HAMARTIA AND ROMEO AND JULIET

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Master of Arts

by

Thomas Harvey Van Brunt

The Ohio State University

1968

Approved by

Donald R. Glancy
Advisor
Department of Speech

The author expresses his thanks to Professor Donald R. Glancy for his efforts in behalf of the author's education, formal and informal; to Marilyn Smith, typist and friend extraordinaire; to William Shakespeare for writing Romeo and Juliet; and to Aristotle who, I think, understood the play before it was written.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One Introduction: Scope and Method

The problem of understanding tragedy has challenged man for as long as he has been literate. As Francis Fergusson writes in his introduction to Aristotle's Poetics, "The question why tragedy, with its images of conflict, terror and suffering, should give us pleasure and satisfaction, has been answered in many ways."[1] This paper is a discussion of a part of the first answer to that question, the Poetics of Aristotle, and an exercise in the use of that answer to analyze Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.

This thesis is concerned with the use of a particular critical tool in the analysis of a specific play.[2] The tool is the Aristotelian concept of hamartia, and the play is William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. Studies of this nature presume the applicability of the concepts of Aristotelian criticism to many post-Aristotelian plays, poems, and other pieces of literature. A recently published instance of such critical scholarship is Professor Sam Smiley's discussion of the "structural principles" of Living Newspapers of the Federal Theatre Project of the 1930's.[3] Professor Smiley examines the plot structure of didactic drama. This paper records research in the use of the concept hamartia. Specifically, this paper is limited to the hypothesis that an Aristotelian hamartia is not a significant part of the plot of Romeo and Juliet.

It is also understood that "There are kinds of questions which Aris-

1. New York, 1961, p. 32.

2. See Appendix A of this thesis.

3. "Rhetoric on Stage in Living Newspapers," QJS, LIV (February, 1968), 29-37.

totle, for example, can treat but Coleridge not, and other kinds of questions which Coleridge can deal with that find no place in Aristotle's poetic."[4] Aristotle can and does deal with the question of the place of hamartia in tragedy. Coleridge does not deal with it, in the same sense of the word, nor do many of the other critics dealt with in this paper. Many modern critics use the terms hamartia and its most frequent translation "tragic flaw," but those terms have a very different meaning for them than they do for Aristotle, who first used them, and the modern neo-Aristotelian school. The Romantic critics, believing their theory to be an extension of Aristotle's, initiated the notion that a tragic flaw is a permanent part of the character or personality of the hero of a tragedy. That notion, most explicitly stated by the nineteenth-century critic A. C. Bradley, continues to be an assumption of most modern critical theories. Such a concept of "tragic flaw" is an important and useful one in the consideration of many Romantic and modern plays. It is, however, not a concept with which Aristotle is concerned. In contradistinction to the modern conceptions, Aristotle's hamartia, an action on the part of a tragic character, is necessary to the formulation of a "complex" tragic plot. The "complex" plot is the one Aristotle calls the theoretical best plot for tragedy and is one of four tragic plots he describes in chapter eighteen of the Poetics. For clarity in this paper, the term hamartia will be used in reference to Aristotle's original concept, and the term "tragic flaw" will be used for the later concept.

The view of "tragic flaw" propounded by the Romantic and nineteenth-century critics has a wide acceptance among modern critics. Many of them

4. R. S. Crane, et al., Critics and Criticism (Chicago, 1952), pp. 9-10.

mistakenly attribute that view to Aristotle.[5] Even though this paper will focus primarily on Aristotelian hamartia, it will consider briefly what has come to be the standard definition of "tragic flaw" as postulated especially by Bradley and as accepted by many contemporary critcs. There will be no attempt to prove that "tragic flaw" is an invalid critical tool, or is in any way inferior to hamartia. A certain amount of doubt will necessarily be cast on the usefulness of "tragic flaw" to describe any part of Romeo and Juliet, but the establishment of that doubt is not crucial to the primary goal of this paper. Consequently, there will be no extensive discussion of tragic characters as personalities. Historical consideration of William Shakespeare or the various theatrical productions of Romeo and Juliet is also beyond the purview of this paper, because this is a critical and not an historical study. In the same vein, the nature of the study precludes a discussion here of Northrup Frye's theory of "mythos," or any variation of that theory. Such a discussion is not germane because the proponents of that theory see hamartia in a significant sense differently than this paper does. Frye does not, as this paper intends to, accept Aristotle's definition of hamartia.

This discussion is limited to an application of an often misunderstood critical concept where it has not been used before; the concept of hamartia as applied to Romeo and Juliet. Modern critics of the Aris-

5. A. C. Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy, (London, 1960), p. 27; Susanne Langer, Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art (New York, 1953), p. 358; Northrup Frye, The Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, 1957), pp. 38, 213; and H. D. F. Kitto, Greek Tragedy (Garden City, N.Y., 1954), pp. 116-117, all accept with no question the Romantic notion that hamartia is a permanent character flaw or alternately as Frye puts it "a condition of being," p. 213.

totelian school have applied his theories to other plays and poems.[6] This is the first study to apply it to Romeo and Juliet.

There is a paucity of scholarly literature from any group of critics on Shakespeare's first great tragedy. Of theses and dissertations written over the last twenty years on Romeo and Juliet, two were acting notebooks and all but one of the remainder were "production" theses concerned with the design and execution of settings and/or costumes for college productions of the play.[7] Most of the more ambitious or famous critics would, it seems, rather discuss Shakespeare's later tragedies. There are very few articles in the journals on this tragedy, and it is generally passed over quickly in larger works.[8] Consequently, Romeo and Juliet has often been treated peripherally in the reflected light of critical writings dealing with other tragedies.

The paper begins with a description of hamartia and concludes with a description and analysis of the plot of Romeo and Juliet. It is the hypothesis of this study that hamartia is an element necessary only in a "complex" tragic plot, and that Romeo and Juliet has a "pathetic" tragic plot. Consequently, hamartia does not exist to a significant extent in either the plot or story of Romeo and Juliet.

6. Crane, et al.

7. See Appendix B of this thesis.

8. Romeo and Juliet is either not mentioned or mentioned only in passing in these modern works: Eric Bentley, The Life of the Drama (New York, 1964), The Playwright as Thinker (New York, 1946), and In Search of Theatre (New York, 1965); Jan Kott, Shakespeare Our Contemporary (Garden City, N.Y., 1966); Bradley; Langer; Frye; Francis Fergusson, The Idea of a Theatre, (Princeton, 1949).

Chapter Two Aristotle

There is probably no work in dramatic criticism which has been less understood or more often misinterpreted than the Poetics of Aristotle. In common with many ancient texts, it is marked by lapses and gaps in the text. It was at one point nearly lost. In addition to these problems, from the time it was first discussed by scholars, it has been grossly distorted to fit whatever views were currently popular. At places in it, the neo-classicists found support for their three unities. The Romanticists found support for the tragic hero, and more recent critics have found support for the psychological drama. The greatest distortions have come from critics who criticize Aristotle for saying something that he did not say. Ironically, some whose critical systems lean heavily on the Poetics still criticize Aristotle for not agreeing with them. The misinterpretations are, moreover, not the works of unscholarly writers. Some of the most celebrated literary lights have been unable to penetrate the fog. Corneille, Coleridge, Lessing, Goethe, Bradley, W. MacNeil Dixon, H. D. F. Kitto, and countless lesser critics continue to mock and misunderstand the Poetics.

As with the whole, so with the parts. If the entire concept of the Poetics is misunderstood, so too are sections, concepts, and individual words. One of the most famous concepts of the Poetics is the tragic flaw. In freshmen literature courses the notion of a tragic hero and his tragic flaw is often taught as being a necessary part of any tragedy. Aristotle is quoted by well-meaning scholars as the author of this concept, and he is criticized because that concept does not fit easily into every drama. This paper will support the view that Aristotle is only peripherally concerned with a tragic hero and even less concerned with

a tragic flaw.

The term tragic flaw is an erroneous and improper translation of Aristotle's language. The word he uses, transliterated into the Latin alphabet, is hamartia. The term appears in chapter thirteen of the Poetics[9] and also in a dozen other places in Aristotle's writings, although few of those other uses help much in explaining the term's meaning. In order to understand the significance of this term in the context of Aristotle's argument in the Poetics, an understanding must be gained of what Aristotle's subject is in the whole treatise.

In the first sentence of the work Aristotle says that he has limited his discussion to "the art of poetic composition in general and its various species, the function and effect of each of them; how the plots should be constructed if the composition is to be an artistic success. . . ."[10] Most of this treatise is devoted to the subject of tragedy, with some discussion of epic.[11] The second book of the Poetics, on comedy, has been lost. Aristotle is not reviewing the latest production at the Athenian tragic festival, although he does use many contemporary tragedies to exemplify his argument; he is not writing a primer on playwriting for the beginning playwright, although every beginning playwright should read it.

9. Bonitz, Index Aristotelicus, 2nd ed. (Graz, Austria, 1965).

10. Aristotle, Poetics, trans. Gerald Else (Ann Arbor, 1967), p. 15 (1447a 8-10). Unless otherwise indicated quotations from the Poetics are from Gerald Else's 1967 translation, hereafter cited as Aristotle. I have also employed the standard system for citing works of Aristotle as prepared for the Berlin Academy by Immanuel Bekker in 1830. The Poetics includes pages 1447 through 1462 of that work. The letters 'a' and 'b' following the page numbers refer to the left and right hand columns respectively. Line numbers are also given.

11. Aristotle, p. 10.

Rather, Aristotle is discussing how tragedies are structured and the materials of which they are formed. This subject is a part of what we call dramatic criticism.

The Poetics is primarily limited to a discussion of dramatic theory, that is, an investigation of the structure of plays and the materials which make them up. Aristotle describes drama as "a process of imitating an action."[12] Aristotle further limits much of his discussion by dealing primarily with the theoretical best plot for tragedies, the "complex" plot. By plot, Aristotle is refering to"the structuring of the events" in a tragedy.[13] If tragedy imitates human actions, the playwright's total organization of those actions for his own purposes is called plot. It is important to remember that Aristotle, except by implication, is not talking about all tragedies or all drama. Many of the difficulties encountered in commentaries on the Poetics result from a misunderstanding of the topic of the Poetics. That topic is the theoretical perfect plot structure of tragic drama.

The tragic plot, which Aristotle is defining, must have a "single rather than [a] double" ending.[14] It must be tragic for all the characters involved. The play should not end with the protagonist winning and the antagonist losing. Further, the "'complex' action [is] one in which the reversal is continuous but with recognition or peripety or both."[15]

12. Aristotle, p. 25 (1449b 24).

13. Aristotle, p. 26 (1450a 5).

14. Aristotle, p. 38 (1453a c. 13-14).

15. Aristotle, p. 35 (1452a 17-18).

The basis of the tragic action is a recognition of discovery on the part of some character in the play. That recognition leads to an instantaneous reversal, peripety, of the fortunes, generally the fortunes of the main characters of the play. It is not important to whom this change of fortune occurs. Because Aristotle has limited the ideal action to a single outcome, in effect the change of fortune affects everybody. "Peripety is the shift of the action towards the opposite pole in accordance with the principles previously mentioned."[16]

These important points about the structure of tragic plots are made in chapters 7 through 11 of the Poetics. Chapter 12 is a discussion of the quantitive parts unique to Greek tragic drama and are not pertinent to this discussion.

In chapter 13 is one of the most debated and least understood paragraphs of dramatic criticism. Bywater's translation, a version commonly used by critics, in its most important parts is as follows:

> Such a story may arouse the human feeling in us, but it will not move us to either pity or fear; pity is occasioned by undeserved misfortune, and fear by that of one like ourselves;. . . .There remains, then, the intermediate kind of personage, a man not preeminently virtuous and just whose misfortune however, is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some error of judgment, of the number of those in the enjoyment of great reputation and prosperity. . . .The perfect Plot, accordingly, must have a single, and not a double issue; the change in the hero's fortunes must be not from misery to happiness, but on the contrary from happiness to misery; and the cause of it must lie not in any deparvity, but in some great error on his part; the man himself being either such as we have described, or better, not worse, than than.[17]

16. Aristotle, Poetics, trans. Gerald Else, in Aristotle's Poetics: the Argument, by Gerald Else (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), p. 342 (1452a 22).

17. Aristotle, Poetics, trans. Ingram Bywater in Introduction to Aristotle, ed. Richard McKeon (New York, 1947), pp. 639-40 (1453a 2-5, 11-16).

The word hamartia appears twice in the Greek original of this passage. It is translated by Bywater first as 'some error of judgement' and then as 'some great error.' Later in this paper that translation will be challenged, but first consideration will be given to some other issues in this passage.

John Jones, Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Oxford, takes issue with the long-held idea of the tragic hero:

> In detailed commentary and criticism, as in the broad outlines of interpretation, Aristotle's 'change of fortune' has always been taken to mean, and indeed is often translated, 'changes in the hero's fortunes.' This is the settled tradition to which must be offered the direct challenge that there is no evidence- not a shred - that Aristotle entertained the concept of the tragic hero.[18]

More specifically Jones notes these alterations made by Bywater:

> Where he has 'a good man' the Greek has 'good men'; where he has 'a bad man' the Greek has 'bad men'; and where he renders 'the change in the hero's fortunes' the Greek has 'the change in fortune'. The first and second of his alterations are not quite as trivial as they seem, for they contrive jointly to suggest that Aristotle has in mind a single dominant figure through out, when in fact his discourse shifts from plural to singular. These two alterations help pave the way for the third, which is in the whole range of its implications, monentous.[19]

In opposition to that notion that tragedy first of all imitates or "is about" man, Aristotle says in his famous definition of tragedy that it "is a process of imitation of an action."[20] The notion of the tragic hero ought to be abandoned in any disoussion of the Poetics, for as Jones points out the tragic hero and the tragic flaw are not mentioned in the Poetics. Not only does Aristotle not mention them, but he also states, somewhat cryptically that "a tragedy cannot exist without a plot, but it

18. John Jones, On Aristotle and Greek Tragedy (London, 1962), p. 13.

19. Jones, pp. 19-20.

20. Aristotle, p. 25 (1449b 24).

can without characters."[21] In addition, Jones makes the point, although it is less substantiated, that there is little evidence that Aristotle meant that tragedies had to end unhappily, i.e., with the downfall of the tragic hero. Jones bases his objection on the fact that Aristotle "Once. . .says unhappy resolutions are preferable, once. . .says the opposite."[22] The second passage he refers to is 1451a 11-15; it is certainly a weaker passage than the one in chapter 13, commonly cited to show that Aristotle favored an unhappy ending. Aristotle is often criticized for seeming to say that all tragedies must end unhappily, but again it must be borne in mind that Aristotle is at that point discussing only the "complex" tragic plot. A tragedy like the Eumenadies does not have a "complex" plot, and for that reason it is in vain to seek the elements of that kind of tragic plot in its structure. There are plays that do not have Aristotle's theoretical best plot but that are none-the-less tragic. There are even some tragedies that, because of their emphasis on character, might be said to have a tragic hero; but having a tragic hero is not the necessary mark of a tragedy.

In his discussion of the fundamental nature of tragedy, Aristotle has defined drama as the imitation of an action. A tragic action is one that evokes the emotions of pity and fear. At some point in the plot of a complex tragedy, a discovery must occur. Gerald Else notes that the best recognition "is a discovery of the identity of a 'dear' person', a blood-relative."[23] The discovery results in a reversal of fortunes. The

21. Aristotle, p. 27 (1450a 24-25).

22. Jones, pp. 46-47.

23. Else, Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), p. 379 - hereafter cited as Else, The Argument.

best plot involves this great change "not thanks to wickedness but because of some mistake of great weight and consequence,"[24] i.e., because of some hamartia. Jones, in discussing this sentence, again challenges the concept of the tragic hero. Because an hamartia is committed by some intermediate kind of personage "does not entitle us to style that personage the Tragic Hero."[25] For when we make the instigator of the action so important, we can lose sight of the fact that it is the result of that hamartia and discovery and reversal, i.e., the tragic state of man, which is most important and is, after all, the subject of tragedy. Jones and Aristotle both make the point that the playwright is not really talking about the hero but about the state of man and his tragic existence on earth. A misunderstanding of hamartia often explains a critic's misreading of the whole of the Poetics.

A consideration of hamartia and what Aristotle meant by it reveals that he preceeds both of his uses of the word (in chapter 13) by saying the "change of fortune" comes about not because of "any real badness or wickedness"[26] (or Christian "sin") but because of hamartia. Hamartia is understood to be not a permanent, inherent evil in the soul, personality, or character. The notion, then, that has been taught for so long that Aristotle is here discussion the tragic flaw of a tragic hero is exposed as fallacious. Even some Greek scholars still refer to hamartia as being an evil character trait of a hero. L. J. Potts suggests that "The

24. Aristotle, p. 38 (1453a 15-16).

25. Jones, p. 20.

26. Aristotle, p. 38 (1453a 9).

theory of the 'tragic flaw' belongs rather to the Christian era and to a certain phase of Shakespearean criticism. . . .It may have arisen because in the Greek New Testament Hamartia is the regular word for 'sin.'"[27]

Aristotle is not discussing character when he uses the term hamartia, even though later critics do mean that when they use the term "tragic flaw." The critical error here has been to try to establish a resemblance between these two concepts, one classical and the other Romantic.

One of the important modern critics who does not accept that resemblance is Gerald Else, chairman of the Department of Classical Studies at the University of Michigan. His discussion of the Poetics is perhaps the finest, at least the most complete, commentary on that work in English.[28] He uses Aristotle's own words to support Aristotle and to show the inner consistency of Aristotle's argument. Else agrees with Jones that chapter 13 is about the tragic change and not about the tragic hero or tragic flaw. He seems to give more credence however to the notion that Aristotle did talk about a tragic hero.[29] Else says a semantic study of hamartia, in classical Greek, is inconclusive because it and its forms show "such a wide range of meanings - all the way from error or failure to 'sin'. . .the only safe guide is the context of Aristotle's argument."[30]

27. L. J. Potts, trans., The Poetics, by Aristotle (Cambridge, Eng., 1953), p. 81.

28. In addition to Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument, and his 1967 translation of the Poetics, see also by Else, Homer and the Homeric Problem (Cincinnatti, 1965); The Origin and Early Form of Greek Tragedy (Cambridge, Mass., 1965); "Agamemnon," Classical Philology, 52, January (1957); and "Imitation in the 5th Century," Classical Philology, 53, April, (1958).

29. Else, The Argument, pp. 376-377.

30. Else, p. 379.

The concept of hamartia is part of Aristotle's argument on the structure of the tragic plot. As noted above, that discussion begins with chapter 7 and continues through chapter 13. "Hamartia is a functional element in a complex plot, otherwise Aristotle would not mention it here."[31] In preceding chapters Aristotle discusses the perfect tragic plot. As we have already said, he specifies that it must include recognition and reversal, as well as many other things not directly related. Of chapter 13 Else speculates that hamartia is that which makes possible the discovery that causes the reversal. "Might not hamartia be the ignorance from which the change begins?"[32] Further, Else says that according to Aristotle the best discovery is "of the identity of a 'dear' person, a blook-relative; it follows that the precedent hamartia would denote particularly a mistake or error or ignorance as to the identity of that person."[33] If Else's view is accepted, hamartia is in the Poetics a part of the machinery of a perfect tragic plot and of a 'complex'plot only. "The reason why Aristotle does not call it so along with peripety, recognition, and pathos, is presumably that it may lie outside the action of the play proper, as in the Oedipus."[34] Although hamartia is not necessarily a formal part of the tragic plot of the "complex" kind it is a necessary catalytic agent for the existnece of that plot. An hamartia sets up the situation

31. Else, p. 379.

32. Else, p. 379.

33. Else, p. 379.

34. Else, p. 385.

for the recognition-peripety sequence, which is the basic form of the complex tragic plot. In using the term in the Poetics, Aristotle makes no attempt to define it.

It is often necessary when studying a particular Aristotelian concept to consult several of his works. "Certain key terms. . . can only be fully understood in the light of Aristotle's other writings."[35] Bonitz' Index Aristotelicus[36] lists over a dozen instances of Aristotle's use of the work hamartia or some form of it. Most of these instances shed no light on its definition. In the Nichomacean Ethics in book 5, chapter 8, Aristotle discusses the kinds of unjust acts. The section is somewhat confusing because Aristotle says there are "three kinds of injury in transactions between man and man."[37] Later in the same paragraph he itemizes four such relationships, but between those two statements he itemizes four ways in which the second of those relationships takes place. Aristotle is drawing distinctions between kinds of unjust actions, first pointing out a difference between intentional and unintentional actions. Frederick Copleston notes "that to do an action which results in damage to another, when the damage was not foreseen or intended . . . is very different from doing an action which would naturally result in damage to another, particularly if that damage was foreseen and intended."[38] This is the distinction that separates the first three kinds of un-

35. Francis Fergusson, "Introduction" Poetics, by Aristotle (New York, 1961), p. 3.

36. Bonitz, P. , p. 37.

37. Aristotle, Ethics, trans. W. D. Ross, in Introduction to Aristotle, ed. McKeon, p. 411 (1135b 11).

38. Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy (New York, 1962), I, part ii, 84.

just actions from the fourth. This fourth form of injury is intentional injustice, an injury to another that occurred with full knowledge of the act and the deliberate perpetuation of it. The several murders of Richard III in Shhkespeare's play seem to be that kind of unjust action. The first of the remaining three kinds of injuries is atychia or misadventure, an injury that does not imply vice by the originator and that occurs contrary to any reasonable expectation, or as Copleston describes it "the damage would not ordinarily result from that action . . . ."[39] Atychia is pure accident in the moral sense. A train accident, for example, may have many physical causes, worn-out tracks, brakes that do not hold, and of course gravity plays its part. There would be, however, no moral cause and no moral guilt involved in such a train accident, an atychia. The second kind of unjust action described by Aristotle is hamartia.[40] Hamartia is a mistake, an injury to another not contrary to reasonable expectation and which does not imply vice. The third form of injury is unintentional injustice, an injury to another that occurred with full knowledge of the act but without deliberation, as when a man kills in anger or passion; the deed is unjust but the man, fundamentally, is not. Aristotle's distinctions between atychia and hamartia and between hamartia and between hamartia and the unintentional act of injustice are fine ones. The following chart (page 16) is an attempt to visualize the distinctions Aristotle made among the four kinds of acts. The differentiation by object, means, and manner in the traditional Aristotelian system

39. Copleston, p. 84.

40. Because Greek nouns are declined, the word which appears in the Greek text of the Ethics has a different ending. Atychia appears as atychema and hamartia as hamartema.

Act	Object Is the end known?	Means Is the means to the end intentional as a responsible act of reason?	Manner Is the manner of the means passive or active?
Atychia	No	No	Passive
Hamartia	No	No	Active
Act of Passion	Yes	No	Active
Premeditated act	Yes	Yes	Active

is not intended to determine the specific object, means, and manner, but the nature of those classifiers. The chart shows for each of the classes of action described by Aristotle whether or not the object, that is, the end or final cause, is known by the agent; whether or not the means used to accomplish that act was intentional or non-intentional; and whether the manner of that means was passive or active. In the premeditated and passionate unjust actions the agent knows the outcome. For the other two the unknown object or final cause is either "the person acted on, the act, the instrument, or the end that will be obtained . . . ."[41] The passionate action differs from the premeditated one in not being intentional; it is done "with knowledge but not after deliberation."[42] Hamartia differs from the passionate act in that the agent cannot foresee the final cause of his action. An example of each will suffice. Oedipus' slaying of the old man was an hamartia. Romeo's fighting with Tybalt was an act of passion. The object of Oedipus' act was the slaying of his father, a result which he could not know. Romeo, however, did know what the result of fencing might be. The manner of their actions was the same. They both actively and purposefully killed someone. Neither intellectually intended that the object which did come about should. Romeo's passion blinded him to the knowledge of the outcome of his action. Even had Oedipus not been angry at the time he killed the old traveler, he still could not have known that that man was his father.

Oedipus' killing of Laius is an hamartia. That hamartia is discov-

41. Aristotle, Ethics, trans. W. D. Ross, p. 415 (1135b 21-26).

42. Aristotle, p. 415 (1135b 19-20).

ered in the course of the plot of Oedipus the King and results in a reversal of fortunes. The action that is imitated by this tragedy is the discovery of the hamartia, the resultant reversal, and the pathos of tragic figures. The killing of Tybalt is a passionate act only. That act is the climax in the plot of Romeo and Juliet and results in no significant reversals. The action that is imitated by this tragedy is a series of passionate acts and the pathos that surrounds them.

Atychia differs from hamartia in that its manner is passive. It comes close to being an event rather than an action. No tragic plot comes to mind as an example of atychia or accident. In an automobile accident caused by the collapse of a bridge, the driver's act is essentially passive, although the passengers in his car may die as a result of his driving over this bridge instead of another one. Had the accident occurred because of excessive speed the resultant injuries would be the result of an hamartia on the part of the driver.

The next important question for the purposes of this paper is: Does hamartia belong "specifically to the theory of the "complex" plot. . . [and]. . .not to the theory of plots in general?"[44] The answer to this question is found in a short section in chapter 18 of the Poetics. In the Bekker edition it is 1455b approximately line 33 to 1456a approximately line 3 as here translated by Gerald Else:

> There are four kinds of tragedy (that being also the number of 'parts' that have been mentioned): the complex which is all peripety and recognition; the fatal, like Ajax and Ixion plays; the moral, such as the Women of Phthia, and the Peleus; and the episodic, like Daughters of Phorcys, Prometheus, and all the Hades dramas.[45]

44. Else, The Argument, p. 384.

45. p. 50.

The passage is admittedly sketchy, but Else with some justification concludes that what Aristotle means here is that a plot may be classified by its dominant element.[46] A drama may be both complex and fatal but is best classified according to its dominant element. Aristotle stresses that "one must try if possible to have all these features, or if not, the biggest ones and as many of them as one can manage."[47] And of course he has already said that the complex is the best. Further it is Else's conclusion that complex plots may at the same time be fatal, moral, or episodic; but that should any one of these three elements dominate a plot, it "cannot be complex and must necessarily be classified, according to its dominant feature."[48]

The complex tragedy requires the mistake-recognition-reversal structure. "The hated enemy or casually despised fellow-wayfarer suddenly revealed as the person naturally dearest to him in the whole world; that is the quintessence of 'complex' as Aristotle defines it."[49] In opposition to this the fatal tragedy may be the one with a simple structure of plot (i.e., absence of the recognition-reversal structure) and an unhappy outcome for the hero.[50] "The fatal plot does not get its definition merely from the dominance of the pathos. It is also defined in part by

46. Else, The Argument, p. 525.

47. Aristotle, p. 50 (1456a c 3-5).

48. Else, The Argument, p. 533.

49. Else, pp. 383-384.

50. Else, p. 531.

the two neighboring "kinds"; for as against "complex" it suggests a simple plot structure, and as against 'moral' it connotes an unhappy ending. Such a nexus of ideas is hard to render by an English word."[51] Else suggests the word "fatal."

The fatal or pathetic tragic plot, then, is one which turns on chance; it is dominated by the tragic deed, while the "moral" plot is dominated by character (which for Aristotle is moral and ethical choice, ergo, such a drama would be dominated by the moral and ethical choices of the characters.) The fourth kind, the 'episodic' plot, is dominated by events causally unrelated. Within these critical categories in theory there is naturally a great deal of artistic variation in practice.

Else tries to define the moral or ethical as having a double plot structure in which not only is character supremely important to the plot but it "wins the success it deserves,"[52] or the protagonist wins and the antagonist loses. That definition is more likely to fit melodrama than a form of tragedy. Else has admitted that he is speculating beyond Aristotle's statements. The moral plot need only be one in which character is more important than any other element. The fatal tragedy too may have variations. It is dominated by the pathetic deed. Pathos for Aristotle is "a destructive or painful act, such as deaths on stage, paroxyms of pain, woundings, and all that sort of thing."[53] The question arises whether this deed of the pathetic plot could be anyone of the four

51. Else, p. 532.

52. Else, p. 531.

53. Aristotle, p. 37 (1452b c. 12-13).

unjust actions mentioned in chapter 5 of the Ethics and discussed above. It could not be hamartia. For that act to be important to the plot of a tragedy, it must be discovered; and the result of the discovery must be a reversal. A tragic plot dominated by such a structure is the complex kind. Therefore the pathetic plot turns on either the intentional or unintentional unjust act or possibly on atychia. The same argument holds for the moral and episodic plots; hamartia does not play a part in them.

Hamartia is an action necessary to the formation of the "complex" tragic plot only. It is an unjust act performed unknowingly and unintentionally, which, when it or its results are discovered, brings about a tremendous change in the fortunes of the leading characters of a tragic drama. Hamartia need not be expected in the "pathetic," "moral," or "episodic" kinds of plots, for it is not inherent in their forms. They are more concerned with other tragic elements. The concept is inherent only in the "complex" plot as Aristotle describes it. In the strictest sense of the word, plot does not include hamartia. The plot includes only what occurres within the action of the play itself.

The theory of the Poetics serves to describe aspects of most if not all drama. At a minimum it provides a set of terms to use so that critics can be sure they are all talking about the same things. Aristotle might very well have felt that Aeschylean and, had he read it, Shakespearean tragedy were not as good as Sophoclean, which to him approached the theoretical best; but that is not to say that those other tragedies may not be accorded a consistent and logical place in his theory. One may very well argue with Aristotle about what kind of tragedy is the best

or even if there is a best, as Professor Kitto does in his several books. It is a very different thing to argue that Aristotle's theories do not apply to other tragic forms. It is another thing to argue that Aristotle's explanations may not aid in the understanding of Aeschylean and Shakespearean tragedy.

Chapter Three Romantic and 19th Century Theories of Hamartia

This discussion of Romantic and nineteenth-century criticism will be brief because critics in those eras seldom if ever discussed dramatic structure in any way meaningful to this paper. Others, like the French neo-classists, thought of nothing but structure. The Romantic writings on drama are generally unprofitable as far as discussion of hamartia goes. "There are kinds of questions which Aristotle, for example, can treat but Coleridge not"[54] and vice versa. Aristotle can and does deal with the place of hamartia in tragic structure. Coleridge does not, nor do many of the other critics discussed in this chapter. During the Renaissance, Western man made a futile attempt to ape the ancients. He probably accomplished more distortion of the Greek and Roman cultures than successful preservation of them. That attempt has influenced dramatic criticism and was the dominant force in the field until the twentieth century. Some French dramatists and critics used obscure passages of the Poetics to confirm the three unities, time, place, and action, as laws for all good drama. In the process they ignored the many Greek dramas that did not adhere to those unities. Jean Mairet (1604-86) was one of the earlier advocates of the three unities. It is at least to his credit that his plays were given good receptions. He helped bring tragedy back into favor. Pierre Corneille (1606-84) with Le Cid actually violated those rules for drama and he was involved in the heated Cid controversy over the "unities". That controversy involved all French men

54. R. S. Crane, "Introduction" in Critics and Criticism, by Crane, et. al. (Chicago, 1952), pp. 9-10.

55

of letters including Cardinal Richelieu. The French critics used their analysis of Aristotle to castigate Shakespeare, whom they considered to be undisciplined.

The Romantic reaction to neo-classicism stressed the natural writing ability of Shakespeare, his "wildness and freedom" from any laws of drama. In their books the Romanticists seem to derive more pleasure from overly generalized statements glorifying or condemning individual playwrights than saying anything significant about dramaturgy. Samuel Taylor Coleridge has a reputation as a leading Shakespearean scholar. His greatest concerns are with lauding Shakespeare for his

> deep feeling and exquisite sense of beauty, both as exhibited to the eye in combinations of form, and to the ear in sweet and appropriate melody; that these feelings were under the command of his own will; that in his very first productions he projected his mind out of his own particular being, and felt, and made others feel, on subjects no way connected with himself, except by force of contemplation and that sublime faculty by which a great mind becomes that which it meditates on.[56]

and for making glowing statements on passages he has just quoted from the poet. About Mercutio he says:

> O how shall I describe that exquisite ebullience and overflow of youthful life, wafted on over the laughing wavelets of pleasure and prosperity, waves of the sea like a wanton beauty that distorted a face on which she saw her lover gazing enraptured, had wrinkled her surface in the triumph of its smoothness.[57]

55. Phyllis Hartnoll, The Oxford Companion to the Theatre, 3rd ed. (London, 1967), p. 338.

56. Coleridge's Writings on Shakespeare, ed. Terence Hawkes (New York, 1959), p. 55 - hereafter cited as Coleridge.

57. Coleridge, p. 118.

And about one of Juliet's lines he says: "The imaginative strained to the highest. What an effect on the purity of the mind."[58]

Coleridge indicates that he thinks Shakespeare deviates not only from Sophocles who he sarcastically says was "the great model of tragedy," but he also deviates from "Aristotle the infallible dictator." After criticising Aristotle and exposing his own ignorance of the Poetics, Coleridge says that it does not matter that Shakespeare did not accept the classical rules.[59] Coleridge attempts to discuss the characters in plays in terms of how Shakespeare must have conceived of them, what experiences Shakespeare must have had, what his conjectures on a particular character might have been. In other words, Coleridge wants to talk about Shakespeare's mental processes that occurred as he wrote. For example, the part of Othello was written with the help of "the inward eye of meditation upon his own nature: for the time, he became Othello, and spoke as Othello, in such circumstances, must have spoken."[60]

This kind of inquiry has little to do with dramatic criticism. It is rather the work of the early behavioral scientist. One may very well labor for many hours over a passage in Coleridge, attempting to determine its meaning and significance and have as a result for one's work only a stern command to enjoy the loveliness of the "naturally undisciplined" poetry of Shakespeare, finding no comment at all on his poetry as drama.

58. Colerige, p. 120.

59. Coleridge, p. 66.

60. Coleridge, p. 129.

Continental Romantic critics such as Lessing,[61] Goethe,[62] and Neitzche,[63] whose The Birth of a Tragedy is surprisingly romantic, are more valuable than Coleridge, yet they too are more concerned with influences outside the play than with the form of the drama itself. The influence of these Romantic critics is still an important part of dramatic theory.

Although Romantic and French neo-classical writers had little to say of interest on hamartia, Professor A. C. Bradley is the prime promulgator of the modern notion of "tragic flaw." It should be noted that Bradley in Shakespearean Tragedy never uses the term hamartia, and he only twice mentions Aristotle. Yet his idea of "tragic flaw" has become identified by later scholars with that Greek term. It is the purpose of this section of this chapter to describe Bradley's view and to indicate the current widespread acceptance of Bradley's view among selected twentieth century critics. The acceptance of Bradley's view of tragic flaw on the part of critics of Romeo and Juliet has led those critics into error in the interpretation of that play.

Bradley says that Shakespeare's heros are marked by a "one-sidedness" of character, which he describes as "a fatal tendency to identify the whole being with one interest, object, passion, or habit of mind." He further labels this "the fundamental tragic trait." In the circumstances in which the playwright places the character, his tragic trait

61. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Hamburg Dramaturgy, trans. Helen Zimmern (New York, 1962).

62. Rene Wellek, A History of Modern Criticism: 1750-1950 (New Haven, 1955).

63. Fredrich Nietzsche, trans. Clifton P. Fadiman, (New York, 1927).

proves "fatal to him." Because of this trait the hero errs,"and his error, joining with other causes, brings on him ruin. This is always so with Shakespeare." This fatal "imperfection or error. . . is never absent" although in the case of Romeo, Bradley says it "scarecely. . . diminish[es] our regard for him."[64]

In Bradley's view tragedy is a human action in which the agents must be held responsible for their action. "The catastrophe is, in the main, the return of this action on the head of the agent. . . . The critical action is, in greater or less degree, wrong or bad."[65]

Further Bradley says that in every Shakespearean tragedy there is a "source of convulsion" which is "in every case evil." In Romeo and Juliet that source is "the senseless hatred of their houses." The hero, even the comparatively innocent hero, for Bradley has some great defect, "irresolution, precipitancy, pride, credulousness, excessive simplicity, excessive susceptibility to sexual emotions, and the like." Of them he says, "These defects or imperfections are certainly, in the wide sense of the word, evil, and they contribute decisively to the conflict and catastrophe."[66]

Generally, Bradley saw tragic error or flaw as a trait in the character of the hero. The trait is essentially evil and is the major factor leading to the hero's destruction. Bradley suggests, as mentioned above, that the evil "convulsion" in Romeo and Juliet is the feud.

64. Bradley, (London, 1960), pp. 26-28.

65. Bradley, p. 35.

66. Bradley, p. 37-38.

Bradley says that Romeo's flaw is his "excess and precipitancy."[67] That idea is amplified by some of his disciples who later applied Bradleyan theories more extensively to Romeo and Juliet (see chapter four).

Even though Bradley says that the hero does not suffer "in proportion to merit,"[68] there seems to be no way of avoiding the conclusion from Bradley that the hero with a necessarily evil character trait is destroyed largely as a result of that character trait.

67. Bradley, p. 28.

68. Bradley, pp. 35-36.

Chapter Four Selected Modern Critics on *Hamartia*

Most of the twentieth-century writing on *hamartia* follows Bradley. That is, Bradley's view of "tragic flaw" is accepted by many modern critics (including those who differ on other questions from Bradley) who have a tendency to attribute Bradley's view to Aristotle. Some other important critics make no mention of the subject. As the views of such other critics are not germane to this study, their critical systems are not examined in this paper. Northrup Frye in his important work, *The Anatomy of Criticism*, does not use the view of *hamartia* accepted in this paper. He says that "Aristotle's hamartia. . . may be simply a matter of being a strong character in an exposed position."[69] Later, in a discussion of tragic characters and man's tragic condition, Frye says "Aristotle's hamartia, then, is a condition of being, not a cause of becoming."[70] He apparently means that tragedy is a result of man's position in nature rather than a specific act. Although that may be true in the context of his theory, it is certainly not true of Aristotle's concept of *hamartia* as an action. Frye's use of the word *hamartia* should not be understood to be an attempt to define the word as Aristotle used it. Bradley's theory requires a permanent trait of character which is vital to the tragic end of the hero. Frye holds that just by being a man a hero is brought down. In *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art*, Susanne Langer accepts Bradley's concept. "The action [of a tragedy] itself must reveal the limit of the protagonist's powers and mark the end of his self-reali-

69. p. 38.

70. p. 213.

zation. And so, indeed, it does: the turning point of the play is the situation he cannot resolve, where he makes his 'tragic error,' or exhibits his tragic 'weakness.'"[71] Langer and other leading critics do not discuss Aristotle's hamartia. Francis Fergusson in The Idea of a Theatre, and in his important essay "Macbeth as the Imitation of an Action" in The Human Image in Dramatic Literature; J. L. Styan in The Elements of the Drama; and Eric Bentley in his four best books, The Dramatic Event, In Search of Theatre, The Playwright as Thinker, and The Life of the Drama do not consider the subject of hamartia from an Aristotelian point of view. In the next chapter consideration will be given to the ideas of two of Bradley's followers because they have specific things to say about Romeo and Juliet in relation to "tragic flaw." Preceding that discussion, this chapter will consider the works of two modern English dramatic critics, W. MacNeil Dixon and H. D. F. Kitto, who have dealt specifically with the subject of hamartia from an Aristotelian point of view. Both men are profoundly influenced by nineteenth century criticism, but deal in what is called formal or structural criticism.

Both Dixon and Kitto spend considerable time talking about tragedy's place in philosophy and with society's need for drama. That need seems to be a force determining its form. Dixon says that in both ancient and modern times "the problem of evil"[72] is a great concern and that tragedy takes this as its subject. Tragedy is concerned with why the gods, or fate, or circumstance, or chance, or whatever a particular culture calls

71. p. 358.

72. W. MacNeil Dixon, Tragedy (London, 1929), p. 57.

it, strikes down the innocent.[73] Modern drama has been concerned largely with social man and psychological man. It has explored man's inner turmoil brought on by a dehumanized society. It has made the divided self the basis for tragedy. That is, modern drama is often largely about character portrayal. The great concern in modern drama is, then, with character and the situation in which character finds itself. Modern criticism has a tendency to broaden the concern of character not only to make it dominant in modern plays but to stress overly its importance in Elizabethan and Greek tragedy. "Yet to identify the interest of tragedy with the interest of character is to let the truth escape us."[74] Character surely has an important role in dramaturgy, but it should be "admitted as a factor only, no further than as a part of the interminable web."[75] In modern culture, when interest in character increases, tragedy is less possible. Modern dramas heavily emphasizing character seem to have as their conclusion that the world is meaningless and chaotic. A problem arises when critics accustomed to character analysis in contemporary drama, attempt to analyze Shakespearean or Greek characters. They begin searching for things unimportant to the understanding of those dramas. One such example is the search for a "tragic flaw," hamartia, in dramas never intended to include it. Hamlet, for example, is often called a victim of his own irresolution. That is supposed to be his "tragic flaw." Some critics feel they must find some fault in Hamlet. Dixon

73. Dixon. p. 98.

74. Dixon, p. 99.

75. Dixon, p. 101.

finds that unnecessary: "With what reason can a natural and proper aversion be construed into a shortcoming?. . . perhaps we are to suppose that in so detestable, so unsavory a society, in such a situation as fell to Hamlet's lot the well-poised, healthy mind should feel pleasantly at ease and at home."[76] Dixon's point is that the fault is not in Hamlet but in Denmark and that a concern with character has led to a false interpretation of the play. Dixon talks about the dilemma that must exist for tragedy, i.e., a good man must be shown to suffer, his career to end in disaster, and yet such a phenomenon is morally offensive.[77] That is, tragedy requires that a good man be punished. That is the tragic statement about life. Good is not always rewarded and evil is not always punished. Tragedy holds that the world is not chaotic. Unless the good man's sufferings are regarded with horror and fear, tragedy is impossible. For if fate or injustice is accepted without question chaos reigns. But when the same deed is rejected as morally repugnant, when the playwright refuses to accept man's fall, he exalts man.

Professor Dixon uses language very similar to Aristotle's, but in places he misreads Aristotle. Dixon says Aristotle says that the tragedy is "in a measure self-inflicted, the consequence of some fault or frailty."[78] Again according to Dixon, Aristotle says that when misery and chaos destroy innocent men, the universe is chaotic.[79] He thinks Aristotle

76. Dixon, pp. 102-103.

77. Dixon, p. 130.

78. Dixon, pp. 130-131.

79. Dixon, p. 131.

wants the poet to create a character "with the heel of Achilles."[80] Not only does Dixon object to such observation on tragedy, but Aristotle does too. There is here the unusual phenomenon of a scholar criticizing another scholar who is saying very nearly the same thing. There is no evidence that Aristotle says any of the things Dixon attributes to him. Dixon's misreading of Aristotle allows him to become confused, to state at one point that Hamlet is not concerned primarily with the character of Hamlet, but with the tragic problem, the "moral offensiveness we meet with in the world."[81] In another place he says that the poet is wholly concerned with the individual and the philosopher with the moral order.[82] His confusion stems from not investigating the Poetics fully. He says of hamartia, "Whether it means a moral or intellectual error, of the heart or head, no one has yet discovered, an error arising out of a momentary or permanent state of mind or character, an error to which responsibility attaches or does not attach itself, an error which could or could not have been avoided, whose results could or could not have been forseen, an error of ignorance or passion or mis-calculation."[83] This concept hamartia is not, as Dixon supposes, a mere "dexterity of wit"[84] on Aristotle's part. It is rather a quite lucidly explained integral part of Aristotle's view of the "complex" tragic plot. MacNeil

80. Dixon, pp. 134-135.

81. Dixon, p. 140.

82. Dixon, p. 138.

83. Dixon, p. 133.

84. Dixon, p. 133.

Dixon than has the right idea about tragedy; he merely refuses to recognize that some two thousand years before him someone said the same thing better.

One of the finest contemporary critics is Professor H. D. F. Kitto, a Greek scholar from the University of Bristol, who is interested in dramatic theory. He is one of the leading proponents of the school of criticism that is concerned more with the content and structure of plays than with their author's psychological, social, or political problems. This rigorous system of analysis he has used very effectively in his criticism of Aeschylus. Despite his fine commentaries on Aeschylean tragedy, Kitto too has his difficulties in understanding Aristotle. He takes issue unnecessarily with Aristotle. He says that Aristotle's theory has nothing to do with Aeschylus' plays. He states that the main character in Aeschylus' dramas is not at all like the "Aristotelian hero."[85] In this second statement he is correct, because there is no such hero. Specifically, Kitto says of hamartia: "this is the flaw, be it great or small, moral or intellectual, without which the hero would not have fallen or his character have been a tragic one." And again, "it is the defect which makes his character tragically imperfect and is directly responsible for his fall."[86] "Flaw" is simply the wrong term to use for this concept. Hamartia is not a case of habitual wrong doing. It is an isolated mistake on which fate capitalizes. Kitto in effect blames Aristotle for trying to apply to Aeschylean tragedy the hero-flaw concept, when Aristotle never mentioned such a thing. Furthermore he quite

85. H. D. F. Kitto, Greek Tragedy (Garden City, N.Y., 1954), p. 116.

86. Kitto, Tragedy, pp. 116-117.

specifically mentions many plays of Aeschylus as not fitting his "complex" model and therefore not having hamartia. Kitto's understanding of hamartia is this: "Aristotle places firmly in the center of his ideal play the Tragic Hero, with his hamartia, the flaw in a character otherwise better than the average. In the best form of tragedy, the Hero will make his transit. . . from happiness to unhappiness by the logical working of the flaw, in the given circumstances; and the end is Pity and Fear - emotions which we feel because the hero is not unlike ourselves. To Aristotle (though not to the dramatists) the spectacle of a good man ruined by no fault of his own is shocking, and not tragic."[87] These statements are a misrepresentation. Aristotle does not place the tragic hero in the center of his ideal play, he does not talk about that; he states quite specifically that hamartia is not a character flaw, that it is an action of a narrowly defined type; nor does the change in fortune necessarily occur from good to bad. A relatively good man, i.e., "neither a paragon of virtue and justice. . . [ruined not] through any real badness or wickedness"[88] is tragic and of the highest form. Aristotle says these things as specifically as one could require. Although Kitto fully agrees with the logic of Aristotelian criticism, he fails to attribute it to Aristotle. Kitto makes the mistake that too many twentieth-century critics make: that Aristotle's discussion of the theoretical best is a prescriptive limitation of the kinds of tragedies that can be written. That is not the case. Aristotle makes the judgment that the "complex" tragedy is the best, but he does not rule out that other

87. H. D. F. Kitto, Form and Meaning in Drama (New York, 1964), p. 233.

88. Aristotle, p. 38 (1459a 8-10).

Chapter Five *Hamartia* in *Romeo and Juliet*

It is the intent of this chapter to discuss the internal structure of *Romeo and Juliet* and the congruence of that structure with the meaning of the play. An attempt will be made to identify in the script examples of important *pathos*, discoveries, and reversals, the building blocks of the plots of tragedy. An attempt will be made to show where some common mistakes are made in the analysis of this play. The plot of *Romeo and Juliet* will be discussed in the light of Aristotle's description of tragic plots, expecially as *hamartia* is involved as a part of a tragic plot. The proof for any contentions about the play will be identified in the text itself. There will be no concern with the purity of the poetry but there will be an assumption that Shakespeare knew what he wanted to say and, being a great poetic dramatist, said it.

In the Prologue the playwright relates the essence of what will happen in the play and how it will happen. A family feud is to be complicated by a "pair of star-cross'd lovers." Nothing could end that feud except the death of the lovers, "Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows/ Doth with their death bury their parents' strife."[89]

The opening scene is a street brawl between Capulet and Montague servants and some younger members of the families. Capulet and Montague themselves both arrive. It is evident that the Capulet and Montague women are not as strong for the fight. Lady Capulet says to her husband,

89. All quotations from the play are from William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. George Lyman Kitteredge, revised Irving Ribner (Waltham, Mass., 1966). Each quotation is followed in the text of this paper by the Roman numerals of the Act and scene from which it is taken. No further footnotes are included for references to the text of the play.

A crutch, a crutch! Why call you for a sword.
(I,i)

and Lady Montague to hers,

Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.
(I,i)

Like most fights, this one begins over an inconsequential remark, "I serve as good a man as you," says a Montague servant to a Capulet servant. Of such grounds for insult given and taken, the Prince comments,

Three civil brawls bred of an airy work
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets.
(I,i)

The street fights evidently begin over small matters, but emotion runs high and both sides easily rise to slight provocation.

After the Prince has disbanded the crowd and Benvolio has related the start of the quarrel to Montague, Romeo is first mentioned, and the subject is in effect changed.

We learn from both his parents and from his own mouth that Romeo is love sick, his sad hours caused by,

Not having that which having makes them short.
(I,i)

Benvolio tries in vain to raise Romeo's spirits. It is significant that Romeo's initial love sickness is as doomed as his later; he feels the bitter fate of his impossible love with Rosaline,

She hath forsworn to love, and in that vow
Do I live dead that live to tell it now.
(I,i)

This first love is no less fated than the later one. The following scene is mostly exposition. In Act I scene iii one of Shakespeare's memorable characters, the Nurse is intorduced. She is a garrulous old

woman who takes too much time telling an unnecessary and slightly bawdy reminiscence,

> dost thou fall upon thy face
> Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit.
> (I,iii)

The story is told in the presence of Juliet. The great contrast between this funny and bawdy old Nurse and her young charge is especially obvious at the point that Lady Capulet asks Juliet if she has thought of being married, to which Juliet answers,

> It is an honour that I dream not of.
> (I,iii)

and the Nurse replies,

> An Honour? Were not I thine only Nurse
> I would say thou hadst suck'd wisdom from thy teat.
> (I,iii)

After encounters such as this it should be evident that Juliet will not go to her wedding bed in ignorance.

In the following scene, I,iv, the volatile Mercutio is introduced. He is a talkative, imaginative, and generally very likable friend to Romeo. He typically advises Romeo that,

> If love be rough with you, be rough with love.
> Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.
> (I,iv)

Romeo should forget his unrequited love for Rosaline and join in the fun. The famous Queen Mab speech in which Mercution "talk'st of nothing" has often been ignored by critics who see in it nothing more than an Elizabethan crowd pleaser. It may well have been that but it also serves to create great empathy for Mercutio. Here and in later scenes he is presented as a frivolous, happy-go-lucky, fun-loving young man. His speeches include non-Freudian bawdry,

> This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs
> That presses them and learns them first to bear,
> Making them women of good carriage.
> (I,iv)

The image of Mercituo is crucial to the tragic deeds which follow.

The scene, which is usually listed as the last in Act I, the dance scene, adds the only real complication of any significance to the conflict, the Juliet-Romeo love affair. Romeo, Mercutio and friends crash the party at the Capulets'. Even though Tybalt, a young and fiery Capulet, would start a fight again, Lord Capulet welcomes the young men to the festivities. During the dance Romeo discovers Juliet and they both discover the sudden love between them. A significant reversal takes place for him,

> Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!
> For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.
> (I,v)

Forgotten is Rosaline as Romeo and Juliet steal kisses in a corner of the dance floor. The two then discover, both of them from the Nurse, that their new lover is an hereditary enemy and both are struck with fear at the meaning of the love,

> Romeo: Is she a Capulet?
> O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.
> (I,v)
> Juliet: My only love, sprung from my only hate!
> Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
> Prodigious birth of love it is to me
> That I must love a loathed enemy.
> (I,v)

Immediately they begin to suspect that fate has taken hold of their lives as love has. It is these two themes which dominate both the poetry and the plot of Romeo and Juliet. At this point in the play two young people have, as innocently as young people can, fallen in love.

Their love is sweet ahd tender. The playwright has contrasted it with the bawdy quips of Mercutio, the unconscious ravings of the Nurse, and Father Capulet's inherent assumption that he can give Juliet's hand to whom he wishes even though he is not inclined to give it to anyone now. Later in the garden of the Capulet house the balcony scene takes place. In order to set it off, there occurs another scene with Mercutio immediately before the balcony scene. If possible Mercutio is more suggestive than before as he and Benvolio attempt to find Romeo,

> O, Romeo, that she were, O that she were
> An open et cetera, thou a pop'rin pear!
> (II,i)

and,

> If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.
> (II,i)

In whatever way it is managed, this scene is meant to be followed directly by the sweet lyricism of the balcony scene. During this scene the lovers swear their devotion and eternal love,

> Trust me, gentleman I'll prove more true
> Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
>
> My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
> My love as deep.
>
> Wert thou as far
> As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,
> I would adventure for such merchandise.
>
> Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!
> Would I were sléép and peace, so sweet to rest!
> (II,ii)

And like all young lovers they are silly and love-struck,

> J: I have forgot why I did call thee back.
>
> R: Let me stand here till thou remember it.

J: I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Rememb'ring how I love thy company.

R: And I'll still stay to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.
(II,ii)

Romeo in swearing his love says,

And but thou love me, let them find me here.
My life were better ended by their hate
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.
(II,ii)

This is an innocent enough profession of love, in ordinary circumstances. It is also the stuff of which tragedy is made. Romeo is not saying anything more than any other lover would say to impress upon his lady the strength of his love; he would rather die than live without her love. In Verona that innocent promise of love or death, might as quickly become death as love; for Romeo has fallen in love with the daughter of his father's enemy. Juliet seems to see the danger in this more than he. It is she who fears for his life there in the garden while he blithely talks of love. It is Juliet who says,

Although I joy in thee
I have no joy of this contract to-night.
It is too rash, to unadvis'd too sudden;
(II,ii)

Juliet introduces the subject of marriage and urges Romeo to make arrangements for it. Then toward the end of the scene Juliet again presages some ill result from their love,

Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
(II,ii)

The balcony scene is sweet and beautiful; two lovers alone, being just what they are: impetuous, silly, and very serious about their affections for each other. Yet the scene is tinged with disaster. There is the slight hint of coming doom; not that they expect it, or want it, or

even consciously think of it, but the dramatic potential is there. Two members of opposing families are in love.

The following scene introduces Friar Laurence. The Friar makes extended comments on life, comparing it to the weeds and flowers he is gathering.

> Within the infant rind of this weak flower
> Poison hath residence, and medicine power;. . .
> Two such opposed kings encamp them still
> In man as well as herbs - grace and rude will;
> And where the worser is predominant,
> Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.
> (II,iii)

Some critics say that the Friar is here condemning the wild passion of Romeo and Juliet and that the playwright has put his own words in the Friar's mouth. According to this notion, Shakespeare is telling the reader how he ought to react to the lovely scene at the balcony. It is clear that the Friar is counselling for moderation both in this scene and in many others.

> Wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast.
> (II,iii)

and,

> These violent delights have violent ends,
> (II,vi)

The Friar's slowness is also in contrast to and seems to emphasize the rapid pace at which the play moves. But he is far from saying here that young love is an evil to be avoided. He approves of their love by marrying them, even as he counsels them to "Love moderately." (II,vi) The critical view that his first long speech reveals Shakespeare's own sentiments about the lovers is doubtful. Assuming, as was stated above that what the playwright has to say is nothing less than the whole action of

of the play, individual speeches by individual characters may be in disagreement with the playwright's message. It is true that many modern playwrights put words into the mopths of their characters which they themselves have often been heard to speak in public. In such an instance the argument of the whole play is or should be the same as the individual speech in question. Friar Laurence's speech is not the same as the argument of the whole play. There is no evidence to indicate that Friar Laurence should be considered the"mouthpiece" for Shakespeare rather than Father Capulet, or Mercutio, or even Romeo. If we were to admit that the Friar here is in the name of the playwright condemning the lovers, we would have some basis for saying the lovers are morally responsible for their fate. Nowhere does the script justify such a conclusion.

The following two scenes move the action along a little farther. Romeo meets the Nurse and they arrange a time for Juliet to be married at Laurence's cell, and then the Nurse after much groaning informs Juliet of the plans. None of this action is as important to the plot structure as the character revelation. It is important once again to witness Mercutio and the Nurse in action. Mercutio is wild and witty; his puns are more than a little salacious,

> For this drivelling love is like a great natural that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole.
>
> The bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.
> (II,iv)

And he sings a mocking song to the Nurse comparing her to an old hoary, hairy, whore. Mercutio is a highly empathetic character.

The Nurse, who has previously seemed rather harmless, begins to ap-

pear less so. She takes money from Romeo to tell Juliet the marriage arrangements. Then, when she gets home to Juliet, she takes her time in divulging the news for which Juliet so eagerly awaits. The Nurse is not purposely avoiding Juliet's questions, she is merely unconscious of anything but her aching back. She too gets in her quip,

> I am the drudge, and toil of your delight;
> But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
> (II,v)

Later the lovers meet at Laurence's cell where, after he enjoins them to "love moderately," they are married. The Friar's hope is that

> This alliance may so happy prove
> To turn your households' rancour to pure love.
> (II,iii)

The Friar's good intentions are quickly swept aside. Within an hour after the marriage, Romeo encounters Tybalt on the street. Tybalt challenges him,

> Romeo, the love I bear thee can afford
> No better term than this: thou art a villain.
> (III,i)

Romeo, who is now Tybalt's cousin, attempts to avoid a fight with Tybalt. Romeo had earlier clearly shown his aversion to a quarrel, "This love feel I, that feel no love in this." (I,i) Mercutio, incensed by what seems to be Romeo's cowardice, himself challenges Tybalt. Mercutio comes to this fight not without some previous dislike of Tybalt. In Act II scene iv in discussing Tybalt he calls him "The courageous captain of compliments. . . [one of these] . . . fashion-mongers, these pardon-mi's" (II,iv) Here at the beginning of the third act Mercutio's mercurial temperature rises as he sees Romeo avoiding a challenge. As Mercutio and Tybalt fight, Romeo attempts to stop them, "The Prince expressly

hath/Forbid this bandying in Verona streets," and then he steps between them to stop the fight. Tybalt kills Mercutio under Romeo's arm, and Romeo protests,"I thought all for the best." Mercutio is assisted off stage to die. At this point there is a significant reversal for each of the characters and for the action of the play. All of the work that the playwright has done to create a loveable and empathetic Mercutio comes to fruition. With Mercutio dead, Romeo's impetuous response is.

> My very friend, hath got this mortal hurt
> In my behalf - my reputation stain'd
> With Tybalt's slander - Tybalt, that an hour
> Hath been my cousin. O sweet Juliet,
> Thy beauty hath made me effeminate
> And in my temper soft'ned valour's steel!
> (III,i)

The response to the death of Mercutio is untempered emotion. It is there in the words of the play; it is there in Romeo's character; and, although this is unimportant to a discussion of the form of the drama, it must also be there in the audience. Mercutio's death, the ultimate reversal of his fortunes, is a shock to all; and it sends Romeo into a "fire-ey'd fury." Romeo slays Tybalt. "O, I am fortune's fool!" is his realization of what he has done, what it will mean, the reversal of his fortunes, and it is the latest in the series of cues given to the reader or viewer that these lovers are doomed.

It is part of the hypotheses of this paper that the significance of the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet hangs on the event described above. All of the following acts occur without any malevolent premeditation on anybody's part. Throughout the reaminder of the play, each character merely reacts to what has already happened, given the divisiveness that exists

in Verona. The Prince exiles Romeo from the city. The Nurse and the Friar contrive a brief respite for the lovers and there follows the touching farewell scene. But before that, Romeo comes to the Friar, and, discovering that he has been banished, in reaction threatens to kill himself,

> In what vile part of this anatomy
> Doth my name lodge? Tell me, that I may sack
> The hateful mansion.
> (III,iii)

The Friar who has so far been the only person in Verona, except the Prince, to counsel reason and moderation, continues in that role and convinces Romeo to fly to Mantua,

> Where thou shalt live till we can find a time
> To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,
> Beg pardon of the Prince, and call thee back
> With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
> Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.
> (III,iii)

Romeo goes to exile in Mantua, pausing only at Juliet's bed. Both Romeo (scene III,iii) and later Juliet (scene IV,i) threaten to kill themselves. These scenes foreshadow their suffering and death in the tomb scene at the end of the play. Their response to a difficult situation is not to fight back, and they are both capable of suicide.

Meanwhile Father Capulet has his own reactions to the death of Tybalt. Either to placate the Prince or to help end Juliet's grief over Tybalt, he makes "a desperate tender" (III,iv) of his child's love to Paris. Juliet understandably refuses,

> Now by Saint Peter's Church, and Peter too,
> He shall not make me there a joyful bride!
> (III,v)

but cannot tell her parents of her marriage to Romeo. Father Capulet

flies into a rage,

> Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds,
> But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next
> To go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church,
> Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.
> (III,v)

Both Lady Capulet and the Nurse, who knows Juliet's dilemma, refuse to assist her. The Nurse even counsels that she forget about Romeo, "This second match/. . . excels your first." (III,v) In desperation Juliet rushes to the Friar's cell to seek his assistance. When Juliet threatens to kill herself, the Friar once again provides the voice of calm. He also provides a scheme "which craves as desperate an execution/ As that is desperate which we would prevent." (IV,i) He gives her a drug that will make her feign death for forty-two hours. He then sends word about this scheme to Romeo by a Friar. The rapidity with which the events since the marriage happen is emphasized still further as Capulet insists on shortening the time before the marriage by arranging it for Wednesday, the very next morning.

The Friar's plan would seem to work well enough despite its desperate nature, but another series of accidents serves to bring about the fatal conclusion. Romeo's man, Balthazar, brings to Romeo in Mantua the news, a false discovery, that Juliet has died; further, he has no word from the Friar. Romeo buys a poison and rushes to Juliet's grave. Meantime the Friar's messenger is trapped in a quarantined house and returns the letter he was to deliver to Romeo to Friar Laurence. The Friar too hurries off to the grave.

In the final scene in the tomb itself, the order in which the events occur seals the fate of the lovers. Paris comes weeping and strewing

flowers to the grave, and he is followed by Romeo. They fight over Juliet's body and Faris is killed. Romeo takes the poison and dies. The Friar enters; Juliet wakes; but this time the Friar is too agitated at the sight of the two more dead bodies and can provide no counsel for Juliet. Fearing discovery he flies and Juliet stabs herself. Finally the Prince and his guards arrive, the Capulets and the Montagues arrive, and a moment of pathetic cartharsis occurs. Had Romeo arrived five minutes later or the Friar five minutes earlier, the ending might have been different. Every effort, prior to the final scene, to save the lovers is of no avail. The final tragedy hinges on nothing less than pure chance.

Nowhere in the script does Shakespeare indicate (as Arthur Brooke did so obviously before him) that these actions are anyone's fault. The fault lies rather in the situation that started this chain of events. The action of the play is one of passion stemming from the old family feud. The moments of great passion are the death of Tybalt, Romeo's threat to commit suicide, and the three deaths at the tomb. Three times the Friar averts further violence and excess of passion: 1) when Romeo comes to him wanting to be married, 2) when Romeo threatens suicide upon discovering he has been banished, and 3) when Juliet threatens suicide rather than facing marriage with Paris. In each of these instances the Friar quite rightly curbs the passion of these young people. The deaths of Mercutio, Tybalt, Paris, and Romeo occur when no adult is there to serve as a restraining influence, and when the full circumstances are hot known by the principals. Juliet dies when the Friar is no longer able to provide consolation. The action of the play then rests on two factors: 1) the youth of the main characters and 2) the effect of

the civil strife on them. The young people, especially the lovers, are impulsive as youth usually is. The quarrel prevented the adults from serving as they normally would to quiet the passion. The extreme passion is a result of the fact that adults do not save them from their worst errors. The adults fail because of the civil strife existing in Verona. If there is anyone morally responsible in the Christian sense of sin it is the elder Capulets and Montagues, but that is another play. If there is anything that causes the tragedy, it is the current social situation.

If the notion that Romeo and Juliet are not the cause of their own tragic demise, is acceptable; if Romeo and Juliet were only acting according to their own best notions of right and wrong, and, as that did not work, killed themselves rather than live alone; and if they were led to this by the quarrel and the various accidents, a question arises about what kind of tragic character's they are and what kind of tragedy this is.

It is the hypothesis of this paper that a critical use of Aristotle's theory will contribute to an understanding of Romeo and Juliet. One of the key points of such a discussion is the place of the particular tragic action, often called "tragic flaw," which has been used in this paper untranslated as hamartia. This class of unjust action does not exist either in the plot or in the story line of Romeo and Juliet to any important degree. It could be said that Romeo's attempt to break up the Mercutio-Tybalt fight was an hamartia, but that also seems to fit the description of atychema. Even if it were hamartia, it is not the important action of the play. Further it leads to no discovery and reversal; it leads to Romeo's impulsive murder of Tybalt. It is that later moment

which is the important moment of crisis in the action. Tybalt's murder resulted from unthinking passion and anger. It is the third of the three unjust actions which Aristotle describes in the Ethics.[90] If hamartia plays no significant role in this tragedy and there is no consequent discovery and reversal from it, Romeo and Juliet cannot be the kind of tragedy which Aristotle says has the theoretical best plot, the "complex" tragic plot. Of the other kinds of tragic plots that Aristotle describes briefly in chapter 18 of the Poetics, Romeo and Juliet comes closest to the plot of passion/fate/pathos. This means simply that there is more emphasis in the structure of the play put on passionate action and fate. It is action of uncontrolled emotion and sheer misfortune which dominates this play.

It is not supposed that the above argument is the only possible interpretation of this play. Along non-Aristotelian lines certain other conclusions have been forwarded. One critic states that Romeo and Juliet has been called "a drama of fate or or sheer misfortune in which the lovers are not at all responsible for the catastrophe they suffer. . . [however] . . . a number of scholars. . . would have regarded the lovers as guilty sinners rather than innocent victims."[91] Whether pathos or ethos is the highest importance in the play is the issue at hand. It is in order here to take note that the critics who claim that Romeo and Juliet were impetuous sinners and that their sin brought them to ruin (i.e., character is more important to the plot of Romeo and Juliet) are not

90. See Chapter Two of this paper.

91. Paul N. Siegel, "Christianity and the Religion of Love in Romeo and Juliet," SQ, XIX (1961), p. 371.

operating on the same ground of formal criticism used in this paper.[92] Paul Siegel and H. Edward Cain are modern critics of English literature who are most greatly influenced by A. C. Bradley. Quite independently of each other they have tried to carry Bradley's theories from Shakespearean Tragedy to a discussion of Romeo and Juliet.

Both of these critics spend considerable time bringing to a discussion of the play material from outside the play to prove their contention about it. Paul Siegal has a fine article detailing the history and the various sources of the Romeo and Juliet legend. That discussion has little do do with Shakespeare's rendition of the story. Siegal points out that in nearly every other telling of the story the lovers are castigated for extreme passion. In almost every form in which the story has appeared, including Arthur Brooke's poem of 1562, each author condemns the lovers' hasty action as the cause of their doom. Siegal reasons that it must be true in Shakespeare's story too. There is no evidence in the play that Shakespeare condemns the lovers. He noticeably excludes the castigation from his treatment of the story. The Friar may try to alter the lovers precipitate actions and the puritanical reader may dislike them, but Shakespeare intends no blame to fall on them.

Professor Cain's article is largely a discussion of Elizabethan ethical theory. He cites sources as varied as the writings of Sir Thomas More and King John. That discussion takes the major part of his paper. Cain successfully establishes that the sin of impatience-anger (he defines the two terms as synonymous) was universally opposed by

92. H. Edward Cain, "Romeo and Juliet: A Reinterpretation," SAB, 22 (1947).

93

the theorists of the day. If impatience-anger was considered a sin by the Elizabethan audience (Cain assumes that the Elizabethan audience had the same moral proclivities as Sir Thomas More and King John) and Romeo is impatient and easily angered, then this must be a tragedy dealing with the sin of anger, thus Romeo is a sinner who deserves the fate he brings upon himself. There are two implications of Cain's argument which seen unacceptable. The first is that the Elizabethan audience is necessarily the best judge of what this play is about. Even if we could know what the Elizabethan audience was really like and provided we could poll them about their reactions to this play, Cain's argument would lead us to assume that audience reaction is the best indicator of what a play is about. This alone is enough to disqualify Cain as a critic. If accepted, it might disqualify all critics in favor of the audience analyst or poll taker, who needs only ask an audience what Romeo and Juliet is about to get at the heart of the matter. Even if it could be proved that the Elizabethan audience and Shakespeare himself dissapproved of the sin of impatience-anger, the script of Romeo and Juliet can be seen to hold another meaning. It is the critic's responsibility to elucidate that meaning.

The other assumption that Cain makes is that tragedies are about sins. Modern criticism has a tendency to look for a tragic flaw in the hero of a tragedy and to call that tragic flaw a sin. That tendency is a result of a misunderstanding of the Greek root for tragic flaw, hamartia. Cain says Romeo and Juliet is a tragedy dealing with the sin of passion. It is possible to describe and analyze tragedy in a number

93. Cain, p. 167.

of ways. In this paper we have been, with Aristotle, saying that tragedy deals with the peculiar condition of man. To say as Cain does, that tragedy deals with man's sins is not so much to form a modern description of tragedy as it is to ignore the significance of tragic plot and emphasize character portrayal. Even though Oedipus most assuredly sinned, those sins are not the subject of Sophocles' play. Even though Hamlet sinned, his sins are not the subject of Shakespeare's play Hamlet. Romeo too sins; he is guilty of murder and is punished for it by not being allowed to live a happy married life with Juliet. Shakespeare's concern is with normal men and women who, despite their every effort and by virtue of their being men, are destroyed.

The plot of Romeo and Juliet is dominated by a sense of fate and by the unthinking passionate acts of young people caught in an inherited world of hate.

Chapter Six Conclusion

Aristotle's discussion of tragedy in the Poetics is seen in this paper to be descriptive and not prescriptive. That discussion is consequently applicable to tragedies written after Aristotle. Specifically his theories are here used in an explication of Romeo and Juliet. Further, hamartia has been described in this paper as a particular kind of human action that has an intimate relationship to the form of the "complex" tragic plot. Hamartia in Aristotle's sense is unimportant to other kinds of tragic plots. Later critics, in adapting to their use the terms "tragic flaw" and hamartia, have not meant what Aristotle meant when he used the word hamartia. They have often changed the original meaning of hamartia. There has been no attempt to establish Aristotle's view of hamartia as better, more correct, more logical, or in any sense superior to the view of "tragic flaw" taken by A. C. Bradley and other twentieth-century critics. Rather this paper has established the difference between hamartia and "flaw".

Romantic and nineteenth-century critics have had very little to say on the subject that has been of concern in this paper, tragic plot structure. Their chief concern seems to be in the description of the personalities of the tragic characters found in drama. To a great extent Romantic and nineteenth-century criticism has been more historical than critical in its concern with the personality and personal philosophy of the playwright.

Most modern critics differ little from the view of "tragic flaw" formulated by Bradley. Professors Dixon and Kitto seem to agree with Aristotle far more than their comments would indicate. There is a clear distinction between Aristotle's use of hamartia on the one hand and its

use by Romantic, nineteenth-century, and some modern critics on the other hand.

The term "tragic flaw" is most often used by critics in reference to some permanent trait of the personality of a character in a play. Further, this notion is seen to be necessary to all tragedy. In Bradleyan terms, character is vitally important. Bradley might explain that the youth of Juliet and Romeo should be labeled the "tragic flaw" for this play, in the sense that youth often acts to excess. Without their youthful personalities they would not be capable of carrying out the parts they must play in the tragic plot. Such a statement would not be germane to this study. In any case, the problem with the use of the term "tragic flaw" is that it is perjorative. To be young is not a "sin," it is merely a state of being. In Verona to be young and in love with the wrong person is to court death. There seems to be no purpose in calling that situation a "flaw." To call such a situation hamartia is, of course, merely to confuse the use of the term.

Romeo and Juliet's plot structure has been analyzed in this paper in the light of Aristotle's description of plot. It has been seen to be the kind of plot that Aristotle says is dominated by pathetic deeds and fate. In that kind of plot hamartia does not play a significant role. To speak of the hamartia or the "tragic flaw" of either the characters or the plot of Romeo and Juliet is, in strictly defined Aristotelian terms, to discuss that which does not exist.

Modern critics have spent considerable time looking for "flaws" in tragic characters. The accepted assumption being that any tragic hero

has a "flaw." This paper has reopened that question. In Aristotelian terms hamartia is necessary only to the "complex" plot and the plot of Romeo and Juliet is one of pathos. The conclusion is that, as far as Aristotelian thinking is concerned there is no hamartia in the plot of Romeo and Juliet. It is also doubtful that, even in Bradley's sense of sinful excessiveness, there is a "flaw" in Romeo's or Juliet's character.

This study may be seen as an argument for greater caution in the use of critical terms and concepts. Many modern critics have unquestioningly accepted the notion that Aristotle's hamartia and Bradley's "flaw" are very similar in meaning. If this single concept is misunderstood and carelessly used, it might be appropriate to begin a reexamination of contemporary thought about the Poetics. Gerald Else, a classical scholar, has already begun such a study, but it would make great sense for theatre scholars to begin their own study and reevaluation. It is constantly a scholar's task to reexamine his basic concepts; such a reevaluation of Aristotle is long overdue. There also seems to be a need for further studies of Romeo and Juliet from the standpoint of Aristotelian criticism and contemporary non-Aristotelian criticism. The amount of published literature on this play is quite small in comparison to that on other Shakespearean tragedies. The author hopes that his paper may prove to be an impetus toward the further study of both the Poetics and Romeo and Juliet by other dramatic critics.

Appendix A Modular theses and dissertations

Sources: Speech Monographs and Dissertation Abstracts

Breault, Sister Mary Amata, "A Comparative Analysis of Shakespearean Use of Comic Elements in Hamlet and As You Like It," Catholic U., 1964, M.A.

Busch, Corliss T., "Symbolism in Two Plays by Tennessee Williams," West Virginia U., 1960, M.A.

Catrell, Dennis E., "The Function of Comedy in Jean Giradoux' Amphitryon 38 and Electra," N. Illinois U., 1962, M.A.

Craddock, George E., "The Concept of Identity in the Theatre of Eugene Ionesco," Louisiana State, 1966, Ph.D.

Ellis, James D., "Imagery in the Plays of Sean O'Casey," State U. of Iowa, 1960, M.A.

Fitch, Polly May, "The Language of the Last Three Major Plays of Eugene O'Neill," Stanford, 1966, Ph.D.

Gasser, Elizabeth, "Love as Goal and Symbol in Three of the Novels of Charles Dickens," Yale U., 1966, Ph.D.

Giordano, Anthony, "A Study of the Plot Development in Shakespeare's Anthony and Cleopatra," Catholic U., 1962, M.A.

Hawes, James W., "The Importance of the Major Discovery and Reversal in the Dramas of Henrik Ibsen," U. of Kansas, 1965, Ph.D.

Higginbothan, Virginia, "The Comic Spirit of Federico Garcia Lorca," Tulane U., 1966, Ph.D.

Hill, Philip G., "Irony as a Structural Device in Selected Plays of Eugene O'Neill," Tulane U., 1964, Ph.D.

Irving, William Francis, "An Analysis of the Exegetical Implications Found in Marc Connelly's Dramatic Fable The Green Pastures," Marquette, 1959, M.A.

Jones, Robert Alston, "The Pantomime and the Mimic Element in Frank Wedekind's Work," U. of Texas, 1966, Ph.D.

Lamun, Jr., Amne B., "A Study of the Greek Concept of Fate as Utilized in Three Plays of Eugene O'Neill," U. of Colorado, 1965, M.A.

Moldovan, Adela, "Theatrical Persuasion as Exemplified by Undershaft in Shaw's Major Barbara," Penn State, 1959, M.A.

Morris, Mary A.B., "Poetic Imagery in the Cocktail Party: A Director's Key to Interpretation," Catholic U., 1965, M.A.

Muller, Arlene Marie, "Didactic and Propagandistic Elements in Brecht's The Caucasian Chalk Circle," Penn State, 1962, M.A.

Nuderauer, George H., "Wit and Sentiment in Sheridan's Comedies of Manners," U. of Southern California, 1966, Ph.D.

Parola, Gene J., "An Interpretation of the Thought in Waiting for Godot," Indiana U., 1962, M.A.

Perry, Jerry Paul, "Shakespeare's Treatment of Plot Exposition in the First Acts of the Tragedies," State U. of Iowa, 1963, M.A.

Risso, Richard David, "A Study of the Psychological Structures in Four Plays by Henry de Montherlant," Stanford, 1965, Ph.D.

Seller, Howard J., "Characterization in the Novels of Samuel Butler," U. of Southern California, 1966, Ph.D.

Soule, Donald, "Irony in Early Critical Comedy," Stanford, 1959, M.A.

Trisolini, Anthony George, "An Analysis of the Structure of Hart Crane's The Bridge," Northwestern, 1959, Ph.D.

Appendix B Theses and Dissertations on Romeo and Juliet

Anderson, Richard Harris, "Costume Designs for Romeo and Juliet," Yale U., 1963, M.F.A.

Boston, Billie Gail, "Problems involved in Costuming Shakespearian Romeo and Juliet," U. of Oklahoma, 1962, M.A.

Emrshoff, Carol Jean, "A Study of the Portrayal of Juliet in William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet," U. of Minnesota, 1963, M.A.

Ferguson, Edre, "Production Study of the Portrayal of Juliet in William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet," U. of Minnesota, 1963, M.A.

Gaupp, Charles John, Jr., "A Project in Setting and Costume for a Production of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet," State U. of Iowa, 1949, M.F.A.

Haas, Thomas B., "Some Trends in Twentieth Century Shakespearean Play Production," Cornell U., 1960, M.A.

Hutsell, Joyce Ann, "Productions of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet on the New York Professional Stage, 1900-49," U. of Washington, 1950, M.A.

Lyons, Charles Kay, "The Progressive Accomodation of Shakespeare's Concern with Love as a Patient of Time in the Structural and Poetic Use of the Image of Love's Triumph," Stanford, 1964, Ph.D.

Marriott, Richard John, "Romeo and Juliet; A Production Book," St. Louis U., 1965, M.A.

Parker, Charles M., "A Study in Costume for Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet," Indiana U., 1949, M.A.

Shaver, Joseph Lowman, "Romeo," Yale U., 1964, M.F.A.

Smith, Ella Louise, "The Image as an Approach to the Interpretation of Juliet," Yale U., 1961, M.F.A.

Tippit, Carolyn, "A Study in the Design and Construction 6f Costumes for a Production of Romeo and Juliet," San Jose State Col,, 1969, M.A.

Webb, Jesse Edgar, "Costuming for Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet," Texas Tech., 1964, M.A.

LIST OF SOURCES CITED AND CONSULTED

Aristotle, Classical Literary Criticism, trans., T. S. Dorsch, Baltimore, Penguin, 1965.

Aristotle, Introduction to Aristotle, ed. Richard McKeon, New York, Modern Library, 1947.

Aristotle, Poetics, trans. S. H. Butcher, intro. Francis Fergusson, New York, Hill and Wang, 1961.

Aristotle, Poetics, trans. Gerald F. Else, Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan, 1967.

Aristotle, Poetics, trans. Preston H. Epps, Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina, 1942.

Aristotle, Poetics, trans. L. J. Potts, Cambridge, Eng., Cambridge Univ., 1953.

Aristotle, Poetics and Rhetoric, trans. Thomas Twinint (1789), New York, E. P. Dutton and Co., 1955.

Aristotle, The Student's Oxford Aristotle, 6 vols., trans. W. D. Ross, New York, Oxford Univ., 1942.

Auer, J. Jeffery, An Introduction to Research in Speech, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1959.

Bentley, Eric, In Search of Theatre, New York, Vintage Books, 1955.

Bentley, Eric, The Dramatic Event, New York, Horizon Press, 1954.

Bentley, Eric, The Life of the Drama, New York, Atheneum, 1964.

Bentley, Eric, The Playwright as Thinker, New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1946.

Boas, Fredrick S., Shakespeare and His Predecessors, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1986.

Bonitz, H., Index Aristotelicus, 2nd ed., Graz, Austria, Akademische Druck-U. Verlagsanstalt, 1955.

Bradley, A. C., Shakespearean Tragedy, London, Macmillan and Co., 1960.

Cain, H. Edward, "Romeo and Juliet: A Reinterpretation," SAB, 22, (1954), 163-191.

Campbell, Lily B., Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes, New York, Barnes and Noble, 1959.

Coleridge's Writing on Shakespeare, ed. Terence Hawkes, New York, Capricorn Books, 1959.

Copleston, Frederick, A History of Philosophy, vol. I, part ii, Garden City, New York, Image Books (Doubleday), 1962.

Crane, R. S., et al., Critics and Criticism, Chicago, U. of Chicago, 1952.

Dixon, W. MacNeile, Tragedy, London, Edward Arnold, and Co., 1929.

Else, Gerald F., "Agamemnon," Classical Philology, 52, January (1957), 33.

Else, Gerald F., Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard Univ., 1957.

Else, Gerald F., Homer and the Homeric Problem, Cincinatti, U. of Cincinatti, 1965.

Else, Gerald F., "Imitation in the 5th Century," Classical Philology, 53, April (1958), 73-90.

Else, Gerald F., The Origin and Early Form of Greek Tragedy, Cambridge, Harvard U., 1965.

Fergusson, Francis, The Human Image in Dramatic Literature, Garden City, New York, Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957.

Fergusson, Francis, The Idea of a Theatre, Princeton, Princeton U., 1949.

Frye, Northrup, The Anatomy of Criticism, Princeton, Princeton U., 1957.

Granville-Barker, Harley, Prefaces to Shakespeare, London, Sidgwick and Jackson, 1930,

Hartnoll, Phyllis, The Oxford Companion to the Theatre, 3rd ed. London, Oxford U., 1967.

Heffner, Hubert C., Selden, Samuel, and Sellman, Hunton D., Modern Theatre Practice, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959.

Henn, T. R., The Harvest of Tragedy, New York, University Paperbacks, 1966.

Jones, John, On Aristotle and Greek Tragedy, London, Chatto and Windus, 1962.

Kitto, H. D. F., Form and Meaning in Drama, New York, Barnes and Noble, 1964.

Kitto, H. D. F., Greek Tragedy, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday and Go., 1954.

Kitto, H. D. F., The Greeks, Baltimore, Penguin, 1962.

Kott, Jan, Shakespeare Our Contemporary, Garden City, N.Y., Anchor Books, 1966.

Langer, Susanne K., Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art, New York, Scribner, 1953.

Lesky, Albin, Greek Tragedy, New York, Barnes and Noble, 1965.

Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim, Hamburg Dramaturgy, trans. Helen Zimmern, New York, Dover, 1962.

Moulton, Richard G., The Moral System of Shakespeare, New York, MacMillan, 1903.

Nicoll, Allardyce, British Drama, New York, Thomas Y. Crowell, 1925.

Nietzsche, Fredrich, The Birth of Tragedy, trans. Clifton P. Fadiman, New York, Modern Library, 1927.

Seltzer, Daniel, ed., The Modern Theatre, Boston, Little Brown and Co., 1967.

Shakespeare, William, The Complete Works of Shakespeare, Chicago, Scott, Foresman, and Co., 1951.

Shakespeare, William, Romeo and Juliet, "New Variorum Edition," ed. Horace Howard Furness, New York, Dover, 1963.

Shakespeare, William, Romeo and Juliet, ed. John E. Hankins, Baltimore, Penguin, 1960.

Shakespeare, William, Romeo and Juliet, ed. George Lyman Kittredge, revised Irving Ribner, Waltham, Mass., Blaisdell Publishing Co., 1966.

Siegel, Paul N., "Christianity and the Religion of Love in Romeo and Juliet," SQ, XIX, (1961), 371-392.

Spencer, Hazelton, The Art and Life of William Shakespeare, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1940.

Stoll, Elmer Edgar, Shakespeare's Young Lovers, London, Oxford, U., 1937.

Styan, J. L., The Elements of the Drama, Princeton, Princeton U., 1960.

Wellek, Rene, A History of Modern Criticism: 1750-1950, New Haven, Yale U., 1955.