

“Here is a thing too young for such
a place”: Innocence in “Pericles”

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I

IN SHAKESPEARE'S plays the corrupt often confuse innocence with stupidity. Swayed by their reductive view of human nature (innocent and simplistic itself) these confident, pragmatic observers of human behaviour cannot acknowledge the possibility that any sensible person can (or should) act beyond his or her immediate self-interest. Such a stance helps to explain why Shakespeare's evil-doers are so sure of their intellectual superiority over their innocent victims, so certain that their interpretation of the world exposes its essential, shabby truth. In Dionyza's jeering tone in *Pericles*, for instance, as she lords it over her ineffectual husband, can be heard echoes of many of Shakespeare's antagonists to virtue, ranging from the maledictions of Richard III to the urbane mockery of Antonio and Sebastian in *The Tempest*. And what, among other things, these scoffers have in common — what Dionyza parades most contemptuously — is a confirmed aversion to the idea that some kind of beneficent supernatural power is at work in the world's affairs. With Iago they believe that it is in themselves that the innocent are thus or the wily thus. And Dionyza is at her most sardonic when she equates Creon's moral compunctions with mere superstition:

Be one of those that thinks
The petty wrens of Tharsus will fly hence
And open this to Pericles. (IV.iii.21-23)¹

Dionyza of course speaks here truer than she knows. In a romance like *Pericles* the “petty wrens” could well be the ro-

mancer's agents of fatal disclosure. Equally unwittingly, Dionyza's contemptuous injunction betrays the appalling innocence of the morally infantile. Her supercilious view of what she considers to be a pathetic example of moral credulity is like the naiveté of Lady Macbeth who believes her husband's horror at the murder of Duncan to be regressive and unmanly. Lady Macbeth deplores Macbeth's scruples as childishly frivolous, the product of cowardice or an unhinged fancy; but when she at last realizes fully what Macbeth has fully realized all along, the revelation drives her mad. In *Pericles* Dionyza remains steadfast in her determination to do away with Marina despite her having infinitely less reason to murder her daughter's closest friend than even Macbeth has to murder his guest, kinsman and king; and if we were to take Dionyza as seriously as she takes herself then she might well be considered more truly "fiend-like" than the woman so famously described by Malcolm. Just *how* seriously, though, are we meant to respond to Dionyza's operatically villainous pursuit of the unspeakable? Many critics think it preposterous to take Dionyza any more seriously than the fabulous ogres of fairy-tale. They argue that Dionyza's naiveté in her murderous intentions towards Marina, along with the states of consciousness of many of the play's other characters, cannot be profitably discussed in terms other than those of mere baffled acknowledgement — the equivalent of the unbaffled acknowledgement we give to the Dionyzas of macabre fairy tales. Philip Edwards, for one, takes this position: "The good are good and the bad are bad. Changes of moral state (Dionyza, Lysimachus, Boult) are as uncomplicated and unconvincing as the moral states themselves."²

Although we may agree that Dionyza's moral state is uncomplicated, it does not seem to me to be at all unconvincing, and it may even be slightly more opaque than Edwards would allow. Indeed, I would argue that it is vital for us in *Pericles* to respond as fully as possible to the moral inadequacy of Dionyza's innocent view of affairs especially as it occurs in Shakespeare's section of the play — the last three acts — where it is rendered with all the vigour of the mature artist writing at his most persuasive. We need to respond, that is, to the casual horror of her encouragement of Leonine, "'Tis but a blow, which never shall be known"

(IV.i.2), or to the even more inappropriate encouragement of "but be / A soldier to thy purpose" (IV.i.7-8). The absurdity (and unpleasantness) of this particular injunction — coupled with Dionyza's cruel joke about Marina's virtue — "The fitter then the gods should have her" (IV.i.10) — is underscored by Marina's entrance at this point (as the Stage Direction makes graphic): "*Enter Marina, with a basket of flowers.*" This is not the first time in the play that one kind of innocence has confronted another. Shakespeare seems to have taken the hint for a series of encounters between the two different kinds of unawareness³ from whoever wrote the play's opening scene where an innocent Pericles confronts the grotesque naiveté of the incestuous relationship between Antiochus and his unnamed daughter. It may be that the relationship strikes the spectator as naive rather than simply unpleasant (though it is that too) because the author of this opening scene has failed to raise the level of the writing above the rapidly melodramatic. At all events, it is hard to repress our incredulity when Antiochus' daughter (whose incestuous union with her father has already been the subject of Gower's moral outrage) indicates that Pericles has captured her heart: "Of all 'sayed yet, mayst thou prove prosperous! / Of all 'sayed yet, I wish thee happiness!" (I.ii.60-61). Equally infantile and even more monstrous is Antiochus' justification for dispatching Pericles: "For by his fall my honor must keep high" (I.i.150).

The falsely innocent appearance of Antiochus' daughter — "apparelled like the spring" (I.i.13) in Pericles' infatuated words — and her corrupt childish mind prefigure Dionyza's "angel's face" (IV.iii.47) hiding her naive, false heart. Like Lady Macbeth Dionyza pours scorn on her husband's human kindness, such as it is. The brief scene in which she does so — Act IV, Scene iii — is particularly telling because there's really no need for us to return to Tarsus except to experience once more, and even more chillingly, the distance between Dionyza and the rest of humanity, here represented by her unremarkable husband, Cleon. Not unexpectedly she has immense contempt for Cleon's stricken conscience, which she perversely interprets as betraying a lack of natural affection on his part for their daughter, Philoten, who,

because of Marina, was "held a mawkin, / Not worth the time of day" (IV.iii.34-35). As a consequence she can only regard the murder of Marina in monstrously innocent fashion "as an enterprise of kindness / Performed to your sole daughter" (IV.iii.38-39). She dismisses Cleon's scruples in the same superior way that Lady Macbeth had dismissed Macbeth's. "Why are you foolish? Can it be undone?" (IV.iii.1) she asks — as Lady Macbeth had asked — and, like her also, accuses her husband of being childish: "I think you'll turn child again" (IV.iii.4). She is particularly scornful of a possible claim to innocence on his part:

Who can cross it?
 Unless you play the pious innocent
 And for an honest attribute cry out
 "She died by foul play." (IV.iii.17-19)

More in keeping perhaps with Dionyza's disconcerting sense of values is the 1609 quarto reading of the second line, "Unless you play the impious innocent," which Philip Edwards restores in his New Penguin edition of the play describing it as a "bold oxymoron."⁴ I doubt whether "pious" should be "impious" considering the awkwardness then of "honest attribute" in the line that follows, but it's certainly not out of character for someone who regards the murder of Marina as an "enterprise of kindness" to think contrition a sacrilegious response to it.

II

Opposed to the impious innocence of Dionyza's views is its educated counterpart (educated morally, that is) embodied in Marina, the victim of Dionyza's wickedly infantile pieties. Like the other four romance heroines (even Miranda), she owes something in her make-up to her counterparts in the earlier romantic comedies, although none of the romance heroines has quite her predecessors' remarkable ease of manner, especially in erotic matters. What Marina lacks in conservatory sophistication she makes up for in militancy: her chastity has iron in it, forged no doubt in the production of Shakespeare's tragic heroines whose plays follow and shatter the bright dream of the world as we would like it.⁵ With the partial exception of her mother and Cerimon,

there is no-one else like Marina in the play, and, although there has been some controversy over the interpretation of Pericles as heroic sufferer, it seems to me to be undeniable that his innocence has little of the energy of his daughter's in both the non-Shakespearean and Shakespearean sections of the play. In this Pericles also resembles (in even more muted fashion) the heroes of Shakespeare's romantic comedies who often seem flat-footed in the adroit presences of the women with whom they are romantically entangled.

Marina's first words bely the pathos of her flowery, tear-stained entrance: "No, I will rob Tellus of her weed, / To strow thy green with flowers" (IV.i.14-15). Has someone (Dionya perhaps) told her not to pick flowers for Lychorida's grave? Or is it simply that Shakespeare wants Marina's opening lines to convey immediately (though mysteriously) the defiant resolution that invariably stiffens her tender feelings? Vehement (the *in medias* "No" suggests the press of impassioned argument), belligerent and active, Marina in her metaphor transforms an archetypally innocent act into an aggressive one as she strips the Roman goddess of her flowery dress to bedeck her nurse's grave. And in the ensuing dialogue between Marina and Dionya's hired murder, Leonine, Shakespeare continues to balance tender sentiment with youthful bravado in everything Marina says. She obsessively reverts to her stormy birth, expatiating on the heroic exploits of her father "galling / His kingly hands haling ropes" (IV.i.54-55). Marina's ecstatic admiration for the notion of royalty galled, of a prince buckling to it in egalitarian confusion, anticipates our own admiration for her later capacity to withstand vulgar siege. What she most relishes in the story of her father (a detail new to us, incidentally) springs from a vital instinct for participation, a form of *noblesse oblige* that the romances encourage.

Marina's militancy sits well with her fundamental innocence and occasional naiveté: we never feel that the two conditions constitute awkward incompatibilities. In this she resembles a host of Shakespeare heroines but the one most immediate to her is her mother Thaisa, though she is frequently overlooked in critical discussion perhaps because she appears mainly in the first two acts of *Pericles*, those clearly not written by Shakespeare. Some-

thing of the same resilience of spirit, however, grounded in a similarly constituted moral sense, can be perceived in the way in which Thaisa woos Pericles — in pale imitation perhaps of the self-assurance of those predecessors in the romantic comedies I have already mentioned. In *The Winter's Tale* Shakespeare conveys the sophisticated warmth of Perdita's mother, Hermione, in similar (though far more dazzling) fashion: both daughters come from mothers whose cheerful and sinless sensuality (to use S. L. Bethell's fine phrase)⁶ has something of the same effect on putative lover and husband that Marina has on Philoten: they become mawkins, viciously so in Leontes' case, in contrast to the insouciant women. Pericles' dealings with Thaisa and her father, Simonides, in the last scenes of the second act, could not be more remote from his previous unpleasant experience with Antiochus and his daughter. We are obviously intended to see the relationship between father and daughter in Pentapolis as a paradigm of the healthy devotion that Pericles imagined to exist between the play's first father and daughter in Antioch.

In other words, however perfunctorily handled, there seems to have been some attempt in the first two acts of *Pericles* to contrast opposing kinds of innocent behaviour: the outspoken innocence of the truly sinless person, on the one hand, unafraid to acknowledge the promptings of a legitimate sensuality, and the perverted innocence of corrupt natures, on the other, whose persistent need for instant gratification marks them as chronic moral adolescents. What Shakespeare takes from these first two acts, then, to revitalize in his own manner in the last three, is not only the underlying notion that a truly innocent response to the world's dangers and enticements is a radical expression of the integrity of the self but also the equally modern-sounding notion that the most chilling manifestation of evil appears in characters who have no understanding of the enormity of their conduct.

III

One of the rules of reality that, in her radical innocence, Thaisa blithely breaks — one that Antiochus' daughter of all Shakespeare's daughters should have broken (if we may continue to

think of her as one of Shakespeare's daughters, seeing as she only appears in the first two acts) — is the one demanding filial obedience, in Shakespeare's earlier comedies a convention at first impossible to circumvent as the heroines of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It* and *Much Ado About Nothing* discover to their cost. Not for them the possibility of Beatrice's advice to Hero in *Much Ado* to "make another cursy, and say, 'Father, as it please me'" (*Much Ado*, 2.1.47-48): they must either obey their fathers or abandon home and civilization for a time as do the lovers in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Rosalind and Celia in *As You Like It*.⁷ Apart from the way in which Katherine treats her father (and everyone else) in *The Taming of the Shrew*, I cannot think of another Shakespeare daughter (to continue to think of her as such) who rules the roost in quite Thaisa's manner — with her father as a more than willing accomplice. Fortunately, his feelings for Pericles fall only a little short of hers: for both of them in everything he does Pericles belies the shabbiness of his trappings, pointing to an inner worth far superior to that revealed by the other knights competing for Thaisa's favour. Nothing could be more romantically conventional: in these situations the leaden casket always conceals the chooser's rich rewards. By their instinctive recognition of Pericles' innate nobility, Simonides and Thaisa put themselves on the side of the forces conspiring in romance to bring about — no matter how belatedly — the establishment of the just and healthy society.

In Shakespeare's section of the play, when Thaisa learns what has happened to Pericles — or rather what she thinks has happened to him — she retreats from the world's perurbations, unjoyously putting on a "vestal livery" (3.4.9). It's a signally strategic retreat: Shakespeare cannot afford to have another active woman competing with Marina for our admiration. But the play's design is sufficiently careful for us to see this particular withdrawal as one in a network of advances and retreats whose distribution tells us something vital about the quality of innocence needed to push back the forces of darkness. Howard Felperin perceives a connection between Thaisa's renunciation of the world and Pericles' increasing passivity in the face of its

hardships: both "withdraw from the pain and flux of the Earthly City into a decidedly medieval asceticism."⁸

Nothing could be less ascetic in contrast than Marina's uninhibited response to the pain and flux of the earthly city, even when that city may very well be one of the ancient world's earthliest — Mytilene. It is here that Marina undergoes the severest assaults on her innocence as the management of the brothel attempts to force her to become their star attraction. Wry intimations of their inevitable failure in dealing with what John Danby calls the "invincible virgin-mind"⁹ occur even before they encounter her. In a grimly comic conversation among the three Bawds, Pander complains that the brothel's reliance on its "pitifully sodden" (IV.ii.18) merchandise — so ravaged as to make their clients "roast meat for worms" (IV.ii.23) — offends his professional pride. What is needed to restore the brothel's credibility — they all agree — is new and healthy (and preferably virginal) blood, no matter what the cost. In this commercial context, Pander's glib use of the term "conscience" can only be viewed as a comic misappropriation; but a little later there seems to be something genuine in his fleeting concern for their standing *sub specie aeternitas*: "the sore terms we stand on with gods will be strong with us for giving o'er" (IV.ii.32-33). We might see in this admission some kind of comic, crippled yearning for the benefaction that Marina brings in her role as harbinger of the fresh new world. However mutated, Pander's is a dream of innocence.

In these scenes, where Marina's radical innocence triumphs, the play is extremely affecting — hilarious and moving in equal measure. Against all odds, Marina not only retains her virtue but has a profoundly disturbing effect upon the brothel's habitués who find themselves exposed for the first time to the power of evangelistic purity in the face of which their worldiness crumbles. A brief discussion between two unnamed customers that constitutes Act IV, Scene v, makes clear the devastation wreaked on the brothel's clientele. As Felperin points out, behind both rueful, half-comic acknowledgements of her power lies the myth of Prosperpine: "The underlying myth employed by Shakespeare is that

of a figure of innocence transported to a realm of darkness, where she eventually becomes its ruler."¹⁰

IV

One of the most astute essays on *Pericles*, "Heritage in *Pericles*" by Andrew Welsh, takes as its point of significant departure the fact that the play's plot is as old as the hills, and so popular as to be constantly retold in countless variations, in language after language.¹¹ Welsh observes that Shakespeare's use of Gower as a story-telling intermediary insistently draws our attention to the tale as something inherited from an ancient past, revived and made significant repeatedly by the writers of the day. The great age of the tale "is a conquest of devouring time by the human imagination" and we should be alive to its external, articulate seniority in our response to the form it finds in Shakespeare: "The meaning is found by bringing the external sense of the continuing tradition of the old tale into the play itself."¹² The continuing tradition of the old tale exploits a number of profound simplicities, not least that of an unchanging human nature: men as they always have been — to revert to the Bawd's fundamental understanding of her clients' hearts and minds. Yet the romances also reveal the extent to which human beings seem perennially to hunger for some kind of deifying experience, as though an essential constituent of their human nature were a yearning to transcend its only too humanly defining limitations: in *Pericles* "at a level deeper than the laughter . . . the idea of purification, the *possibility* of it in this climate of easy-going, casual sexual gratification."¹³

All four romances make much of the possibility of purification, of a renewal of innocence, latent in human nature, the heritage ultimately of God's gift of free will to mankind. When Gower says that the purchase of *Pericles* is to make men glorious we sense behind this proud boast not only a prediction about the revitalization of the play's characters and society but also the ancient claim for the power of art "to lead and draw us to as high a perfection, as our degenerate soules, made worse by theyr clayey lodgings, can be capable of."¹⁴ While it may not be pos-

sible to number Pericles among the play's degenerate souls we can hardly fail to notice the difference in the quality of his innocence from Marina's. The innocence that matters, Marina's, flourishes amid the bustle of the world's doings. From the play's beginning — however ineptly written those first two acts — Pericles fluctuates between rashness and a kind of stricken despair. When he discovers the incestuous relationship between father and daughter he shrinks into a melancholy prudence, convinced of his own helplessness in the courts of powerful kings: "Who has a book of all that monarchs do, / He's more secure to keep it shut than shown" (I.i.95-96). There is a hint of collusion in the alacrity with which he accepts his role as the blind mole thronged by man's oppression: prudent, cynical, defeated, he succumbs to what he conceives to be an immitigable Jovian authority whose power leaves him no choice but to become, like Antiochus' daughter, corruption's silent accessory. Intentional or not on the part of whoever wrote these opening scenes, his jingles on self-preservation expose his lack of dignity:

It is enough you know; and it is fit,
 What being more known grows worse, to smother it.
 All love the womb that their first being bred.
 Then give my tongue like leave to love my head. (I.i.106-09)

Howard Felperin goes so far as to see Pericles' response to the difficulties of his situation as a minor fall from grace and innocence: ". . . his recognition of the incest writ large in the riddle is presented as a kind of fall, if only from innocence into knowledge, and his play too will be concerned with redemption."¹⁵

Pericles' disturbing stoicism takes another form in the second act. Forced to flee from Tarsus, he puts to sea again only to be shipwrecked by the storm that is ubiquitous in these romances, destiny's agent for significant change — in this case, permitting Pericles to be washed ashore at Pentapolis to marry Thaisa. His response to nature's buffeting parallels his response to the savagery of human authority; no King Lear, he submits to the judgement of the elements:

Wind, rain, and thunder, remember earthly man
 Is but a substance that must yield to you;
 And I, as fits my nature, do obey you. (II.i.2-4)

Later, in Shakespeare's half of the play, after Thaisa's apparent death in a second storm, he voices again in plangent monosyllables his disturbing fatalism:

Could I rage and roar
As doth the sea she lies in, yet the end
Must be as 'tis. (III.iii.10-12)

As he says: "We cannot but obey / The powers above us" (III.iii.9-10), just as we cannot but obey those considerably less elevated. Despite the miraculousness of Pericles' first escape, he chooses to brood on his imminent death (as he imagines), close enough for him to refer to himself in the third person in yet another line of soporific monosyllables as though soul and body were already disjoined: "Here to have death in peace is all he'll crave" (II.i.111). Fortunately, his peace is rudely shattered by the arrival of the three fishermen whose robust good humour serves to make more obvious Pericles' insufficiency. Whoever constructed these opening scenes at least knew the value of such organic and discreet commentary.

It takes more than the miracle of his own survival, however, and more than the heartiness of the three fishermen, to reanimate Pericles. It takes, in fact, what he perceives as an impressively symbolic miracle — the fishing up of his father's armour, bequeathed to him on his father's death with the usual solemn injunctions about its superior efficacy. Pericles throws off his sluggishness only in response to this most obtrusive of interventions on the part of the guardian spirit of romance; and we can hardly fail to contrast the necessity for such a literal provision of armour — the miraculous armour of romance fiction — with the spiritual armour provided by her own strength of character on which Marina can only rely. No armour — spiritual or material — can help Pericles withstand the catastrophe of Marina's apparent death (despite his not having seen her for fourteen years) — an event so dire as to overwhelm the expression of human individuality itself, his capacity for speech, so that we never hear from his own lips the extent and degree of his suffering but witness it partially in expressive dumb-show: "*Pericles makes lamentation, puts on sack-cloth, and in mighty passion departs*" (IV.

iv.22 S.D.). When we next meet him "hirsute and atrabiliarian, upon the barge"¹⁶ he has retreated deep within himself, silent, comatose. Our sympathy for his sufferings should not obscure the sustained contrast between him and Marina — brought to a focus in the fifth act in their therapeutic confrontation. As Andrew Welsh argues, Pericles has throughout responded to his misfortunes in a perilously defeated manner and here "he has deliberately taken the extreme course of suicide; by inflicting upon himself a death of the spirit, he has isolated himself from further pain."¹⁷ Welsh's conclusion is that Pericles suffers from what the Middle Ages often thought to be the eighth cardinal sin: Tristitia, or a despairing, enervating sadness.

V

In *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale* great store is laid by the ability to know the world in all its deceptiveness, an ability which requires education, knowledge and experience as much as any intuitive awareness. Much to their chagrin, Marina usually understands her corrupt teachers only too well: in her responses to them she exemplifies the educated evangelism that Calvin thought essential for the practising Christian, "The Christian profession requireth us to be children, not in understanding, but in malice."¹⁸ A child in malice, a wise adult in understanding: a formidable combination in Marina who, in her moral superiority, resembles Cerimon, the quasi-magical director of what J. P. Brockbank calls the "miraculous first-aid post of Ephesus."¹⁹ In Cerimon innocence and knowledge find their ideal representative, though Shakespeare, anxious to keep his paragon lawfully human, begins with an admission of Cerimon's human limitations as a doctor. "There's nothing can be minist'ed to nature / That can recover him" (III.ii.8-9) he advises the Servant of one who is about to die. Having, as it were, established Cerimon's human credentials, Shakespeare can then afford to stress the attributes whose purchase makes Cerimon glorious: philanthropic, ascetic, loving, Cerimon has become an institution in Ephesus. And, speaking in the lofty style of one who knows his own worth, Cerimon (whose name also suggests "sermon" as well as "ceremony")

those Anglican apologists for the *via media* between paths of faith and knowledge, but also from Puritans trying to mitigate the harsh voluntarism of Calvinism.²⁰

Marina's mockery of Mytilene's brothel-keepers or Cerimon's dignified justification of the enquiring mind would be well understood by Baker's seventeenth-century Anglican apologists for rationality; and one can imagine someone like Hooker, had he lived to attend a performance of one of Shakespeare's romances, applauding the sweet combination of innocence and understanding that the play advocates, especially as his *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* mocks anti-intellectualism generally, and Puritan anti-intellectualism specifically, for the naiveté of thinking reason "an enemy unto religion, [and] childish Simplicity the mother of ghostly and divine Wisdom."²¹

As an artist, Shakespeare, like Henry James, recognized the aesthetic value of the conjunction of Hooker's contraries: reason and childish simplicity. Gower's Chorus introducing Act V praises Marina's talents even more fervently than at the beginning of Act IV. Singer, dancer, composer, scholar ("Deep clerks she dumbs"), and innocent craftswoman, Marina overflows with accomplishments; like Paulina and Perdita in *The Winter's Tale* she's someone who rivals nature in the golden work of creation and renewal. Her skill and her innocence combine in the first scene of the fifth act to "allure" Pericles back to life, although Lysimachus, with perhaps his own experience in mind, does justice in his military metaphor to the iron determination behind the allurements:

She, questionless, with her sweet harmony
And other chosen attractions, would allure,
And make a batt'ry through his deafened parts,
Which now are midway stopped. (V.i.45-48)

Marina's assault succeeds in restoring Pericles' desire to speak which he uses, at least initially, to give vent to his wondering admiration for the miraculous creature so unexpectedly come his way; in the course of which he speaks the play's most famous lines:

Yet thou dost look
Like Patience gazing on kings' graves and smiling
Extremity out of act. (V.i.138-40)

In his Arden edition of the play, F. D. Hoeniger notes that most commentators fail to see the obvious inspiration for the image in carved figures of Patience on tombs; and he also enlarges the usual interpretation of "smiling / Extremity out of act (i.e., suicide)" to "smiling extreme calamity out of existence (i.e., making it melt away), whatever the dictionaries say."²² Nothing could be more eloquent, from our point of view, than the way this bride of quietness smilingly cures man's infirmities. Although both statue and personification, Patience takes on here the active humanity necessary to repair the workings of extremity, the difference between merely "gazing on," and "smiling . . . out of." (I can't think of any famous statue, incidentally, that has been given the humanity of a smile.) What Pericles chooses to praise in these lines is an active, uncloistered patience — though he himself, as we have seen, was much more inclined passively to gaze, especially on the deeds of kings, than to smile extremity out of act.

Marina once more smiles extremity out of act when she forces her father to forego the comfort of his self-induced narcotic state. When he recognizes her as his child he is overcome by a "great sea of joys" (V.i.194) and thinks of her as the creator of his happiness: "Thou that beget'st him that did thee beget" (V.i.197) — an innocent reordering of the incestuous dependency of Antiochus on his daughter, and imbued with Christian feeling as Philip Edwards notices: "The paradox is the ancient paradox of Christianity, in which God the father becomes the son of his own daughter, a virgin."²³ And it is at this rhapsodic moment that Pericles hears "heavenly music" (V.i.234) falls into a "thick slumber" (V.i.235) and has his vision of Diana — the whole experience justifying the way in which Edwards ties together intellect, innocence and the supernatural in the play: "in the depth of their learning [Cerimon, Marina] or in the strength of their innocence [they] have the power to change others, to revive and re-create them, and their power suggests divine help."²⁴

Mysteriously aiding, Diana commands Pericles to journey to her temple at Ephesus, there to recount the story of his troubled life before a congregation that includes Cerimon and Thaisa, now the High Priestess of Diana's church. Like Gower, Pericles must tell the tale that will purchase for him the glory that "Makes my past miseries sports" (V.iii.41), a minor penance surely, but a highly appropriate one for a man who from the beginning at Antioch has retreated further and further into the extremity of his quietism. It is this terrible spell that Marina breaks, and Pericles' revitalization and reuniting with his wife and daughter climax Shakespeare's presentation of Marina as divinely and formidably innocent. The play, therefore, as J. P. Brockbank remarks, "smiles extremity out of act,"²⁵ but it could never have done so without Marina and the gift of innocence at her bestowal. She is never too young for all the places that need her. The three romances that follow *Pericles* also smile extremity out of act, and also depend upon militant innocence for being able to do so; but only *The Winter's Tale* has the bold, confident sweep of *Pericles*. The other two achieve the same new-born state, if indeed they quite do so, in a much more ambiguous manner. But for this we should be just as grateful as we are for the way in which *Hamlet* and *Measure for Measure* challenge the felicity of *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*.

NOTES

- ¹ References to Shakespeare are from *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare*, ed. Alfred Harbage (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, Inc., 1969).
- ² *Pericles*, The New Penguin Shakespeare (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, Inc., 1976), p. 14.
- ³ Marina with Dionyza and Leonine; Marina with Lysimachus; Marina with Boult and co. The wooing of Pericles by Thaisa (abetted by her father) looks forward to the relationship between Leontes and Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*. Neither woman keeps her innocence at the expense of her sophistication: both men have the kind of innocent unawareness that blinds them to the reality of what is going on around them. In the case of Leontes, of course, such ignorance is disastrous.
- ⁴ Edwards, p. 176.
- ⁵ Howard Felperin notices in the romances how Shakespeare draws upon the experience of the tragedies, the "harshes cacophonies of the tortured soul" *Shakespearean Romance* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 63.

- ⁶ *The Winter's Tale: A Study* (London: Staples Press, 1947), p. 31.
- ⁷ Northrop Frye sees the way in which these comedies begin as part of a larger comic pattern where an irrational society blocks for a time the legitimate desires of some of its leading citizens whose refusal to submit to such tyranny constitutes the revitalizing process. He notes: "All four of the romances introduce a hostile father or father figure who descends from the *senex iratus* of New Comedy." *A Natural Perspective* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 74.
- ⁸ "Shakespeare's Miracle Play," *SQ* 18 (1967), 370.
- ⁹ *Poets on Fortune's Hill* (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), p. 99.
- ¹⁰ Felperin, "Shakespeare's Miracle Play," p. 370.
- ¹¹ Andrew Welsh, "Heritage in Pericles," in *Shakespeare's Late Plays: Essays in Honor of Charles Crow*, edited by R. C. Tobias and P. G. Zolbrod (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1974), pp. 89-113.
- ¹² Welsh, p. 93.
- ¹³ Edwards, p. 21.
- ¹⁴ Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie*, ed. E. S. Shuckburgh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905), p. 13.
- ¹⁵ *Shakespearean Romance*, p. 149. Cf. W. B. Thorne who thinks that Pericles is tainted by Antiochus' sin, "Pericles and the 'Incest-Fertility' Opposition," *SQ* 22 (1971), p. 47. Both critics probably owe a debt to Wilson Knight who describes Pericles' venture at Antioch as a "plunge into sin and death closely associated with ravishing desire." *The Crown of Life* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1961), p. 38.
- ¹⁶ Philip Brockbank, "Pericles and the Dream of Immortality," *SS* 24 (1971), p. 113.
- ¹⁷ Welsh, p. 106. Cf. John Arthos who talks of Pericles in terms of an apathy which is a "kind of desperation." "Pericles, Prince of Tyre: A Study in the Dramatic Use of Romance Narrative," *SQ* 4 (1953), p. 261.
- ¹⁸ John Calvin, *Concerning Offenses* (London, 1567), Sig. B3v. Quoted in R. M. Frye, *Shakespeare and Christian Doctrine* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 74.
- ¹⁹ Brockbank, p. 113. Cf. Felperin who writes: "Cerimon is clearly a descendant of the miracle-play Christ," "Shakespeare's Miracle Play," p. 369.
- ²⁰ (London: Staples Press, 1952), p. 29.
- ²¹ 2 vols., Everyman's Library (London: Dent, 1963), Book 2, p. 311.
- ²² *Pericles*, ed. F. D. Hoeniger (London: Methuen, 1963), p. 147.
- ²³ Edwards, p. 188.
- ²⁴ Edwards, pp. 20-21.
- ²⁵ Brockbank, p. 116.