ready to do battle over the succession to the throne. Although Titus' entry quells the hostility momentarily, the dispute ensues once again when Marcus offers his brother the crown. Also, Titus' rigid adherence to Roman customs prohibits him from granting mercy to Alarbus; and finally, after Bassianus claims Lavinia as his betrothed and literally abducts her, Titus pursues them and slays his son because he stood in his way. All of these violent incidents are committed by the Romans, not the Goths, and an audience may well wonder who are the real barbarians in this opening scene.

There is a fundamental difference between Hieronimo and Titus with respect to their views on revenge. Hieronimo is caught in a moral dilemma and questions whether or not he should seek a private revenge after he has failed to obtain justice from the king. But for Titus, the question of whether or not revenge is morally correct is never at issue. Titus never doubts of his right to revenge. There is nothing in Titus Andronicus that resembles Hieronimo's "Vindicta mihi" speech or Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy. By his very nature, Titus is incapable of such introspection. But more importantly, Titus is a pagan and a Roman, not a Christian. When he delays in seeking revenge against Lavinia's assailants it is only because he does not know their identities. But once Lavinia reveals who the rapists are, Titus vows that he will seek vengeance. While Shakespeare's audience was familiar with the Scriptural injunctions against revenge, Titus obviously is not and he never worries about offending the "gods" in his quest for revenge.

According to Ronald Broude, the fact that Titus Andronicus is set in pagan Rome is significant because it underlines "the differences between 'non-

Christian' and 'Christian' forms of vengeance."[33] The human sacrifice by which the ghosts of Titus' dead sons are placated and the vendetta are clearly non-Christian forms of revenge because they do not recognize that vengeance ultimately rests with the Lord. In my opinion, Shakespeare not only contrasts the Roman and Goth values in the play as Sommers contends, but he also illustrates that the pagan forms of revenge are cruel, barbarous and ultimately wasteful. Each act of revenge is countered by another until the members of the two feuding families have been killed off, and it is significant to note that by the conclusion of Titus Andronicus all of the Goths brought to Rome as prisoners are dead (with the exception of Aaron who is sentenced to death just before the play ends) and the only remaining members of Titus' family are Marcus, Lucius and Lucius' son.

The sacrifice of Alarbus is definitely one of the most important scenes in the play because it is this incident that begins the vicious cycle of revenge. As Maxwell points out in his introduction to Titus Andronicus, the sacrifice of Alarbus is purely Shakespeare's invention and is not found in any version of the Titus story (p. xxix). The sacrifice of Alarbus is basically what enrages Tamora and causes her to seek revenge against Titus; but perhaps there is another reason why Shakespeare chose to include this unusual incident in his play.

Throughout the play the name Titus is inextricably linked with that of Rome, and as Sommers observes Titus embodies the Roman values of "virtue," "justice" and "piety" (p. 276). But the one word not associated with Titus is mercy, and the sacrificial crisis makes it quite clear that Titus is a pitiless man. When Titus' sons lay hold of Alarbus, Tamora begins to plead for mercy:

> Stay, Roman brethren! Gracious conqueror,
> Victorious Titus, rue the tears I shed,
> A mother's tears in passion for her son;
> And if thy sons were ever dear to thee,
> O, think my son to be as dear to me.
> ...
> Andronicus, stain not thy tomb with blood:
> Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods?
> Draw near them in being merciful;
> Sweet mercy is nobility's true badge:
> Thrice-noble Titus, spare my first-born. (I.i.104-120)

Tamora's appeal to Titus to "draw near the nature of the gods" by being merciful must have struck a sympathetic chord in Shakespeare's Christian audience. But in spite of Tamora's eloquent plea, Titus stands by as his sons seize Alarbus and drag him off to be killed.

Tamora's declaration that the sacrifice is "cruel, irreligious piety" (l. 130) is justified. Yet Demetrius tries to comfort his mother by telling her that one day she will have the opportunity to avenge Alarbus' death:

> The self-same gods that arm'd the Queen of Troy
> With opportunity of sharp revenge
> Upon the Thracian tyrant in his tent
> May favour Tamora, the Queen of Goths,
> ...
> To quit the bloody wrongs upon her foes.

As it turns out, Demetrius' hope comes true for Tamora is given this chance to revenge when she is made Saturninus' wife-to-be later in the scene. Although she pretends to reconcile with Titus, she never forgets how he allowed her son to be killed, and Tamora swears that she will see the demise of the Andronici. In an aside to Saturninus, she remarks "I'll find a day to massacre them all,/ And race their faction and their family" (ll. 450-451). The importance of these lines is that Tamora directs her revenge not only towards Titus, but towards the rest of his family as well.

The opportunity to bring harm to Lavinia presents itself in Act One,

Scene Two when the Romans and the Goths engage in a royal hunt. While in the forest, Tamora suggests to her black lover, Aaron, that they engage in erotic pleasures but the Moor will have none of it. He explains that he is preoccuppied with thoughts of revenge, saying "Vengeance is in my heart, death in my hand,/ Blood and revenge are hammering in my head" (II.iii.38-39). The reason Aaron is contemplating revenge is unclear, but as the play unfolds Shakespeare illustrates that Aaron is instinctually evil, and that he thrives on the suffering of his enemies. Cut from the same cloth as Barabas in Marlowe's The Jew of Malta, Aaron enjoys perpetrating evil deeds for evil's sake. In fact, it is Aaron, not Tamora, who plots to have the chaste Lavinia raped and disfigured by Chiron and Demetrius.

Following the murder of Bassianus by Chiron and Demetrius, Tamora asks her sons to give her a poniard so she can kill Lavinia. But her sons have other plans for Lavinia, and they suggest to their mother that they be allowed to rape her. Lavinia then pleads for mercy from Tamora and begs that she be put to death rather than be raped by the Goths. This scene is obviously intended to parallel the scene in Act One when Tamora pleads with Titus to spare her son. Indeed, Tamora herself draws this parallel in her parting words to her sons:

> Remember, boys, I pour'd forth tears in vain
> To save your brother from the sacrifice,
> But fierce Andronicus would not relent:
> Therefore away with her, and use her as you will. (II.iii.163-166)

But the rape of Lavinia and the murder of Bassianus is only the beginning of the Goths' revenge. Aaron arranges to have Titus' two sons arrested and condemned for the murder of Bassianus, and this episode illustrates the lack of earthly justice in Rome. When Saturninus discovers the two men in

the pit along with the corpse of Bassianus, he rejects the possibility that the brothers are innocent. In fact, he pronounces them guilty even before they have an opportunity to state their case:

> Some bring the murthered body, some the murtherers;
> Let them not speak a word; the guilt is plain. (II.iii.300-301)

Act Three opens with Titus begging the judges and Roman senators to take pity on his sons, claiming that their souls are "not corrupted as 'tis thought" (III.i.9). Here is the third example in the play of a character who appeals for mercy and is denied, and the irony is most evident in this scene. When Titus had the power to grant mercy to Tamora, he refused; and yet now, he himself is pleading that the judges grant him mercy and pardon his sons. But the judges refuse to give Titus a hearing, and pass him by without a word.

Moments later, Marcus brings the mutilated Lavinia to her father. When Marcus comments that Lavinia is weeping either because her brothers killed Bassianus or because she knows them to be innocent, Titus responds "If they did kill thy husband, then be joyful,/ Because the law hath ta'en revenge on them" (III.i.116-117). Even during times of abject suffering Titus remains scrupulously just, and he is willing to accept the sentence of death imposed on his sons if they did indeed murder Bassianus. But Titus knows that his sons are loyal to Rome and are incapable of committing such a "foul deed."

The Goths continue to torment Titus and his family in this scene. Aaron tells Titus that if he sends the emperor his hand, Saturninus will release Martius and Quintus. Although Titus believes that Aaron is delivering an offer from Saturninus, the audience realizes that the amputation of Titus'

hand is associated with the Goths' vendetta against Titus and his family.

In Act Three, Scene One, Marcus recounts the sufferings of the Andronici, and he specifically mentions Titus' "mangled daughter" and his "banish'd son" (11. 255-256). These sufferings exact their toll on Titus and he breaks out in a fit of mad laughter. Titus does not laugh because he is indiffferent to his family's plight; on the contrary, he laughs because he has finally arrived at the inescapable conclusion that all his tears and lamentations will not help him avenge the wrongs he has suffered. Titus' haunting laughter signifies a definite change in his character. Whereas in the previous scenes he spent most of his time on stage voicing his grief in rhetoric, in the remainder of the play he becomes obsessed with the idea of revenge. As the head of the Andronicus clan, he feels obligated to seek vengeance for his children, and he pledges his word that he will actively pursue revenge:

> ...which way shall I find Revenge's cave?
> For these two heads do seem to speak to me,
> And threat me I shall never come to bliss
> Till all these mischiefs be return'd again
> Even in their throats that hath committed them.
> Come, let me see what task I have to do
> You heavy people, circle me about,
> That I may turn me to each one of you,
> And swear unto my soul to right your wrongs. (III.i.270-278)

Following this speech Titus instructs his son, Lucius, to flee to the Goths and raise an army "To be reveng'd on Rome and Saturnine" (1. 300).

Unlike Hieronimo, Titus never considers the moral implications of revenge. To him, the Goths are a cancer in the body politic of Rome and must be excised by any means possible. But more importantly, Titus holds Saturninus and the Goths responsible for his own personal misfortunes, and Marcus echoes his brother's feelings later in the play when he swears they

"will prosecute by good advice/ Mortal revenge upon these traitorous Goths,/ And see their blood, or die with this reproach" (IV.i.92-94).

Titus and Marcus finally learn the identities of Lavinia's rapists in Act Four, Scene One, and they swear that the villains will pay for their heinous crimes. But as Titus, Lavinia and the boy exit the stage, Marcus remains to speak a few words. He suggests that Titus is too just to take revenge by himself and he appeals to the heavens to intervene in Titus' cause:

> O, heavens, can you hear a good man groan
> And not relent, or not compassion him?
> Marcus, attend him in his ecstasy,
> That hath more scars of sorrow in his heart
> Than foemen's marks upon his batt'red shield,
> But yet so just that he will not revenge.
> Revenge the heavens for old Andronicus! (IV.i.123-129)

Though not a Christian himself, Marcus is clearly expressing the Christian perspective towards revenge in this passage. The problem with Marcus' statement is not that it is anachronistic--Shakespeare's audience would hardly have worried about that--but that it is inconsistent with Marcus' own character. While it is true that Marcus is more moderate in temperament and less inflexible than his brother, there are instances in the play when he cries out for revenge just like Titus.[34] Nowhere else in the play does he suggest that Titus should leave vengeance to the heavens, and in my view Marcus' impassioned plea to the heavens to revenge "old Andronicus" is intended to point out the contrast between the Christian concept of divine retribution and the "non-Christian" practise of blood revenge.

Shakespeare illustrates in Act Four, Scene Three that all the members of Titus' family are concerned with his quest for revenge. In this scene Titus, like Hieronimo in The Spanish Tragedy, alludes to the classical

story of Astraea, the Roman goddess of justice. Titus tells his relatives that Astraea cannot be found on earth and therefore they should seek her elsewhere. He sends some of his "cousins" to cast their nets in the sea in hopes of finding the goddess there, and instructs Publius and Sempronius to "dig with mattock and spade" (IV.iii.11) until they come to the underworld. Once there, they should ask Pluto for assistance in their search for the elusive goddess of justice.

Publius--one of Titus' relatives who is otherwise rather unimportant as a character--is nevertheless given what I consider to be a significant bit of dialogue. When Titus asks him if he has had any success in his search for Astraea, Publius replies that although the goddess could not be located in the underworld, Pluto has offered to assist the Andronici by sending them a minor deity, Revenge:

> ...Pluto sends you word
> If you will have Revenge from hell, you shall:
> Marry, for Justice, she is so employ'd
> He thinks, with Jove in heaven, or somewhere else,
> So that perforce you must needs stay a time. (IV.iii.37-41)

Publius is evidently humouring his mad uncle in this scene, and perhaps too much weight should not be attached to his words. However, Publius seems to suggest that Justice and Revenge are not one and the same. Indeed, Revenge is a minor deity "from hell." According to Eleanor Prosser, many revengers in Elizabethan drama who seek a private revenge--including Hieronimo and Titus--"associate their motives and actions with Hell and the demonic," and she contends that these references to hell illustrate that their revenge is morally unjustifiable (pp. 93-94).

Titus indicates that he will actively seek revenge when he meets the clown in the arrow-shooting scene. He gives the clown a knife and a letter

to deliver to the emperor, and instructs him to return with an answer from Saturninus. But whatever scheme Titus may have been devising is effectively ended when Saturninus orders the clown be put to death. Nevertheless, Titus is ultimately provided with an opportunity to avenge himself against the Goths. Fearing that Lucius will soon enter Rome with an invading army, Tamora goes to Titus and requests a meeting be arranged between Lucius and the emperor. Tamora and her sons arrive at Titus' house "disguised" as Revenge and her "ministers", Rape and Murder, and they promise Titus they will torment his enemies if he arranges the meeting. At best, Tamora's plan to deceive Titus by disguising herself as Revenge is ludicrous for Titus is never fooled by her. In fact, he tells her straight out "I am not mad; I know thee well enough" (V.ii.21). But Tamora persistently claims that she is Revenge, and although Titus appears to be duped as the scene progresses, he reveals in an aside that he "knew them all, though they suppos'd me mad" (l. 142). He eventually agrees to arrange a meeting between Lucius and Saturninus but only on the condition that Tamora leave her two "ministers" behind. Believing that Titus is mad and therefore harmless, Tamora assents.

But once Tamora departs, Titus calls in his relatives and orders Chiron and Demetrius gagged and bound. He begins his long-awaited revenge, and mocks the villains by telling them exactly what he plans to do:

> This one hand yet is left to cut your throats,
> Whiles that Lavinia 'tween her stumps doth hold
> The basin that receives your guilty blood.
> You know your mother means to feast with me,
> And calls herself Revenge, and thinks me mad.
> Hark, villains, I will grind your bones to dust
> And with your blood and it I'll make a paste,
> And of the paste a coffin I will rear,
> And make two pasties of your shameful heads,
> And bid that strumpet, your unhallowed dam,

Like to the earth swallow her own increase. (V.ii.181-191)

Titus' ghastly plan to feed Tamora her own children baked in a pie fulfills his desire for vengeance, but his scheme cannot be called a just retribution. In his pursuit of revenge Titus is as callous and bloodthirsty as Chiron and Demetrius. In The Spanish Tragedy Hieronimo is not satisfied with killing Lorenzo and Balthazar, but wants to torment the unoffending Castile and the Portuguese viceroy also by revealing to them after the Soliman and Perseda play that they have unwittingly witnessed the actual deaths of their own children. Similarly, Titus wants Tamora to know that she has partaken of a cannibalistic feast before he kills her. In both plays, then, the protagonist's desire for revenge is excessive, and Hieronimo and Titus not only want to punish their tormentors but also want to see them suffer.

In what must be the most intriguing scene in Titus Andronicus, Titus enters on stage dressed "like a cook" (V.ii.25 o.s.d.) and sets the table for the banquet. As Tamora and Saturninus eat of the pie, Titus stabs his daughter, explaining that he has killed Lavinia so that her shame might die along with her. When an astonished Tamora demands to know why Titus has done this, he says that Chiron and Demetrius are to blame because they raped Lavinia and "did her all this wrong" (1. 58). Saturninus orders that the brothers be brought before him to answer this charge, and it is at this point that Titus reveals that Chiron and Demetrius are the main course of this gruesome feast. Following this revelation, the mad Titus stabs Tamora. Saturninus then kills Titus and is himself killed by Lucius.

The almost mechanical way in which the characters in this scene plunge daggers into one another's sides illustrates that revenge is essen-

tially an emotional response to a real or perceived injury. The code of blood revenge is merely a way of legitimizing this desire to strike at one's enemies by associating revenge with family honour. But as Ronald Broude indicates, the form of blood revenge practised in Titus Andronicus demands that every act of violence be requited by another equally violent response.[35] Thus, the sacrifice of Alarbus in the opening scene inaugurates the Goths' quest for revenge, and their brutal crimes against the Andronici are answered by Titus' equally brutal actions which culminate in the Thyestean banquet he serves Tamora and the emperor. The killings and reprisals which occur throughout the play only cease when Saturninus and the Goths are dead, leaving the two remaining members of the Andronicus family, Marcus and Lucius, to rebuild the state.

It is obvious that Lucius' ascension to the imperial seat of Rome is meant to be seen as the restoration of order and moral sanity after an interregnum of evil.[36] A brave and noble soldier like his father, Lucius embodies the Roman values of loyalty, virtue and justice. Following the stabbing of the emperor, Lucius and Marcus explain to the Roman people what has occurred. Marcus recounts how Aaron, the "Chief architect and plotter of these woes" (V.iii.122), inflicted great suffering on the Andronici, and Marcus asks his listeners to judge Titus' decision to seek revenge:

> Now judge what cause had Titus to revenge,
> These wrongs unspeakable, past patience,
> Or more than any living man could bear.
> Now have you heard the truth: what say you, Romans? (V.iii.125-128)

To the people of Rome, Titus' revenge is justifiable, and they elect Lucius as their new emperor. As he accepts the office, Lucius remarks that he will try to heal Rome's wounds, and it appears that strong and just rule

has returned to Rome once again. Lucius' first duty as emperor is to purge the court of all traces of moral corruption. Towards this end, he orders Tamora's corpse be thrown to the birds and beasts to prey upon, and he decrees that Aaron be buried chest-deep in the earth and left to die.

Whereas the conclusion to The Spanish Tragedy is unequivocally pessimistic--there are no successors to the Spanish throne and the king and viceroy exit the stage bearing their dead--there is at least the hope in Titus Andronicus that Rome will again rise from its ashes; only this time, it will be governed judiciously by Lucius. But the conclusion to Titus Andronicus also shows that Roman society is still as severe and pitiless as it had been when Titus permitted his sons to sacrifice Alarbus in the opening scene. In fact, it was Lucius, Rome's newly-instated emperor, who initially demanded that Alarbus be sacrificed, and there is no indication in the play's conclusion that Lucius will temper justice with mercy during his reign.

Titus Andronicus reflects Shakespeare's concern with the issues of justice and revenge, and it is a concern which stays with him throughout his career as a playwright. In the play one incident triggers a bloody and violent feud between the two families, the Goths and the Andronici. Titus is a sympathetic hero because he has devoted his life to the service of Rome, but after returning from the wars he is forced to suffer unrelenting physical and mental anguish. He is, like Lear, a man more sinned against than sinning. But while it is true that in the conflict between Titus and Tamora our sympathy lies with the noble Roman, we cannot forget that he is largely responsible for his own fate. By refusing to grant mercy to Alarbus when it was in his power to do so, Titus enrages Tamora and starts

a vicious cycle of revenge and reprisals. Yet according to the values of Titus' Rome, the sacrifice of Alarbus is acceptable because it is a "Roman rite." If Titus must be condemned for being unmerciful and obstinate, then so too must his society. Through Titus Andronicus, Shakespeare indicates that any society which adheres to the dictates of the code of blood revenge and places a greater value on family honour than on mercy is destined to breed enmity and strife.

In his second tragedy, Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare developed this idea with more sophistication. Although we never discover what is the "ancient grudge" over which the Montagues and Capulets quarrel, it appears that in this play Shakespeare's concern is with the consequences of revenge rather than its causes. As in Titus Andronicus, the two opposing families openly practise the vendetta, and it is this desire to revenge which compels Tybalt to start a quarrel with Mercutio: a quarrel which inevitably leads to Tybalt's death and Romeo's banishment. Like in Titus Andronicus, the consequences of the vendetta are tragic. The rape, mutilation and death of Lavinia is no less tragic than the deaths of Romeo and Juliet, and if we feel greater sympathy for the lovers than for Lavinia it is because Shakespeare failed to develop Lavinia as fully as the other two characters.

According to Eleanor Prosser, an implicit condemnation of private revenge is found throughout Shakespeare's plays (p. 94). Whether the conflict be between the Andronici and the Goths, the Montagues and Capulets or the House of York and the House of Lancaster, Shakespeare illustrates through his plays that revenge--and especially the vendetta--is a cruel and unjust practice Instead of resolving conflicts within the state, the vendetta perpetuates them because, as Broude says, "each act of revenge is both the answer to a previous

act and the provocation to a new one."[37]

Ultimately, then, Kyd and Shakespeare express the orthodox view towards revenge in their respective plays. Although both Hieronimo and Titus are presented sympathetically and their grievances against the villains and the state are legitimate, their acts of revenge are excessively violent and cannot be condoned. But as several critics point out, it is highly unlikely that every member of Kyd's and Shakespeare's audiences left the theatre condemning the revengers for their actions. Indeed, there must have been a complexity of responses to Hieronimo and Titus. After all, Hieronimo and Titus are representative of suffering humanity. They are the men who demand that villains be punished for their villainy, and that right prevail over wrong. They are also the men who cry out for justice in an unjust world, and when society fails to redress their wrongs they choose to go above the law and wage their own battle against corruption and evil. The tragedy of Hieronimo and Titus is not that they die in their respective quests for justice; rather, it is that they succumb to that instinctual desire for revenge which is deep within all of us.

CHAPTER 2: NOTES

[1]Broude, "Revenge and Revenge Tragedy in Renaissance England," pp, 38-43.

[2]Lily B. Campbell, "Theories of Revenge in Renaissance England," Modern Philology, XXVIII (1931), p. 290.

[3]The Elizabethan attitudes towards revenge have been thoroughly examined by many critics. Some of the best treatments of the subject are: Campbell, pp. 281-296; Bowers; pp. 3-61; Prosser, pp. 3-35; Eland, pp. 88-98; Broude, "Revenge and Revenge Tragedy," pp. 38-55, and Edwards' introduction to The Spanish Tragedy, pp. 1v-1xi.

[4]See especially Psalms X, XIII, XXII and XXXVII for examples of Biblical passages concerning God's divine judgement.

[5]Hieronimo alludes to this passage from Romans in The Spanish Tragedy, III.xiii,1. Other Biblical passages that clearly express the view that vengeance should be left to God are Deuteronomy: XXXII: 35, Proverbs XXV: 21, and Ecclesiastes XII: 14.

[6]Broude, "Revenge and Revenge Tragedy in Renaissance England," pp. 47-48.

[7]Ronald Broude, "Four Forms of Vengeance in Titus Andronicus," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 78 (1979), p. 500.

[8]Bowers, pp. 37-40, and Broude, "Four Forms of Vengeance in Titus Andronicus," p. 499.

[9]Francis Bacon, "Of Revenge" in The Works of Francis Bacon, ed. James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis, and Douglas Denon Heath, new ed. (London: , 1890), VI, pp. 384-385, quoted in Prosser, p. 20.

[10]William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet in The Riverside Shakespeare ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974), Chorus, 1. 3.

[11]According to Eland (p. 174, f. n. 18), the four overt references to Christianity in The Spanish Tragedy are: Hieronimo's "Vindicta mihi" soliloquy (III.xiii); Lorenzo makes Pedringano swear an oath on the cross of his sword hilt (II.i.87); Isabella insists Horatio is in Heaven and not in the pagan underworld (III.viii.17-21); and Hieronimo mentions the saints in heaven (IV.i.33). One other obvious Christian reference overlooked by Eland is Hieronimo's allusion to "the fall of Babylon" (IV.i.195-196).

[12]Bowers, passim.

[13]Hunter, "Shakespeare's Earliest Tragedies: Titus Andronicus and Romeo and Juliet," passim.

[14]John D. Ratliff, "Hieronimo Explains Himself," Studies in Philology, LIV (1957), p. 118.

[15]Einer Jensen, "Kyd's Spanish Tragedy: The Play Explains Itself," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, (1966), p. 16, and Ernst de Chickera, "Divine Justice and Private Revenge in The Spanish Tragedy," Modern Language Review, LVII (1962), p. 232. In contrast to this opinion, John Scott Colley in "The Spanish Tragedy and the Theatre of God's Judgements," Papers on Language and Literature, 10 (1974), contends that it does not really matter what Andrea and Revenge say about Hieronimo at the play's conclusion because theirs is not the final word on justice. As Colley says, "the smug certainty of Revenge is the final irony in a play replete with ironies" (p. 248). Colley's view of Hieronimo is similar to that of Prosser because he says "Hieronimo represents to Kyd's audience a spectacle of despair and wrong action" (p. 251).

[16]See Frank Ardolino, "Veritas Filia Temporis," Studies in Iconography, 3 (1977), pp. 57-69, and Ronald Broude, "Time, Truth, and Right in The Spanish Tragedy," Studies in Philology, 68 (1971), pp. 130-145.

[17]S. F. Johnson, "The Spanish Tragedy, or Babylon Revisited," Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1962), pp. 23-36.

[18]Although Johnson's essay raises many interesting points, I do not find it very convincing. Had Kyd really wanted to depict Spain as Babylon he would certainly have made Spain's king and the Duke of Castile representative of the corruption in the court. But in my reading of the text, both characters are honest and generally good-natured, and have a warm regard for Hieronimo.

[19]Johnson, p. 31, and Baker, p. 215.

[20]Edwards, p. 1v.

[21]Edwards, 1v, and John Kerrigan, "Hieronimo, Hamlet and Remembrance," Essays in Criticism, 31 (1981), pp. 105-126.

[22]John Scott Colley, "The Spanish Tragedy and the Theatre of God's Judgements," Papers on Language and Literature, 10 (1974), p. 249.

[23]See Wineke, p. 74, and de Chickera, p. 230.

[24]Bacon, "Of Revenge" quoted in Prosser, p. 20.

[25]For an interesting discussion of the symbolic importance of Horatio's blood-stained handkerchief, see Kerrigan's article, especially p. 107.

[26]Ronald Broude in "Time, Truth and Right in The Spanish Tragedy" sees this speech by Isabella as the key to understanding the play.

[27]See also Proverbs: XXIX: 6.

[28]Whether or not Hieronimo is insane at this point in the play is a matter of contention amongst scholars. I feel that throughout the play Kyd gives every indication that Hieronimo has been going mad and there is no reason to believe that the knight marshal has suddenly regained his mental faculties in this scene.

[29]Edwards, f. n. to IV.i.195, and Johnson, passim.

[30]For the Scriptural passages Kyd may have had in mind when composing these lines, see the prophetic description of the fall of Babylon in Revelations: XVIII, Isaiah: XIII and Jeremiah: LI

[31]I am indebted to Dr. Douglas Duncan for providing me with this suggestion.

[32]Altman, p. 279.

[33]Broude, "Four Forms of Vengeance in Titus Andronicus," p. 495.

[34]For example, see IV.i.92-94 and IV.iii.32-34.

[35]Broude, "Four Forms of Vengeance in Titus Andronicus," p. 495.

[36]R. F. Hill, p. 63.

[37]Broude, "Four Forms of Vengeance in Titus Andronicus," p. 495.

CHAPTER 3

THE REVENGER'S MADNESS

i) Madness and the Revenge Play

The revenger's madness has long been recognized as one of the major dramatic conventions of revenge tragedy. For many years, two distinct attitudes concerning this subject have dominated literary scholarship. Many critics have accepted Bowers' view that madness was a feature of Senecan drama which Kyd adapted for the Elizabethan stage. According to this view, those playwrights who followed the Kydian formula when composing their own revenge tragedies such as Shakespeare and Webster also included the mad revenger in their plays. Earlier in this century, G. B. Harrison expressed his opinion that all revenge plays necessarily include mad characters. In his criticism of Hamlet, he remarks of Ophelia: "let the poor girl go mad; we always have a mad scene in a Revenge Play."[1]

The other view of the revenger's madness which still has many supporters today is that the Elizabethans enjoyed watching mad characters on stage, and the playwrights tried to oblige them as much as possible. In a rather dated article, Louis B. Wright remarks that the rantings of the mad revenger amused the groundlings and boorish audiences of Elizabethan England.[2] "To an Elizabethan," says Wright, "the antics of the madmen furnished comic entertainment" (p. 51). Also, he adds that the mad scenes in Elizabethan and

Jacobean plays were "mere variety show amusements, inserted to please an audience that sought entertainment, not 'art'" (p. 54).

But in spite of Wright's assertions, I find it difficult to believe that the audiences of The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus could have found Hieronimo and Titus to be funny. The portrayal of these characters evokes pity, not laughter, and several scenes in both plays suggest that Kyd and Shakespeare tried to create an atmosphere of pathos in their respective plays. In my opinion, the revenger's madness is intimately tied up with his vision of society. Both Hieronimo and Titus initially see their societies as embodying the values of justice and virtue. However, neither character is prepared to face injustice on such a grand scale, and when their children are assaulted Hieronimo and Titus re-evaluate their views of society.

Following the murder of Horatio and the rape and mutilation of Lavinia, Hieronimo and Titus experience an enormous amount of grief. In Renaissance England, it was believed that madness resulted from an inordinate amount of passion, and excessive grief over the loss of a son or daughter was seen as a prime cause of insanity. In fact, Lucius' son remarks in Titus Andronicus that he has heard that "Extremity of griefs would make men mad" (IV.i.19). Nevertheless, excessive grief by itself does not explain how an essentially good and just man can be transformed into a murderous lunatic. When Hieronimo and Titus realize that their sovereigns do not intend to redress their wrongs, when they discover that their idealized visions of society are false, both characters swear that they will have revenge. This desire for revenge becomes an all-absorbing passion, and when Hieronimo and Titus begin to contemplate revenge they also begin their

gradual descent into madness. The link between the revenger's obsessive concern with justice and his mental deterioration is in evidence in both The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus because most of the "mad scenes" in these two plays also deal with the issue of justice.

In the remainder of this chapter I do not intend to point out every example of the protagonists' madness, nor do I think such a discussion would be of much value. However, I believe that certain scenes in the plays are of great importance because they illustrate that Hieronimo's and Titus' unrelenting search for justice is what ultimately drives them insane. Unable to find justice on earth, both Hieronimo and Titus impose their own visions of justice on their respective societies.

ii) Hieronimo is Mad Again

For much of the time Hieronimo is on stage in The Spanish Tragedy he is either mad or showing signs of going mad. In fact, the alternate title to Kyd's play as indicated by the title page to the 1615 edition of the text is Hieronimo is Mad Again (see Appendix A). The knight marshal's mental deterioration begins almost immediately after he discovers that his son has been brutally murdered. When Hieronimo finds his dead son in his garden, he is understandably grieved and outraged by this discovery. But what is odd about Hieronimo's behaviour in this scene is that he keeps Horatio's blood-stained handkerchief to remind him of his vow to seek vengeance. More importantly, though, Hieronimo says he will not bury his son's corpse until his revenge is complete. Even at this early stage in the play, Hieronimo displays noticeable signs that he is in danger of lapsing into madness.

Although Hieronimo is overwhelmed by grief, he still retains the capacity to reason in Acts Two and Three. However, he periodically suffers extreme fits of madness which recurr whenever he remembers the unrevenged death of his son. In Act Three, there are two scenes in particular which show that Hieronimo's grief is greatly increased by his inability to obtain justice. In a soliloquy in Act Three, Scene Two, Hieronimo rages against the heavens and wonders why Horatio's murderers have been allowed to go unpunished. The knight marshal is obviously distraught in this scene, but when a letter identifying his son's murderers falls from above Hieronimo has enough sense to delve into this mystery rather than act rashly against Lorenzo and Balthazar. A few scenes later, following Pedringano's execution, Hieronimo again questions whether or not the heavens hear his pleas for justice. According to Hieronimo, his "tortur'd soul" is still tormented "With broken sighs and restless passions" (III.vii.10-11), and yet all his solicitations to the heavens for justice have come to nothing. Hieronimo is not insane in these two scenes, but it is clear that the lack of progress in his quest for revenge has definitely exerted a tremendous mental strain upon him.

Kyd contrasts Hieronimo's mental deterioration in the play with Isabella's condition. Although Hieronimo has been able to retain his mental faculties during his quest for revenge, Isabella has not. In fact, she only appears in the play in two other scenes after she and Hieronimo discover Horatio's body in the garden, and in both these scenes she is incontestably mad. After she and her husband bear Horatio's body off the stage, Isabella does not re-appear until an entire act later. When we finally see her again she "runs lunatic" across the stage (III.viii.5 o.s.d.),

asking her nurse where is Horatio. There is no subtlety in Kyd's portrayal of Isabella, and he spends practically no effort in making her madness seem convincing. The dramatic importance of Isabella's madness is that it prefigures what will happen to Hieronimo. Like Hieronimo, Isabella has also sought justice and trusted that the heavens would avenge Horatio's death. But when it appears to her that heaven will not intervene on her behalf, Isabella despairs of ever finding justice. Her desperation becomes an extreme form of madness, and in her demented condition she violently attacks the garden in which Horatio was found before ultimately committing suicide.

Unquestionably, the most important "mad scene" in The Spanish Tragedy--save perhaps the conclusion--is the scene in which Hieronimo endeavors to plead for justice with the king. In this scene, Hieronimo enters on stage carrying a poniard in one hand and a rope in the other. He is obviously contemplating suicide and he rambles on about appealing to some infernal judge for justice. The ambivalence in Hieronimo's soliloquy shows the effect his quest for justice has had on him for he wonders whether it is better to kill himself and appeal to the judges of the pagan underworld for justice or whether he should ask the king to hear his case. Hieronimo's reason eventually prevails, and he decides to voice his grievances to the king.

But Lorenzo prevents Hieronimo from approaching the king, and the knight marshal, seeing his sovereign occupied with the affairs of state, decides to bide his time before making a full explanation. Yet Hieronimo never does get the opportunity to plead his case before the king. Hearing Horatio's name mentioned by the Portuguese ambassador, Hieronimo breaks out in an uncontrollable fit of madness. He demands that the king grant him

justice, but his insanity prohibits him from explaining his grievance to the king in a comprehensible manner. Consequently, the king asks that Hieronimo be restrained, but before anyone can do so the knight marshal storms out of the court, vowing that he will be avenged.

There is one final "mad scene" in the play that is worth mention because it also illustrates that Hieronimo's madness is inextricably linked with his quest for revenge. In his official capacity of knight marshal, Hieronimo listens patiently to several men as they tell of the injustices they have suffered. But whereas the first three citizens complain of relatively minor matters, the fourth citizen, Bazulto, explains that his son has been murdered. Hieronimo immediately perceives the similarity between Bazulto's case and his own, and he is reminded once again that he has yet to avenge his son's death. Hieronimo's madness takes hold of him, and he tears up the citizens' legal documents with his teeth, imagining them to be the limbs of his enemies.

In the play's conclusion Hieronimo appears to have recovered his wits for he is no longer ranting and raving on stage. Also, his ingenious scheme to slay Lorenzo and Balthazar during the Soliman and Perseda play shows that, unlike Isabella in her final stages of madness, Hieronimo still seems in control of himself. However, there can be no doubt that Hieronimo is insane during the last act. He has become obsessed with the idea of revenge to the point where nothing else concerns him, and he is prepared to kill Lorenzo and Balthazar by whatever means possible. Bowers is quite correct in his assessment of Hieronimo when he remarks that his actions in the final scene "are those of an insane person holding himself so rigidly in check that his madness is not visible" (p. 79). Hieronimo's desire for

revenge has so transformed his character that he bears little resemblance to the noble and just knight marshal of the first act.

What has ultimately driven Hieronimo mad is his refusal to accept that the world in which he lives is imperfect, and that in such a world virtuous individuals frequently suffer while the wicked escape retribution. Hieronimo pleads to the heavens to intervene on his behalf, but when he does not perceive that a divine judgement is forthcoming he despairs and goes mad. As Hallett observes, "Hieronimo is maddened by the seeming failure of one system, the divine, to correct the failure of the other, human law" (p. 24). Further evidence of Hieronimo's insanity is provided in this final scene when Hieronimo equates his will with that of God's (see above, p. 85). Like Hamlet, Hieronimo sees himself as God's "scourge and minister" who must fulfill his role by slaying Lorenzo and Balthazar.

While Elizabethan audiences obviously enjoyed the various mad scenes in The Spanish Tragedy, it is evident that Kyd did not include the mad revenger in his play merely to entertain the groundlings. The revenger's madness is an integral feature in Kyd's examination of the theme of justice. So long as the protagonist retains his sanity, so long as he understands the moral implications of seeking a private revenge, he cannot slay his enemies in cold blood. Hieronimo is too just a man to kill Lorenzo and Balthazar, and he proceeds against them within a legal framework. But the king's disinterest in the affair causes Hieronimo to renounce earthly justice, and seek a private revenge. Hieronimo is only able to act--that is, he is only able to kill--when he no longer recognizes that revenge is a moral issue. As Hieronimo buries his dagger deep into Lorenzo's side, nothing can be further from his distracted mind than the Biblical injunction against revenge

which, ironically, he had alluded to only a few scenes earlier. Through Hieronimo's madness, Kyd re-affirms the orthodox view that the insatiable craving for revenge ultimately leads to the destruction of the avenger's mind, body and soul. However, Kyd presents this view in such a way that we never lose sympathy for Hieronimo. His suffering is totally undeserved, and although his actions in the final scene cannot be condoned, they can at least be understood as the tragic consequences of a grief-stricken father driven mad by the murder of his beloved and only son.

iii) Titus' Mad Pursuit of Justice

Like Kyd, Shakespeare also included several important "mad scenes" in Titus Andronicus which clearly link the protagonist's search for justice with his mental decline. During the first three acts of the play, Titus' family is virtually decimated as the vindictive Goths relentlessly seek to injure the Andronici. The murder of Bassianus, the rape and mutilation of Lavinia and the unjust executions of Martius and Quintus are more than Titus can bear. Consequently, he loses his sanity, and embarks on a mad quest for Astraea, the pagan goddess of justice.

The first indication that Titus' grief has adversely affected his mind is provided in Act Three, Scene One. Martius and Quintus have been unjustly condemned for the murder of Bassianus and Titus pleads in vain for their release. After the Roman tribunes and judges pass over the stage without acknowledging Titus' request, Marcus enters and brings Lavinia to her father. Titus is overwhelmed by the sight of his mutilated daughter, and he remarks that he can barely stand to see her in such a state. In fact, Titus himself comments that seeing Lavinia with her hands amputated causes

him much mental anguish:

> Had I but seen thy picture in this plight
> It would have madded me: what shall I do
> Now I behold thy lively body so? (III.i.103-105)

Throughout the remainder of this scene Titus does little more than deliver lengthy rhetorical speeches recalling all that he and his family have suffered. That these injuries are threatening to drive Titus insane is made clear when Marcus cautions his brother against grieving excessively, and counsels him to control his lamentations:

> Marc: O brother, speak with possibility,
> And do not break into these deep extremes.
> Tit: Is not my sorrows deep, having no bottom?
> Then be my passions bottomless with them.
> Marc: But yet let reason govern thy lament.
> Tit: If there were reason for these miseries,
> Then into limits could I bind my woes. (III.i.214-220)

In this dialogue Titus provides the key to understanding his madness. He says that he sees no reason why these miseries should befall his family, and there is apparently no end to his suffering. A few moments after Marcus has advised his brother to control his grief, a messenger enters carrying the heads of Titus' two sons and Titus' amputated hand which he sent to the emperor as ransom for the lives of his boys. The visual impact of this scene is over-powering for Shakespeare piles horrors upon horrors until the audience is sure that Titus' mind is about to snap--and in fact, this is precisely what happens. Titus breaks out into mad laughter, and he vows that from this point on he will seek revenge. Like Hieronimo, Titus has come to the realization that words alone will not satisfy his desire for revenge. If he is to have justice then he will have to seek it actively.

In the very next scene Titus is unquestionably insane as he, Marcus, Lavinia and Lucius' son partake of a banquet.[3] Titus has once again reverted

to rhetoric as a means of soothing his tortured soul, and as he laments his predicament Marcus strikes at a fly with his knife. Titus is horrified by his brother's actions, and he calls Marcus a "murderer" who has committed "A deed of death...on the innocent" (III.ii.56). Titus sees the fly's fate as comparable to that of his sons, and he expresses concern that the insect's "father and mother" might be grieved by its loss (l. 60). Also, he claims that the "Poor harmless fly" came to the banquet to make them merry with its "pretty buzzing melody" (ll. 63-65). Titus' response to the killing of an insect is absurd to say the least, and depending how the scene is acted it can either produce a great deal of sympathy or hoots of laughter. But the thematic importance of this scene is that Titus' view of the world has been so distorted by his grief that even the killing of a fly seems to him an act of injustice. Marcus is ultimately able to placate his brother by claiming that he killed the fly because it was black like Aaron (l. 67). Titus then praises Marcus for this "charitable deed," and seizing the knife himself he carves up the insect's body as though it really were the body of the Moor.

The "arrow-shooting scene" in Act Four, Scene Three associates Titus' lunacy with his quest for justice. Titus sees the quest for justice as a physical search for the goddess Astraea, and he orders his relatives to comb the earth for her. If she is not found, then they must search the underworld and ask Pluto's assistance in their quest. Again, Titus' madness is extreme for he even imagines that Astraea might have been captured by Saturninus and shipped away from Rome in a man-of-war (ll. 22-23). Furthermore, Titus and his relatives shoot arrows with letters attached to them soliciting the gods for aid. When the clown enters a few moments after the Andronici let fly

their arrows, Titus imagines that the clown is a divine messenger sent by Jupiter in response to his supplications for justice. Titus' mistaken notion that the clown has been sent by the gods to aid him in his quest for justice is similar to Hieronimo's belief that the heavens sanction his revenge. Although both revengers feel they have divine support for their respective quests for revenge, it is obvious that Hieronimo and Titus are both mad when they arrive at these conclusions, and hence they are ultimately deluding themselves.

As with Hieronimo, Titus appears to possess some capacity to reason in the play's final scenes. Indeed, when Tamora and her sons come to his house dressed as Revenge and her ministers Titus sees right through their disguises. Titus also says in an aside to the audience that he is not mad, and this assertion poses somewhat of a problem. His words suggest that he is sane in this scene, and yet Titus illustrates moments later in this same scene that he is capable of the most brutal acts imaginable. After Tamora departs, leaving her sons in Titus' custody, he orders his relatives to bind and gag them and then proceeds to slit their throats in full view of the audience. Moreover, he explains how he intends to dismember their bodies and bake them in a pie. While Titus may appear sane in this scene, his plan to feed Tamora her own children betrays these appearances, showing him to be a madman bent on torturing his enemies.

The banquet scene also poses somewhat of a problem concerning Titus' madness. Titus asks the emperor if it were right for Virginius to kill his daughter after she was ravished. When Saturninus says that it was, Titus fatally stabs his own daughter. The text does not reveal whether or not Lavinia suspects that her father plans to kill her in this scene, and she

is obviously silent just before Titus stabs her. But in a 1985 made-for-television version of Titus Andronicus produced by the British Broadcasting Corporation, Lavinia willingly offers herself up as a sacrifice and even furnishes her father with the knife with which to kill her. Such an interpretation of this scene suggests that Titus understands what he is doing when he kills his daughter. However, if the scene were played with Titus unexpectedly lunging at his daughter with a knife it would re-inforce the idea that he is insane and therefore make the conclusion more plausible. Lavinia's death should be viewed as a direct consequence of Titus' madness, and according to Hallett in almost all revenge tragedies at least one innocent victim is killed during the revenger's mad pursuit of revenge.[4] In The Spanish Tragedy, Hieronimo slays Castile in a passionate outburst of violence following the play-within-the-play; Hamlet kills Polonius while he is eavesdropping behind the arras; and in Titus Andronicus, Lavinia dies so that her "shame" and her father's sorrow might die with her (V.iii. 46-47).

Following Lavinia's death, Titus fatally stabs Tamora, thereby fulfilling his vow to take revenge against the Goths. But unlike Hieronimo, Titus does not get the opportunity to deliver a final speech for he is immediately slain by Saturninus. In my view, this final scene in which the characters mechanically stab one another provides an unsatisfying conclusion to Titus' quest for justice. After suffering greatly at the hands of the Goths, he is not even granted the opportunity to defend his actions and it is left to Marcus and Lucius to relate what has transpired to the Roman citizens.

Both Kyd and Shakespeare associate the revenger's madness with his

quest for justice in their respective plays. In The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus, the revenger is initially a loyal subject who respects the authority of his sovereign. But when Hieronimo and Titus are wronged and their impassioned pleas for justice go unanswered, they decide to remedy their ills through a private and extra-legal revenge. Such methods of achieving retribution were explicitly condemned by Church and State in Elizabethan England, and Kyd and Shakespeare ultimately re-assert this orthodox view in their respective plays because they illustrate that once the individual puts himself above the law, once he succumbs to the passion for revenge, he embarks on a destructive path that will ultimately lead him to madness and death.

CHAPTER 3: NOTES

[1]G. B. Harrison, Shakespeare's Tragedies, cited in Hallett, p. 61.

[2]Louis B. Wright, "Madmen as Vaudeville Performers on the Elizabethan Stage," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 30 (1931), pp. 48-54.

[3]According to Maxwell (footnote to III.ii), there is some evidence to suggest that this scene is a later addition to the original text. However, he also observes that the evidence is far from conclusive, and therefore I have chosen to discuss the scene as though it were Shakespeare's.

[4]Hallett, passim.

CONCLUSION

For many years, The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus had been dismissed as bloody and violent plays that were written to appeal to the Philistine tastes of their audiences. Although scholars have always recognized the historical importance of these two plays in the development of English drama, The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus have only recently begun to garner some praise for their value as literature. Nevertheless, this critical re-evaluation of the plays cannot change the fact that they are rudimentary plays with obvious flaws. Indeed, Kyd's bombastic style can seem rather embarrassing to a modern audience, and Shakespeare's bloody scenes in Titus Andronicus do not look as though they were composed by England's greatest dramatist. While it is now generally accepted that this play is entirely or partially Shakespeare's, Titus Andronicus is--and probably will always remain--the least respected of his tragedies.

The recent revival of interest in these early Elizabethan revenge plays suggests that, in spite of their apparent flaws, The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus possess some artistic merit. Both Kyd and Shakespeare examine the enduring theme of justice in their respective plays, and both playwrights raise some interesting questions about crime and punishment. I suspect that Hieronimo and Titus were so beloved by their audiences be-

cause they epitomize the virtuous man's struggle to be heard in a corrupt and unjust society. In many respects, the revenger in revenge tragedy is Everyman on a quest for justice.

Through Kyd's and Shakespeare's use of natural imagery, it is implied that Hieronimo and Titus perceive the world in much the same way as the Elizabethans did. They view nature as benevolent, and believe that justice is an absolute value. But when their children are savagely assaulted in a natural setting and their pleas for justice are ignored by the temporal authorities, Hieronimo and Titus begin to see their societies in a different light. To Hieronimo as well as Titus, the world has become a "wilderness of tigers" in which everyone must fight tooth-and-claw to survive. The revengers ultimately discover that power--not justice--is that which governs the affairs of men, and this bitter realization inevitably drives them mad. Both characters struggle to retain their idealized visions of the world but to no avail. They desperately search for justice on earth, but Astraea has fled the world never to return. Hieronimo and Titus conclude that if they want to punish the wicked for their crimes, then they must abandon their futile endeavours to find earthly justice, and instead they must resort to acts of violence and brutality.

So long as there are individuals in this world that crave justice, The Spanish Tragedy and Titus Andronicus will have relevance to audiences and readers alike. These two revenge tragedies are compelling stories in which basically good men are engulfed and swept away by the evil tides of society. In both plays, Kyd and Shakespeare pose that timeless question: how is the just man to act in an unjust society? It is a question which the Elizabethans could not answer definitively, and it is a question with

which the twentieth century continues to struggle.

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APPENDIX A

The Spanish Tragedie:

OR,

Hieronimo is mad againe.

Containing the lamentable end of *Don Horatio*, and *Belimperia*; with the pittifull death of *Hieronimo*.

Newly corrected, amended, and enlarged with new Additions of the *Painters* part, and others, as it hath of late been diuers times acted.

LONDON,
Printed by W. White, for I. White and T. Langley, and are to be sold at their Shop ouer against the Sarazens head without New-gate. 1615.

Title page of the 1615 edition

Above is a reprint of the title page of the 1615 edition of Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy (taken from Edward's edition of the text). The composite sketch in the center of the page shows Bel-imperia calling for help, and also depicts Hieronimo discovering his dead son hanging from a bower in his garden.

APPENDIX B

The subject of this picture taken from Turberville's The Noble Art of Venery (1575) is a royal hunt in progress. Note that Queen Elizabeth is participating in the hunt alongside the nobility. Shakespeare obviously had such a scene in mind when composing Titus Andronicus for Titus invites the emperor "To hunt the panther and the hart with me/ With horn and hound..." (I.i.493-4).

APPENDIX C

The famous "Peacham drawing" is the earliest known illustration depicting a scene from one of Shakespeare's plays. The sketch is probably a somewhat confused rendering of the first act of Titus Andronicus in which Tamora pleads with Titus to spare one son, not two as is illustrated in this sketch. But it is also possible that the drawing is a composite sketch of the play: that is, a sketch which depicts several distinct scenes from Titus Andronicus. The two central figures are obviously Titus and Tamora and it is clear that Tamora is pleading for mercy as she does in the first act. But the picture of Aaron brandishing the sword on the far right could be an illustration of the scene in which the Moor helps Titus to cut off his hand. The two characters kneeling in the background with their hands bound might be Chiron and Demetrius just before Titus slits their throats in Act Five.