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**George Chapman's "*Bussy D'Ambois*" (c. 1604) and Jacobean
social attitudes**

Beach, Vincent Woodrow, Jr., Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1988

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GEORGE CHAPMAN'S BUSSY D'AMBOIS (c. 1604)

AND JACOBAN SOCIAL ATTITUDES

by

VINCENT W. BEACH, JR.

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
English in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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1988

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GEORGE CHAPMAN'S BUSSY D'AMBOIS (c. 1604) AND

JACOBEAN SOCIAL ATTITUDES

by Vincent W. Beach, Jr.

Adviser: W.R. Elton

This study explores the controversial play by George Chapman, Bussy D'Ambois. It aims to synthesize various theories about the play which help to illuminate Chapman's use of historical allusion as a vehicle for heroic tragedy.

Chapman, perhaps more than any other playwright of the period, utilizes historical allusion in dramas set in a recent (for Chapman) historical period. His early tragedies (1604-1613) deal with the French courts of Henry III (1574-1589) and Henry IV (1589-1610), while Chapman's allusions at times refer to the English courts of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) and James I (1603-1625).

Better understanding this aspect of Chapman's work allows us greater comprehension of what other important London playwrights of the period were doing. During Chapman's tenure other notable playwrights were: Ben Jonson, Christopher Marlowe, John Marston, Thomas Middleton, John Webster and William Shakespeare.

This study seeks to place Bussy D'Ambois within the contextual meaning of rival plays as well as in the context of other Renaissance texts that were then circulating in England. These approaches help us to better identify Chapman's place in an important period of English letters.

PREFACE

I would like to thank W.R. Elton for his support, stimulation and guidance, and I am grateful to Angus Fletcher and Patrick Cullen for their comments. My dear parents have been steady supporters. And this is also an opportunity to gratefully recognize other colleagues and associates who have asked me searching questions about Chapman and his work: Charles Beach, Mark Hussey, Carmen Silva, Benjamin Sloan and Jo-Anne Rosen.

I would also like to thank the staff members of the libraries where I have spent the most time: The Boston Public Library, The Columbia Libraries, The City University of New York library system, The Library of Congress, The Folger Library, The Harvard Libraries, The Huntington Library, The New York Public Library system, The Pierpont Morgan Library, The Stanford Libraries, The State University of California library system, The University of California library system, The University of Colorado Library, and the Yale Libraries.

Manhattan

Vincent W. Beach, Jr.

1988

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

For the sake of convenience the following works, which are referred to in this study, will be abbreviated as follows: Act, scene and line numerals by themselves refer to John H. Smith's 1607 edition of Bussy D'Ambois in Allan Holaday, Gen. Ed., The Plays of George Chapman: The Tragedies (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D.S. Brewer, 1987) and Holaday's edition of The Comedies (Urbana: Illinois UP, 1970).

The plays will be abbreviated as follows:

RBD, The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois.

BC, The Conspiracy of Byron.

BT, The Tragedy of Byron.

Shakespeare's works are referred to The Riverside Shakespeare, Ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Houghton Mifflin, 1974).

Marlowe's works are referred to The Complete Plays, J.B. Steane (Penguin, 1982).

CHAPTER I: QUESTIONS OF INTERPRETATION

This study explores George Chapman's (1559?-12 May, 1634) earliest extant heroic tragedy, Bussy D'Ambois.¹ Scholars and critics of Chapman, particularly during the last half century, have sharply disagreed in their interpretations of the important problematical work.² This may be understandable since Chapman's ornamental language and multi-leveled plots at times seem to defy rational comprehension. An aim of this study is to help identify and explicate textual passages for a modern reader and show how they form a component of Chapman's early tragedies: social disorder as reflected in textual and contextual social paradox and inversion.

Critical disagreement has occurred in part due to the insufficient attention that has been paid to Chapman's dramatic attitudes regarding the structure of Jacobean society. Chapman's play seems to identify a pre-figuration of Enlightenment Humanism by offering D'Ambois as a unified and sovereign entity whose identity is solely self-dependent. The elements of social inversion which Chapman uses in his early tragedies form a cohesive theme. The play cannot be fully appreciated without knowing some of these highly individual usages. In addition, by better understanding Chapman's social vision, we also gain a greater comprehension

of the intellectual life of London theaters. From this approach we can better see what the citizens appreciated in this popular play. Certainly these theatrical representations are shaped in such a way as was calculated successfully to entertain primarily Blackfriars Theatre (a private theater) audiences of 1603-1604.

Chapman required that his audience of the period recognize literary conventions and philosophic concepts in order to best appreciate the plays. He assumes a literary tradition and an ability on the part of that audience to understand the numerous allusions and literary conventions available to a well-informed Renaissance audience. This study identifies some of these conventions and tries to show how Chapman evolves his dramatic innovations.

Chapman shows some of his literary idiosyncrisies by textually combining aspects of his contemporary political and social history with allusion to numerous classical and Renaissance sources. In this way he follows the classical literary tradition which humanism had brought to the drama.

Humanism had revived an interest in the drama as an instrument of literary and moral education as well as an environment for theological and political controversy. Chapman is particularly interested in these matters, and he often examines social attitudes by allegorically representing specific persons and events.

Chapman's approach to social order in Bussy D'Ambois is analyzed by focusing on four social terms--nobility, honor, kingship, and greatness--terms which Chapman uses

thematically. This unity ironically evokes aspects of social disintegration and locates one of Chapman's dramatic habits: ironical use of social political diction. He takes these terms and creates a world of social inversions. We see an illustration of this in Chapman's character, Tharsalio (The Widow's Tears, c. 1603/05), a spirited relation of D'Ambois who also lives in a world where it is possible that "I'll turn all topsy-turvy" (V.iii.200) and where:

Fools shall have wealth, and the learned shall
live by their wits. I'll have no more bankrouts.
They that owe money shall pay it at their best
leisure, and the rest shall make a virtue of
imprisonment. V.iii.310-14

A central focus for these social meanings appears in the specific allegorical (social / historical) dialectic which Chapman effectively uses in his early tragedies. His audience surely knew that Chapman's historical and political allegory at times literally signify actual personages and events. We infer this because the government censors charged him for libel on numerous occasions. In addition, his audiences consisted primarily of professionals educated at the Inns of Court and at the universities. The overwhelming success of Bussy D'Ambois at the gate, combined with the knowledge that his audience was the best educated of any of the London theaters, allows us to infer that Chapman's complicated dramatic machinery was understood and heartily appreciated within social contexts. As time passed and audiences no longer remembered those contexts, Chapman's early tragedies passed out of fashion. A task of this study is to illuminate some of those contexts so that we may better understand the

problematic Bussy D'Ambois.

The dialectic centers around questions of sovereignty and may also be observed in his next three tragedies: The Conspiracie and Tragedie of Charles Duke of Byron (c. 1607-08) and The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois (c. 1610-11). These works help to further identify Chapman's dramatic tendency. Still further, instances in the texts of several of Chapman's chief competitors on the London stage of this period will be explored in order to illustrate dramatic tendencies which they shared. In addition, other selected Renaissance thinkers are added to the discussion when their texts seem useful.

The combination of dramatic texts and selected Renaissance readings proposed in this study form a web of meaning within which Chapman composes his early tragedies, and particularly Bussy D'Ambois. In fact the playwright relies on an audience's contextual sophistication and understanding. The 1603-04 audience was accustomed to Hamlet, The Malcontent, and Sejanus as the newest rival plays. With Bussy D'Ambois, then, Chapman was successfully competing for the attention and interest of the 15,000 or so weekly theater-goers of the period. So, studying Chapman's drama, as this study proposes to show, places each of the above-mentioned plays as cultural and intellectual documents of similar fabric, rather than as isolated "mountain-peaks."

Identifying Jacobean social attitudes, this study will seek to develop an awareness of social contexts during the period of Chapman's early tragedies, and particularly Bussy D'Ambois. Specific lines in the text refer to incidents

taking place in the royal courts of England and of France. Chapman boldly moves into dramatic representations of individuals living at the respective courts.

Chapman's lively historical allegories at times have the ring of libel, or so attentive government censors might lead us to believe. In spite of a libelous tendency, or perhaps in part because of it, his plays remained fashionable for about forty years. During this period Chapman was also among the most censored playwrights in a field which featured Marlowe, Jonson, and Shakespeare as his chief rivals.

While examining Chapman's plays the study will also set some of the historical context Chapman uses which would have been known to an early Jacobean audience. Such context is specifically focused on in his history plays. Therefore, developing a greater awareness of the context may help readers of another period to better understand and to more fully appreciate these important transitional plays.

As a method of investigation I understand this to mean that existing texts from the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, taken as a unit, cast light on what meanings may be gleaned from the web-like networks of meanings which these texts seem to signify. This is not a study of deconstruction, but rather a reconstruction of 1604 London literary and intellectual interests as presented on stage.

Chapman's intentional multiple meanings constructs a sort of network of meaning. The audience's enjoyment of the play depended upon understanding and appreciating the web of meaning that is illustrated in this study. Chapman was one of

several dramatists of this period who used language in a web-like play of multiple-meanings, and Chapman regularly exploits multiple-meanings. It thus becomes a task of the twentieth century scholar to uncover contexts of past meanings in order to learn from our intellectual heritage.

Chapman is one of the most learned people of the age. He mixes his learning with social events and individuals of European courts. Chapman's dramatic social attitudes are often influenced by specific people and incidents with particular reference to both recent and contemporary Tudor (1485-1603), Stuart (1603-1645), Valois (1328-1589) and Bourbon (1589-1793) courts. So accurate and unhidden are Chapman's queries that representatives of these courts on several occasions lodge official protests. Chapman apparently went too far with dramatic allegory on more than several occasions, leading to censorship and prohibition.

A notable instance was in 1605, when Chapman was imprisoned for his part in composing Eastward Ho. Government representatives, at least, believed that in Chapman's plays there were at times clear textual links between drama and the society in which he lived and worked. The dramatist presents a type of social document, and the approach of the essay will be to consider the peculiarly dramatic dialectic which is applied to his stage handling of social attitudes surrounding the court of ca. 1603-1604 London.

Chapman's concept of drama, then, tends to differ from that of his chief Elizabethan predecessors and contemporaries--Thomas Kyd (1558-94), Christopher Marlowe

(1564-1593), John Marston (1576-1634), William Shakespeare (1564-1616) and Ben Jonson (1572-1637). While Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy (1592?) takes place in a roughly contemporary Spanish court, and Marston's The Malcontent (1604) allows, "'fore God, I think / the world be turn'd upside down too" (III.ii.151-52), these playwrights tend to organize their plays around a more carefully limited range of social philosophy than does Chapman.

Chapman's staged battle of social philosophies takes risks politically and theologically, and the influence of Dr. Faustus, for example, may be discerned in the morality play element and in the necromancy of the drama. But it is Tamburlaine which provides the more direct literary ancestor by means of a bold overreacher who conquers a worldly empire. Tamburlaine, like D'Ambois, seeks to gain the reward for his considerable abilities which errant Fortune had ignored. But Chapman goes further than Marlowe by throwing over a world order at court, or so the audience may recognize it.

At times Chapman engages in such diverse contradictions of political and social philosophies that he appears to overturn several of his contemporary institutions of social order. And in his early tragedies, he seems to take that to mean social institutions which in some way are inverted.

Among the criticized and overturned social institutions are divine right sovereignty, the sources of justice apart from Christian theology, and a microcosmic view of a changing and decaying social structure.

Social values at court are acted out through a series of

seemingly unresolvable moral and philosophic dilemmas. These dilemmas serve to illuminate the play's ambiguous, fluid, and at times ironic use of the four terms, king, honor, nobility, and greatness, which form a unique variation of a social topos, the world upside down.³ The topos is then used by Chapman to form a critique of French and English monarchical (courtly) society, a theme which Chapman particularly develops in Bussy D'Ambois as well as in his other French history tragedies which soon followed.⁴

In the early tragedies the playwright often critically examines the English class system by employing contradictory social terms, and by using the honest and at times too ambitious Bussy D'Ambois and later Clermont D'Ambois to question commonly held social attitudes. The complexity of the debate and the unusual number of allusions to classical and to Renaissance sources, as well as the fact that it was performed at Blackfriar's theater, identify Bussy D'Ambois as intended for an audience prepared to follow the fast-paced sing-song of Chapman's Elizabethan English. And it could be Chapman's fluent use of allusion combined with his ornamental Elizabethan language that has generally deterred revivals of his plays.

Other complexities facing Chapman studies include frequent use of complex reversals that exploit multiple meanings. This is inherent in both the language and in the complicated action of opposed contraries. Chapman delights in these various inversions, and most particularly by inverting king imagery. We find that a notable Renaissance example of such inversion,

or world upside down inversion, is evident in Pantagruel by Francois Rabelais (1494?-1553), in which serious ideas are set forth next to overwhelming nonsense. Royal inversion also appears in Shakespeare's First Part of King Henry the Fourth, IV.ii.483 (Harbage c. 1595-98), where Prince Hal and Falstaff pretend first for one to be king and the other to be prince, then reverse roles. Measure for Measure (1604) also tamely formulates a temporary reversal of roles in I.i.

Chapman's approach differs in that such reversal is intended as constant and absolute. What's more, in Chapman's tragic drama these qualities of reversal are present from early in Act I and then woven throughout the play. His tragic heroes cannot help themselves. They have, by nature, "kingly" qualities which show themselves in nearly everything the protagonist does.

In Bussy D'Ambois Chapman places a meritorious "kingly" commoner into the most ruthless and decadent court of Europe, the Parisian court of Henri III (1574-1589).⁵ Henri's court, like the court in Chapman's play, was distinguished by sensational plots, seductions, assassinations, and massacres. What's more, the active dramatic role of the Duc de Guise (Henri, third Duke, 1550-1588) in the St. Bartholomew massacre (1572) would have been remembered by a Protestant English audience seeing such a character on Chapman's stage. That audience would also recognize that in such a bloody and treacherous atmosphere it would be surprising if an honest and direct protagonist failed to meet with disaster.

The life of ruthless London and Paris courtiers, then,

offers a glimpse into a critical impetus of Bussy D'Ambois and the French history tragedies. Revealing attitudes about apparent breakdowns in the social order, his early tragic dramas approach becoming satires through their incessant probing. Chapman's satirical and ironic attitudes about societal order breaking down are further revealed through word distortion and by extending the range of definition of the above-mentioned recurring word groups.

Such distortion of meaning is also evident in Shakespeare's King Lear (c. 1607) and in Hamlet (c. 1600-1604). In such a world right and wrong are disputed, and a benevolent cosmos-ordering Providence cannot be taken for granted. Instead, ruthless Machiavellians are in control of "the state of things," and honest virtues have no purpose or value in such an atmosphere.

Chapman's Machiavellian politicians form a picture of decaying divine right monarchy.⁶ His approach to corrupt "politic" behavior emphasizes an inversion of social roles as related through actions and speeches of the characters. The following are several notable inversions which will be considered in this study: king and commoner become equals; the legitimacy of marriage is questioned by introducing instantaneous "true" love, creating new transcendent holy vows; the friar (a holy vicar) serves as liason in Tamyra's sexual intrigue with D'Ambois; and, nobility now depends on mere money and treachery for its sustenance.

Besides recognizing that Chapman's approach to inverted social attitudes is central to understanding what he is doing

in the play, this study will also seek to identify opposed social philosophies unleashed on stage. Where some critics have sought to reduce the play's formula by apparently exposing Bussy's flaws as an unethical Christian hero or pointing out his limitations as an exemplar of Roman Stoic virtù, the study will suggest that Chapman's synthesized world order incorporates not only Renaissance Christian values and Roman stoic principles but the Platonic good, libertinism, and alchemical philosophy as well. It is as if Chapman is responding to John Donne's (1572-1631) idea that the new philosophy calls all in doubt.⁷

Chapman seems to suggest that the cosmos is ordered by seemingly inscrutable means. No longer may any one philosophy hope to encompass all of newly discovered Reformation, new world, and Copernican universes. By throwing the world out of focus, questions were being raised about Providence and therefore, too, monarchs thought to be representatives of divinity. Failure to recognize this as one of Chapman's comprehensive ambitions is what may account for some of the difficulties in understanding this play.

Application To Text

Early in Bussy D'Ambois we find that the protagonist presents us with a striking inverted contrast of good men to great men, the latter appearing,

As cedars beaten with incessant storms,
So great men flourish; and do imitate
Unskilful statuaries, who suppose

(In forging a Colossus) if they make him
 Straddle enough, strut, and look big, and gape,
 Their work is goodly (I.i.5-10)

Great men are the opposite of good men. Such a definition of greatness seems to depend on mere external appearance and imitation, a type of forgery executed by inferior artisans. Bussy inverts greatness by manifesting in a corrupt court his rare "good" qualities:

I am for honest actions, not for great:
 If I may bring up a new fashion,
 And rise in Court with virtue, speed his plough.
 (I.i.124-126)

Virtue and honesty amount to goodness and are to be thought of as contrary to greatness. Chapman uses this inversion contrast to account further for his stage purposes.

The playwright often uses words in ways which invert their meaning. In Act II we may observe another striking instance of inversion as Bussy reveals his kingly nature. Here we have a conversation between Bussy the commoner and newcomer to court, and the King of France:

When I am wrong'd and that law fails to right me,
 Let me be King myself (as man was made)
 And do a justice that exceeds the law.
 (II.i.197-99)

When humanity was first made, so the legend goes, individuals were responsible for and capable of seeing justice done. Each individual was able to be fair and just in considering other people. It then seems to follow that human beings as individuals are sovereign, free to prosecute their ideas of nobility and love:

If my wrong pass the power of single valour
 To right and expiate; then be you my King,
 And do a Right, exceeding Law and Nature:

Who to himself is law, no law doth need,
 Offends no King, and is a King indeed.
 (II.i.200-204)

Here is a sense of the Medieval lord of misrule where people's everyday social roles are reversed for one day. But in this passage we begin to see that Chapman has something more encompassing in mind. The use of the word king is stretched to include himself (Bussy) as King, all men as kings, and Henri III as king. Chapman uses King in the second line as if it were inverted.

The king or sovereign exists in several senses, each sense pertaining to sources of justice. D'Ambois and Henri III each recognize kingly aspects in one another and each appears to respect the other's ability to see justice served. D'Ambois and the king appear as closer spiritual allies than any of the other characters in the play. They form an instant bond, even though they come from opposite poles of the hierarchy. D'Ambois seems to embody the idea that nobility may include members from every level of society, as we observe in a disputation between Bussy and Monsieur:

Mons.	He's the better man.
Buss.	And therefore may do worst?
Mons.	He has more titles.
Buss.	So Hydra had more heads.
Mons.	He's greater known.
Buss.	His greatness is the people's, mine's mine own.
Mons.	He's nobler born.
Buss.	He is not, I am noble. And noblesse in his blood hath no gradation, But in his merit. (III.ii.70-79)

Chapman explores these terms in a variety of inverted applications of nobility. He similarly uses a term such as King in its fullest spectrum of meanings, not merely echoing

commonly held concepts but vigorously stretching them.

With the opening dialogue of D'Ambois we are introduced to what will be recognized as a favorite Chapman strategy: "Fortune, not Reason, rules the state of things, Reward goes backwards, Honour on his head . . ." (I.i.1-2). Reversal has become the only sense of order one may refer to, and Chapman appears to use the terms this study focuses on to further explore this concept.

Honor is also inverted in several variations, particularly when Tamyra disputes Bussy's honor. Monsieur queries Tamyra about her understanding of honor with,

Honour, what's that? your second maidenhead:
And what is that? a word; the word is gone,
The thing remains . . . (II.ii.60-62)

Furthermore, we see that Tamyra offers a vision of free and universal kingship for all men of honor (III.i.42), while Monsieur on the contrary maintains the Elizabethan commonplace that "in a King All places are contain'd" (I.i.35).

Then, an assortment of inversions may be usefully noted: degrees of nobility are debated by Monsieur and D'Ambois (III.ii.70) as well as by the Duchess (I.ii.87), thereby extending the range of the term; the definition of "true" law is twisted by Henri III and Montsurry (II.ii.118), suggesting that fundamental natural laws are in several ways turned upside-down. The meaning of a 'great' man, who turns out to be a politic Machiavel and therefore the opposite of a good man, is outlined by D'Ambois (I.i.6). And the independence of an individual's honor from the jurisdiction of kings is

further established by Tamyra (II.ii.59), thus questioning accepted codes and establishing the liberty of both herself and D'Ambois to develop their own senses of honor. These and similar scenes combine to constitute the reversal of Fortune as stated in the opening remarks.

Throughout the drama we see that Bussy considers himself a law unto himself, beyond the jurisdiction of kings and governments. The "honorable" man of "natural nobility" is self-contained and appeals to natural laws which transcend the fashionable and transient laws regulating society. Furthermore, Chapman's handling of kingship and clergy casts doubt on their reliability. The friar and the king, honor and justice; each is manipulated so that none may be ultimately depended upon. A premise of Chapman's thus entails criticism of both church and state as well as questioning the value of social achievement. We find instances of a similar (and later) critique in John Webster's (?1580-?1634) The Duchess of Malfi (c. 1614) and in Thomas Middleton's (?1580-1627) Women Beware Women (c. 1613-1621), where commoners and nobility also explore fundamental English social attitudes. These plays seem to critically expose the decay of social structure and in each case the audience witnesses tragic destruction as a consequence of living in a world that appears to function without moral direction.

The topical nature of Chapman's approach to kingship is suggested by the transition on the throne from Elizabeth to James (James was crowned 25 July 1603). The entourage which came with the King drew the attention of some London

playwrights and their audiences. We observe an instance of this when we find allusions in Bussy D'Ambois to James's open sale of knighthoods. And a year later, in Eastward Ho (1605) Chapman, Jonson, and Marston (as collaborators) refer to those "industrious" Scots whose nobility and honor appear doubtful to sharp-witted playwrights.

In plays of this period Chapman questions the nature of a nobility which can be bought and sold. Again, he further questions the nature of nobility by presenting as characters on stage (before a Protestant English audience) the corrupt court of the French Catholic Henri III (king May 1574-August 1589) and the zealous anti-Protestant Duc de Guise (1550-1588). Though of "noble blood," these men are at times intended to be recognized as ignoble in their actions.

Chapman's "flawed nobility" subject matter is notably influenced by Christopher Marlowe's The Massacre at Paris (c. 1593), which employs most of these characters and refers to similar events. However, Chapman's play goes further than Marlowe's in that the former occasionally seeks antidotes to the ruthless savagery into which the earlier play had inevitably descended.

The Present State Of Studies On Bussy D'Ambois

Scholars have notably disagreed about the prevailing philosophy which orders Chapman's play. Such disagreement is reflected in the scholarly difficulties to reach a conclusion

about the nature of the crux (the final scenes) of Bussy D'Ambois. Taken together this diversity of views suggests the problematical design of the play and some of the complexities of Chapman's approach to tragedy.⁸

Chief critical approaches have attempted to unravel Chapman's complexity by imposing a dominant theme or political, philosophical, historical, or ethical idea upon the play. In fact most critics have understandably sought to reduce the play to a single moral formula. Such attempts at reduction account in part for the variety of positions. This study suggests that Chapman's work would seem to invite a perplexing diversity of views, and this study will also advance the view that social diversity is purposely used by Chapman as a focus for Bussy D'Ambois.

The following reverse chronological survey of scholarship is intended to outline some of the critical context of this study. The survey seems to suggest that critical confusion is to be expected, especially when readers overlook Chapman's use of social inversion and interspersed philosophies.

One scholar who has usefully pointed to the use of inversion in Chapman's plays is Jane Melbourne. In her article "The Inverted World of Bussy D'Ambois" (1985), she observes the timeliness of the issue of inversion by pointing out that the retinal inversion of visual images is first described in Johannes Kepler's Ad vitellionem paralipomena (1604). Professor Melbourne points out that Chapman uses the "image as part of a complex of ideas and images supporting

Monsieur's reduction of Nature to a sum of forces indifferent to man," and that he also develops "the inversion of right relationship in the marriage of Tamyra and Montsurry."⁹

Kepler points out that what one sees, in reality, are inverted images. Reality itself has been thrown off center, and the world really is, in a sense, upside down.

As the world view is shifted so is humanity's place in that world and analogously humanity's position in the cosmic scheme of things. Developing this idea further, Jonathan Dollimore (1984) writes,

This decentering of man is the basis of an increasingly penetrating social and political realism in a sequence of plays ranging from Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois, through Shakespeare's Lear and Coriolanus and culminating with Webster's The White Devil.¹⁰

Dollimore goes on to observe an emerging topos:

Exclusion and poverty give him-or rather force upon him-a true view of things yet one which is anything but disinterested; that is, they offer to Bussy a vantage point from which he experiences the relative worthlessness of the social order and, simultaneously, his dependence upon it.¹¹

Bussy sees the social order from a viewpoint focused on the apparent lack of merit of those who are on "top" of his society.

In another recent study, Jonathan Goldberg (1983) is interested in how authority is represented by Chapman, Massinger, Jonson, and Shakespeare. Goldberg inquires into personal and societal authority as represented in the work of Jacobean playwrights and in the writings of James I of England (1603-1625). Since Chapman appears to transfer royal absolutism to fit every member of society (through D'Ambois),

Goldberg suggests that "Absolutism is everyone's goal--it is how to be a person, to reflect the royal self."¹² Goldberg goes on to say that,

Henry sees the golden age when he sees Bussy; he apprehends a founding myth for the imperium in him, a state which is also a spirit and a genius, out of time and eternal, before nature and justice were separated, an originary principle that transcends opposites.¹³

D'Ambois sees what is before him, without discrimination. This clarity of vision sets him apart from the Machiavellian politicians at court, who weigh and calculate every move to their advantage.

In a recent monograph, The Painful Passage to Virtue (1982), Gunilla Florby suggests that the D'Ambois plays represent pessimistic explorations of the question of how to lead a virtuous life.¹⁴ Such pessimism is shown as Bussy is punished by a society unappreciative of his qualities, particularly since honesty has little use at court.

In a reversal of the above view, the limitation of Bussy's honesty is questioned by Richard Ide (1980), who contrasts Bussy's natural origins to his lofty, courtly ambition in the following comment:

Chapman's tragedy would be less perplexing and Bussy himself less ambiguous if King Henry's assumption about a golden age of native noblesse were correct, or if Bussy exhibited the true native noblesse which Strozza defines in The Gentleman Usher (V.iv. 56-62), or if Bussy were a throwback to the Christian golden age.¹⁵

The dilemma of the drama is, Ide indicates, the limitation as well as the grandeur of Bussy's virtù. He sees Bussy as a character exercising less than native noblesse,

emerging as a paradoxical figure merely caught in a series of ethical labyrinths.

A way out of the labyrinths is suggested in Peter Ure's (1974) ironic reading, which emphasizes that:

Throughout the play there are many places where Chapman fails to reprove and seems to admire. One way out of the incoherence that this causes is to suppose that such passages must be read ironically; that the spectator is required to measure what appears to be intended to arouse our admiration and amazement at Bussy, our sense that he lives in a different world from the other characters.¹⁶

Another way out is simply to accept the validity of the code which members of the Court live by, the code which Bussy learns about in his straightforward advance. Such a code is contrasted to the moral structure Bussy embodies at the beginning of the drama, where he is a natural man living in a forest (pastoral), apart from society.

Another critic, Raymond Waddington (1974) points out that in contrast to Bussy's potent search for good Fortune, the king is without power:

Although an enlightened and effective monarch can restore to a court something like the lost order, it is Bussy's misfortune to attempt to bring justice to a court ruled by a man who wants either power or will to effect change.¹⁷

D'Ambois enters into the court with the fervor of a man on a mission, a sort of social reformer set on achieving what he aims at. He seems more powerful and versatile than the mediocre king by learning court senses of honor and love, nobility and greatness, and by finding out how to pursue each new definition through action at court.

New meanings emerge from reading Chapman's variation of

the world upside down. Observing such a tendency is Ian Donaldson, whose The World Upsidedown (1970) notes that "the currency of the figure in English Renaissance literature may be suggested by the frequency of its occurrence in the works of one author alone, George Chapman."¹⁸

In a gesture of conciliation, Millar MacLure (1966) observes that there is reason for Chapman's play to have been considered a "problem play" by some critics. MacLure offers a possible way to join some of the factions:

Chapman's tragedies cannot be adequately interpreted solely in terms of ethical and political discussion; in that light they are 'problem plays' in more ways than one.¹⁹

Posing conflicting elements may well be Chapman's way of showing the moral and political confusions of the period. He projects D'Ambois as an energetic individual who is attempting to navigate in spite of social and ethical confusions. MacLure seems to concur with Waddington that the hero is superior to the confusing moral environment:

Bussy's heroic energy, spirit--the play is full of references to his spirit--finds no worthy matter to work upon; in tragedy, the full meaning of the hero's fate being revealed in his agony, he is transformed by that knowledge, becomes as it were completed.²⁰

In a humanist view of tragedy the individual may be able to maintain an advantage over the course of events. Consequently D'Ambois may be viewed, according to MacLure, as an idealized humanist hero, the sum of the physical and mental excellences of humanity; Roman Stoic virtù.

The Stoic approach considers Bussy's strong character as superior to an environment which nevertheless succeeds in

destroying him. In The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare and Dryden (1962), Eugene Waith suggests:

Bussy's failure cannot be equated with moral failing and hence the meaning of his tragedy is not simply what might be suggested by the outlines of the story--that he must pay the penalty for pride, adultery and traffic with the devil. As Chapman dramatizes this story, the failure is rather Bussy's inability to reach his goal.²¹

A noble man engages in a dialogue with sin and he pays the penalty. This has some of the elements of a medieval morality play except that other characters in the play also court pride, adultery, and the devil. Why do they go unpunished if D'Ambois is murdered for having committed lesser sins?

It is due to a lack of fortitude, Waith suggests, that Bussy is punished. Since Bussy falls short of permanently establishing honesty in court society, then he must be weak. Waith continues: "Together these paradoxes present the moving dilemma of a great-spirited man who attempts to live by a heroic code in a world dominated by Machiavellian policy."²²

The heroic code has evidently become outmoded in a world controlled by faction and policy. Bussy's exemplary heroism is sharply contrasted to the moral opportunism of courtiers. Some critics see D'Ambois as simply a figure who advances merely by virtue of sexual prowess and supreme swordsmanship. He does, nevertheless, seem to triumph over the other courtiers in the play through vigorously exercising his natural code of ethics.

Although Irving Ribner at times seems to agree that Bussy is superior to courtly society, he qualifies this idea in

Jacobean Tragedy (1962):

I would suggest that Bussy D'Ambois is deliberately shaped as a dramatic symbol of humanity, faced with a problem which all mankind must face. In this we have much of the difference between moral exemplum and the kind of philosophical exploration which is tragedy. It is this range which links Chapman to Shakespeare.²³

Or, on the contrary, virtue might never surrender itself to inevitable decay, instead merely resigning himself to imminent death. Where Ribner observes Bussy "failing" to find an answer to such problems, we might bear in mind that Shakespeare, too, was asking similar questions.

Some scholars have pointed to the historical sources used by Chapman as of primary importance in understanding the motives of his play. A notable contribution along this line has been Jean Jacquot (1961), who points to Chapman's interpretation of the Seigneur who serves as a model for Bussy (Louis de Clermont, Seigneur de Bussy, 1549-1579). However, the sources themselves are undecided about the interpretation of events:

Contemporary judgments on Bussy vary from the severity of L'Estoile, who praises his indomitable courage and noble ambition, but thinks that his vices and insufficient fear of God caused his untimely death, to the hyperbolic tombeaux which promise immortality and heavenly bliss to the hero who fought so gallantly against treacherous enemies.²⁴

Even seventeenth century historians disagree about the nature of these events. An element of certainty does exist, however, Jacquot goes on to say that,

One thing is certain, we cannot think of Bussy D'Ambois in simple terms of punishment for vice according to Baldwin's definition of tragedy in the Mirror for Magistrates. Chapman's tragic art is

something more complex than the mechanical application of ethical formulae.²⁵

Indeed, many complications stem from Chapman's diverse allusions. Here again we see that Chapman's application of ethical formulae appears in a diversity of layers and guises throughout the drama. This is true from the opening scenes of the drama through to the ambiguous ending.

C.L. Barber's multiple-reading approach (1961) begins to see that apparent ambiguity may be dramatically purposeful:

Bussy D'Ambois is a play which can be read in two different ways: either as if written for an audience which accepted traditional Christian morality, or as if written for an audience which accepted the code of honour; and Chapman does not force us to choose between the two readings. In a way, the play is an early victim of the moral and political tensions that were to lead in the next age to the sharp dichotomy between Tradesman and Courtier, and Man of Honour.²⁶

While the play points to social questions dealt with more fully by the next generation (civil war 1642-1649) it is a drama which is dense with controversial contemporary and classical political allusions. At every turn Chapman makes it difficult (if not impossible) for an audience to reduce the drama to a simple moral formula.

Another scholar who also attempts to join disparate elements is S. Kandaswamy, who suggests that,

Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois, therefore, becomes a 'metaphysical' drama by virtue of the dramatist's hovering between two equally strong but opposed attitudes, his passionate apprehension of thought, his deep speculative interest in the experiences of his characters of which his drama is an expression, the psychological curiosity with which he writes of politics, love and virtue and above all the 'metaphysical character of his metaphors' and images.²⁷

In the above passage Kandaswamy undertakes to merge the varied views into a type of critical synthesis. Perhaps this more accurately anticipates Chapman's varied approach than any of the views previously mentioned.

In contrast, Ennis Rees (1954) does not consider Bussy's character as superior to his environment or as a person who is capable of serving law in a responsible way:

But Bussy is obviously not a man who to himself is law, and he obviously does not have the kind of virtue which enables men to live free of the law. Only such men as Cato and Clermont can hope for this absolute 'freedom,' and they abhor nothing so much as lawlessness.²⁸

Chapman's world may appear morally confused but it literally, at least, allows a host of prevalent philosophies to co-exist.

One point of focus in this study is that the "moral confusion" and "lawlessness" is not instigated by Bussy; rather he represents a dramatic articulation of transition in the Jacobean social, political and intellectual environment. It is true that trying out new ideas may at first appear lawless. Perhaps Chapman may be thought of as seeking to reveal underlying natural truths about human conduct, truths which appear to incorporate instances from numerous philosophies then available to that society.

D'Ambois appeals to natural laws which transcend, at least, "policy" practiced at court. The medieval and Renaissance concept of earthly society as microcosm of heavenly society, with each person in their place, would appear to be undergoing a shift in emphasis as performed on Chapman's stage. The social and philosophical values of the

period undergo thorough evaluation in Chapman's dramatic practice.

Rhetorical excess is identified by John Wieler as the reason for Bussy's disaster, since "The noble words of the tragedy are rarely matched by comparable actions."²⁹ However, when we consider the consistently ambiguous nature of social values in Chapman's plays, we see that any given action may summon an opposite result or a contrary articulate argument. How is D'Ambois to function in such a world? How is anyone with integrity supposed to survive and then flourish in such a world? Such a dilemma must have stirred Jacobean audiences for decades.

Another interpretation of the play focuses on the possibility that simple flaws in Bussy's character lead to his downfall. For instance, Ennis Rees and John Wieler agree with Theodore Spencer that "The tragedy of Bussy is just this; he is swayed by desires over which he has no control."³⁰

The nature of Chapman's characters is defined by Hardin Craig (1935), who concurs with Spencer in judging D'Ambois as an unethical hero:

They differ from Shakespeare's tragic heroes in the circumstance that as proponents of flesh against spirit, passion against reason, they are from the beginning, according to the teachings of the Renaissance, beyond the pale of ethical tolerance. In other words, Chapman goes further than ethics permitted in sympathizing with sin.³¹

D'Ambois appears to commit sins, but compared to the habits of other characters at court, his seem unworthy of special attention. Although D'Ambois may at times seem to challenge the Christian notion of virtue, he embodies elements

of Roman virtu in such a way as to distinguish himself from the other characters in the play.

In addition, Craig maintains that Chapman is a master of ethical insight, and that in fact the state of ethics in 1604 England appears to be in something of a shambles. Efforts at controlling passions at court were not always successful. Craig points out that,

Bussy D'Ambois is possibly more completely devoted to the psychology of passion than any play written before that date. Every principle applied in the characterization of Bussy is sound in the psychology of the time.³²

Suggesting that political didacticism is central to the play, Charles Kennedy (1935) maintains that:

These scattered passages deal, broadly speaking, with four general topics: the nature of a true ruler, the nature of an upright citizen, the obligations of a prince to his people, and the duties of a subject to his prince. We have nowhere in Jacobean drama any expression of political philosophy as definite as Chapman's, and nowhere outside the drama any movement of which he may be considered the exponent.³³

In addition, Bussy's sense of political Roman virtu is developed by T.M. Parrott (1914), who suggests that Bussy's approach is what is devastating for him:

The passion that dominates him is a desire for self-fulfillment, a lust to realize himself in and work his will upon the world in which he lives. And this passionate desire is attended by a self-confidence which, in the hero's mind, is the surest guarantee of success.³⁴

Though the source of this confidence is in Bussy's natural nobility, Parrott says that lust and desire come to dominate Bussy's motivations, and that excessive pride blinds him to any possibility of failure.

Reasons For Impasse

Such a variety of interpretations is in part understandable if we consider the play's (and Chapman's) prolific seventeenth century production and publication record when contrasted to, for example, the influential and devastating criticism of John Dryden (1631-1700) in his Dedication of The Spanish Friar (1681).³⁵

So popular was Bussy D'Ambois in the early seventeenth century that few dramas of the period may boast of a more distinguished publication history. The first quarto was issued in 1607 ("As/it hath been often presented/at Paules") and reissued in 1608. Demand was such that issues also appeared in 1616 and in 1641 ("As it hath been often Acted with/ great Applause. /Being much corrected and amended/by the Author before his death") and reissued again in 1641, 1646, and 1657. Throughout the century numerous revivals of this play attest to its popularity, and in 1638 it was played before Charles I at court. By production and publication standards of the day, Bussy D'Ambois was a great success.³⁶

Chapman's dramatic successes, however, were not generally appreciated by Restoration critics and audiences. They no longer considered Chapman's rugged energy, swashbuckling virility, obscure profundity and ethical individualism fashionable. It is partly in response to Chapman's singing Elizabethan diction that Pope calls Chapman's Homer "fustian."

But Dryden's colorful comment stands out as the most damaging late seventeenth century evaluation of Bussy D'Ambois:

I have sometimes wondered, in the reading, what was become of those glaring colours which amazed me in Bussy D'Ambois upon the theatre; but when I had taken up what I supposed a fallen star, I found I had been cozened with a jelly; nothing but a cold, dull mass, which glittered no longer than it was shooting; a dwarfish thought, dressed up in gigantic words, repetition in abundance, looseness of expression, and gross hyperboles; the sense of one line expanded prodigiously into ten; and, to sum up all, uncorrect English, and a hideous mingle of false poetry, and true nonsense; or, at best, a scantling of wit, which lay gasping for life, and groaning beneath a heap of rubbish.³⁷

Whether or not appreciation of an author waxes or wanes, it may be instructive for us to remember, that at the time of production Chapman was among the most highly thought of writers in England. Whether or not one believes as Dryden does, we may do well to recognize that Chapman's peers praised him. Webster's prefix to The White Devil (1609?), for example, praises Chapman's "full and heightened style," and John Davies (1611) even calls Chapman "father of our English poets."

It may well be true that it has been some time since Chapman's tragedies have been considered fashionable. However, an aim of this study is simply to better understand the social contexts and attitudes of what well may be a central intellectual document presented by one of Shakespeare's chief rivals. Studying Chapman provides insight into Shakespeare's dramatic method, and also helps to better understand Elizabethan England. After all, the most fashionable audience of perhaps the most important period of

English letters found Bussy D'Ambois fine entertainment.

Besides Webster, John Marston also indirectly responds to Dryden's (later) criticism in his preface 'To the Reader' in The Malcontent (c. 1604):

I would faine leave the paper; onely one thing afflicts me, to think that Scenes invented, merely to be spoken, should be inforcively published to be read, & that the least hurt I can receive, is to do my selfe the wrong.³⁸

Perhaps Bussy D'Ambois, like many of the plays of the period, was favorably enhanced by the superb actors, the feathery costumes, and the sound of words ringing through the house. And when we realize that Shakespeare, like Marston, does not appear to have intended his plays for publication, we begin to recognize our loss when we merely read. An absence of visual appeal bestowed by performance may possibly limit the reader. However, Dryden's evaluation does not especially seek to understand Chapman's period.

The Chapters

The next chapter investigates some of the historical works that Chapman either directly referred to while composing Bussy D'Ambois, or works that may have influenced his thinking on divine right monarchy. Chapman's work contains many echoes.

Chapter Three investigates several types of kingship in the play. The variety ranges from Henri III as a weak monarch lacking personality to Bussy, an exalted commoner who towers

in kingly spirit (there is much reference to spirit in the play) above the nobles on the stage. It is as if D'Ambois tells us that human beings, regardless of rank, are individual sovereigns as they were made by nature. Such a notion of sovereignty will be developed and contrasted to the official views of divine right kingship that Henry III and James I shared. Chapman's sources are rich on this subject, and occasional reference will be made to the works of Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529), Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), and James I (king of England 1603-1625), to name only several.

The fourth chapter explores the new knights at court and the ambiguous nature of nobility. The fifth chapter pursues this line of development further by discussing the types and degrees of nobility D'Ambois confronts at court. The nobles of birth are ranged into the conventional hierarchy, yet D'Ambois demonstrates that noble blood is not a requirement for noble achievement. He demonstrates this by killing court minions in an eight-way duel and by his courting of the noble ladies. He flaunts this contrast by courting the ladies in front of their husbands, thereby whipping the gentlemen into inevitable jealous rages. Bussy seems to epitomize natural qualities of love, contrasting himself to marriage contracted for social or financial advancement.

The fifth chapter illustrates what greatness means for Chapman. In his scheme of things the great may not be what they appear to be, whereas the good are those who avoid the trappings of the great and who keep contact with the true

virtues. Bussy and Tamyra are good, whereas the king, the count of Montsurry, the Duke of Guise, and the noble ladies of the court are among the most corrupt and therefore great. However, even this oversimplified schema is not completely accurate, as we shall see. The question as to what constitutes the true virtues remains.

Aspects of honor will be the focus of the sixth chapter. Tamyra, Bussy, and Monsoreau primarily provide the speeches which this chapter will examine. Bussy's honor is maintained in the duel with the four swordsmen of the king, while Tamyra begins to outline a sense of honor and identity which transcends the bounds of matrimony and nobility of birth. Yet another inversion of honor is observed when Montsurry, her husband, defends his own honor by torturing Tamyra until she confesses her rendezvous with Bussy. The play seems to present several types of love as well as several types of honor.

And finally, the seventh chapter will sum up what are some of the implications and insights to be drawn about Bussy D'Ambois and social inversion in Chapman's approach to tragedy.

Bussy D'Ambois is a heroic tragedy which uses a dramatic manipulation of recurring paradoxes. In his use of paradox Chapman combines classical and historical allusions as well as references to contemporary works. A Jacobean audience begins to recognize a distinctive code of layered images conveying inverted states of meaning and of being. These images

recurringly expose hypocritical professions of high social principle. This study will suggest that Chapman purposely leaves us to arbitrate among the wide assortment of positions offered in the play. However, if we try to choose which carries the most dramatic influence, Chapman tends to confound attempts at reduction, as the survey of critics might suggest.

And Chapman's D'Ambois character likewise confounds us, ranging between Tamburlaine's and Hamlet's. Though eloquent and thoughtful, D'Ambois does not display Hamlet's desire for evidence (and therefore caution), although Hamlet's caution still brought about the death of his uncle and mother, the murder of his two friends, and the madness and suicide of his mistress. While more cautious, D'Ambois resembles Tamburlaine in that his is a tragic, near-absurd figure seeking to transcend inevitable human limitations. Chapman's dramatic character, too, is that of an "overreacher."

The philosophical turmoil and uncertainty at court prove too much for the overreacher D'Ambois. His attempt at transcendence, Icarus-like, ends in a disaster that is stoically endured by the protagonist.

Chapman has a remarkable social and political imagination and demonstrates an ability to trace various human motivations at court. And while Chapman's play may lack a reductive moral, his intellectual horizons are not narrowly constricted. This study also maintains that none of the social-philosophical views predominates and that is, in a sense, what is conveyed in Chapman's dramatic world view. And this world view is representative of one of the chief writers of the

time. As T.S. Eliot has suggested, Chapman is "a breezy British character as firm as Nelson or Wellington."³⁹

Bussy D'Ambois may be thought of as a sort of intellectual hologram of the age (tracing a diffraction pattern of light from which a three-dimensional image can be projected), and Chapman's stage becomes a lens through which to view the changing Jacobean world in microcosm.

Questions Of Interpretation: Notes

¹ William Aspley on 3 June 1607 "Entred for his copie vnder th(e) (h)andes of Sir George Bucke knight and the Warden Master white. The tragedie of Busye D'Amboise. made by George Chapman."

The title page on the first quarto reads: "Bussy D'Ambois:/ A/ Tragedie:/ As/ it hath been often presented/ at Paules.// London,/ Printed for William Aspley./ 1607." This edition was reissued in 1608 with only a changed date on the title page. The "revised" 1641 edition arguably obscures 1607 scenes. For a discussion of the virtues of the 1607 quarto over those of the 1641 revision (which obscures several scenes) see Robert Adams, "Critical Myths and Chapman's Original Bussy D'Ambois," Renaissance Drama (Northwestern, 1966) 141-61.

In Modern Philology, LVII, No. 2 (1959) Elias Schwartz argues for a composition date of 1597. However, based primarily on topical references to the old queen (I.ii.12), to a leap year (I.ii.85) and to the new knights of James (I.ii.111), most have followed Parrott in suggesting 1604 as the likely date. Schoenbaum sets a 1600-1604 limit in his revised Harbage, Annals of English Drama 975-1700 (London, 1964) 86, with 1604 set as the probable date.

Therefore, for purposes of historical and allegorical accuracy, which seemed to entertain Chapman, references to the play will be made to John H. Smith, Ed. Bussy D'Ambois in Holaday's The Plays of George Chapman (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1987), the best modern editor of the 1607 quarto.

See also E.K. Chambers William Shakespeare 213: "Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois was touched up, at some unknown date before 1641, possibly to improve its effectiveness on the stage."

² Chapman criticism is not as extensive or as recently developed as that of Shakespeare, Marlowe, or Jonson. If in a Chapman bibliography there are relatively few references to recent work it is because relatively few studies have been done on Chapman, particularly on the topic which this study addresses.

³ E.R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages (Princeton 1953) 70. Topos refers to loci communes, or ancient rhetorical models intended to aid in the composition of orations. Quintilian says that topoi are "storehouses of trains of thought" (V,10,20). Topoi were often used in Medieval and Renaissance literature. Curtius further discusses The World Upsidedown topos on pages 94-98.

⁴ Chapman's historical tragedies of this phase of his artistic development are Bussy D'Ambois (produced c. 1604), a double tragedy The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Charles, Duke of Byron, (1607-08); The Tragedy of Caesar and Pompey (1612-13), (though not about French history, it at times demonstrates a similar approach); and The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois (1613).

⁵ Henri was the fourth child of Catherine de Medici and cousin of his rival to the throne, and enemy, the Duc de Guise. So serious was the rivalry for the throne that murder and plots were greatly in vogue. Henri actually had his cousin assassinated 23 December 1588, only after lengthy counter-plots had been attempted.

⁶ Other notable playwrights who enacted an emphasis on power as a subject for English drama had been Kyd, Marlowe, Marston, and Shakespeare. Dramatic artists of the period were interested in formulating a critique of London society, and more specifically the relationship between monarch and subject. Perhaps another contribution to this period of malaise is the fact that in 1597 inflation was at its highest point in a decade of soaring inflation. This seems to suggest that economic uncertainties may have also played some role in the Jacobean malaise.

⁷ Chapman is responding to the same type of intellectual malaise that we see in Donne's poem Anatomy of the World (1611), beginning with line 205:

And new philosophy calls all in doubt,
 The element of fire is quite put out;
 The sun is lost, and the earth, and no man's
 wit,
 Can well direct him where to look for it.
 And freely men confess that this world's
 spent,
 When in the planets, and the firmament
 They seek so many new; then see that this
 Is crumbled out again to his atomies.
 'Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone;
 All just supply, and all relation:
 Prince, subject, Father, Son, are things for-
 got.

⁸ These philosophic complexities may be classified into seven (at times overlapping) recent perspectives: 1) The strong character of Bussy is destroyed in a corrupt world (Waith, Waddington, MacLure, Parrott, and Ribner--see selected list of works cited for full references) 2) Flaws in the character of Bussy lead to his downfall (Craig, Ide, Florby, Rees, Wieler, and Ure); 3) Stoic philosophy (Bussy stoically accepts his assassination by members of the nobility) held as the center of focus (Wieler, Higgins, and Muir); 4) The play as historical pageant (Jacquot, Ribner); 5) The play as politically didactic (Dollimore, Goldberg, Kennedy, Una Ellis-

Fermor); 6) The play reveals psychological truths (Higgins, Craig); 7) Multiple interpretations (via a double-or triple-level plot) are held as the playwright's chief intent (Barber, MacLure, Kandaswamy, Jacquot).

⁹ Jane Melbourne, "The Inverted World of Bussy D'Ambois." SEL, 25 (Spring 1985), 381-395.

¹⁰ Jonathan Dollimore, Radical Tragedy (Chicago, 1984) 161.

¹¹ Dollimore 183.

¹² Goldberg, James I and the Politics of Literature (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1983) 159.

¹³ Goldberg 160.

¹⁴ Gunilla Florby, The Painful Passage to Virtue (Lund, 1982), 42.

¹⁵ Richard Ide, Possessed With Greatness (North Carolina, 1980) 85.

¹⁶ Peter Ure, "Chapman's tragedies," in Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama ed. J.C. Maxwell (Liverpool Univ., 1974) 170.

¹⁷ Raymond Waddington, The Mind's Empire (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1974) 35.

¹⁸ Ian Donaldson, The World Upside-Down (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970) 22.

¹⁹ Millar MacLure, George Chapman, A Critical Study (Toronto, 1966) 114.

²⁰ MacLure 23.

²¹ Eugene Waith, The Herculean Hero in Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare and Dryden. (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1962) 109.

²² Waith 111.

²³ Irving Ribner, Jacobean Tragedy (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1962) 21.

²⁴ Jean Jacquot, "Bussy D'Ambois and Chapman's Conception of Tragedy," English Studies Today (Bern: F. Verlag, 1961) 132.

²⁵ Jacquot 134.

²⁶ C.L. Barber, "The Ambivalence of Bussy D'Ambois," Review of English Literature. v. II, 4 (1961), 38-44.

27 S. Kandaswamy, "Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois: A 'Metaphysical' Drama," Mother India (Feb. 1961) 76.

28 Ennis Rees, The Tragedies of George Chapman (Harvard, 1954) 38.

29 John Wieler, George Chapman--The Effect of Stoicism upon his Tragedies (New York, King's Crown Press, 1949) 28.

30 Theodore Spencer, Death and Elizabethan Tragedy (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1936) 243.

31 Hardin Craig, "Ethics in the Jacobean Drama: The Case of Chapman," Essays in Dramatic Literature (Princeton, 1935) 42, 29.

32 Craig 29.

33 Charles Kennedy, "Ethics in the Jacobean Drama: The Case of Chapman," Essays in Dramatic Literature (Princeton, 1935) 42.

34 T.M. Parrott, intro., Bussy D'Ambois (New York: Russell and Russell, 1914) 545-6.

35 Concerning Chapman's sterling reputation see Francis Meres, Palladis Tamia (London, 1598) facsimile Garland 1973; William Drummond of Hawthornden, Notes of a Conversation with Ben Jonson (Edinburgh, 1619) 1966, 4-6; John Davies of Hereford, "Commendatory Verses: To my highly vullued Mr. George Chapman, Father of our English Poets", in The Scourge of Folly (London, 1611) from Pearson's 1873 ed. Memoir of George Chapman xlv; Thomas Freeman, Gent., "To George Chapman", Rubbe and a great Cast: Epigrams (London 1614) Pearson xlvii; and John Webster's preface to The White Devil (1612).

36 Few plays can be said to have inspired such a consistent interest and demand for revival: Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy (p.c. 1592, printed in quarto 1594, reprinted 1599, 1602, 1610, 1611, 1623, and 1633) and Marlowe's Dr. Faustus come to mind (p. c.1589, printed 4^{to}, 1604, reprinted 1609, 1611, 1616, 1620, 1624, 1631, and 1663). Contrasted to these "best-sellers" we observe that Shakespeare's King Lear was issued twice in 1608 4to, once in 1623 folio, and only once again in the century, 1655. Hamlet p. c. 1600-1604 was issued in 4^{to} 1604, re-issued in 1605, 1611, 1637, and after the Restoration in 4to 1676, 1683, and 1695. After the Restoration interest in Bussy D'Ambois was evident when it was successfully revived at the Theatre Royal. Evidently for some seventy years (three generations of playgoers) Renaissance audiences sufficiently understood and appreciated what was going on in the play to keep it in performance. The evidence suggests that excellence as poet, playwright, and translator distinguished Chapman during the period we are considering.

37 John Dryden, Essays of John Dryden, Ed. W.P. Ker, v.I (New York: Russell & Russell, 1961) 246.

We may also usefully remember that the players and the audience had changed, and without an informed context for his plays, who wanted to listen to Chapman? Who wanted to learn the complexities of his texts, and what's more, fashions had changed in drama, like in most other things.

Chapman, in fact like Dryden, offers us a detailed portrait of the world in which he lived. For an example of an attitude which appreciates Chapman and his dramas, see Charlotte Spivack who goes further in George Chapman (NY: Twayne, 1967) 52: "The vigor of language, perception of character, and clarity of conception far outweigh the Chapmanesque Waterloos of turgidity and obscurity."

38 John Marston, Preface to The Malcontent (London, 1604).

39 T.S. Eliot, Essays in Elizabethan Drama. (New York: Harcourt & Brace, 1932) 83. Eliot also states that, "In the first class could fall Marlowe, Jonson, and Chapman (125)," a view which seems to be substantiated by Chapman's contemporaries.

CHAPTER II: CHAPMAN'S HISTORICAL SOURCES

Chapman, like other playwrights of the period, selects historical materials which he finds useful for his dramatic purposes.¹ In this way he takes his place among a host of writers who had an interest in Tudor political doctrines. And political obedience was the dominant political question of the England which produced the history plays that this study considers. Such obedience refers to issues of sovereignty: the rights of the individual versus the rights of government. This is particularly true in the light of Chapman's posing meritorious individuals, like D'Ambois, confronting corrupt courtiers and monarchs.²

The most notable of Chapman's sources for Bussy D'Ambois are De Thou's Historiae Sui Temporis (Paris, 1609); Dampmartin Du Bonheur de la Cour (Paris, 1592); and the work of Chapman's cousin, Edward Grimestone, who did a translation of The General Inventorie of the History of France (London, 1607).

Chapman's chief classical sources are Seneca's Hercules on Oeta and Plutarch's Moralia. Each of these works, in its way, is interested in the social questions that literally fill Bussy D'Ambois.³

The question was open, widely debated; and to thoughtful

dramatists it was certainly well known. It may be that we can assign much of the dark skepticism which is present in Elizabethan and Jacobean history plays to this awareness of human limitations. Some playwrights of the period at times subtly questioned political doctrines, but most were not bold enough to openly question such doctrines. Government censors were vigilant in such matters.

Tudor doctrines concerning the nature of the state and of the rulers basically held that the monarch has absolute authority over the people.⁴ The monarchs are responsible to Providence alone for their actions, and therefore any rebellion—no matter how seemingly justified—is a sin against Providence.⁵

The earliest theological argument for the new Tudor doctrine is William Tyndale's Obedience of a Christian Man (London, 1528). Other defenses which soon followed include Stephen Gardiner's De Vera Obedientia, Oratio (translated in 1535 by John Bale); Thomas Cranmer's Sermon on Rebellion; John Cheke's The hurt of sedicion howe grevous it is to a commonwealth, a tract printed in 1549 which was included in the 1587 edition of Holinshed. John Jewel first articulates divine right doctrines under Elizabeth in Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae in 1562; and Richard Hooker notably presents the great argument for royal supremacy over the church in his Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity (1593).

The first serious questioning of the doctrine of passive obedience to divine right rule appeared in John Ponet's Shorte Treatise of Politicke Power (1556). Ponet breaks with

Tudor absolutists by returning to Medieval Natural Law. Ponet argues that there is a law of God which is equivalent to Natural Law, and which is accessible to human reason. Monarchs function, then, to replace humanity's temporarily forfeited reason and to bring human affairs into harmony with Natural Law. This constitutes a total reversal of the absolutist doctrine which held that the ruler is responsible only to God. Ponet's views were more actively developed after the events of the St. Bartholomew Massacre in 1572. At that time French Huguenots facing liquidation developed a doctrine of resisting tyranny and argued for the right to armed rebellion.

Francois Hotman significantly voices this doctrine in Franco-Gallia (1573) and also in the Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos (1579). Hotman says that in every kingdom the actual sovereign is the people. Providence, interested in the welfare of the people, appoints a monarch who is responsible to both the people and again to providence. If the monarch should fail in the duty of serving the people, and instead places private interests ahead of public necessity, that monarch becomes a tyrant and is no longer, in fact, functioning as monarch.

Another writer who had an influence on this type of thinking in Tudor England is George Buchanan whose De Jure Regni Apud Scotos (printed 1578), probably written around 1570, seems to justify the dethronement of Mary Stuart. Buchanan also spent a considerable amount of time in France, and it shows in his new thinking.

As we have noted in the previous chapter, in Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois we find an allegorical representation on stage of a weak divine right king. Whether we think of Henri III of France or James I of England and Scotland, or a third character based on these two, we see the playwright presenting a weak or silent king who appears far weaker than Henry VIII (1509-1547) or Elizabeth (1558-1603), for example.⁶

Chapman's kings are standard characters, yet it is not always clear to what degree the playwright respects that "divinity doth hedge a king" (Hamlet IV.v.124).⁷ Certainly he is critical of some of the key court members who, like D'Ambois, appear even more powerful than his kings.

An emphasis in the drama on the shifting role of kingship may in part be due to a general social alarm concerning the actual transition of power from Elizabeth to James. Not everyone, it should be pointed out, welcomed James to the English throne.⁸

And we also begin to see that Chapman is not necessarily a literary defender of the realm. A close theatrical reading of his plays in terms of complexities of Renaissance political ferment shows him to be well-versed in the latest controversy. Bussy D'Ambois is couched in dangerously provocative terms for a period committed to guarded questioning of authority in a tightly censored realm. And the arrival of James did not appear to loosen matters of censorship. In fact he, like his son Charles I, was outspoken on the subject of his rights and authority, and may certainly be described as conservative and conventional.

More striking, critics of James grew in number when the finance which should have been used for national purposes was squandered on English and Scottish favorites. Charles I also enjoyed personal luxuries. Yet there were more problems for James than criticism of his personal habits. The large number of Scots that James had brought with him had been treated generously by the monarch. So flagrantly generous was James that the lower house engaged again in an old national feud. They blocked James's attempt to form an immediate and complete union of England and Scotland.

Resistance to James assumed other forms besides dramas and pamphlets: plots were numerous during the period. The Main plot, for example, was stimulated by displeasure with a Scottish king. In addition, there was factional support for Arabella Stuart (the great-granddaughter of Margaret Tudor and the Earl of Angus).

In 1603 we see that the shrewd maneuvering of Elizabeth's ministers arranged for James to be king, thereby avoiding, at least for the time, civil strife. Another significant event in that year was the Main plot. The conspirators, Lords Cobham, Grey, and others, plotted to overthrow James and replace him with Arabella Stuart. Sir Walter Raleigh was one who was implicated in this plot and was imprisoned until 1616. The Bye plot, also in 1603, sought to imprison the king. And in 1605 Guy Fawkes attempted to blow up King, Lords, and Commons. While Fawkes was an extreme case, it should be noted that any activity that went against the interest of the monarch constituted rebellion. And since

kings were sent by Providence to rule the state, rebellion against them upset the commonly assumed to be fixed order of the universe.

It is interesting to note that part of Chapman's dramatic method drew in other concepts of conspiracy. The name of his protagonist echoes a famous sixteenth century plot in France: the Conspiracy of Amboise (1560) was a plot against the house of Guise. The plot was crushed but in effect sounded the beginning of the French Wars of Religion.

Sedition and plots had become common in both England and in France. And this may in part account for Chapman's method of contrasting the heroic, honest commoner to someone like the ruthless Duke of Guise. Chapman freely intermingles history and drama.

Other writers of the period were also considering the changing roles of kingship. In Thomas Dekker's (c. 1570-c. 1641) The Wonderfull Yeare 1603 we find a first-hand report of the delicate and mystical transition of the English throne from Elizabeth to James:

"Upon Thursday it was treason to cry God save King James King of England, and vppon Friday hye treason not to cry so. In the morning no voice heard but murmures and lamentation, at noone nothing but shoutes of gladnes & triumphe."⁹

Dekker, like Chapman, is correct more in the general drift or direction of his observation than in precise fact. In this way Chapman, too, takes up the theme of transition; the queen had died 24 March 1603, the funeral taking place April 28. The coronation of James I was July 25, and miraculously the plague which had besieged London subsided.

Just prior to the ascension of James to the throne, threats of civil disruption had plagued Elizabeth's ministers, and as a consequence using history to explore possible responses to political problems soon became commonplace in Jacobean drama.

Bussy D'Ambois in part mirrors Jacobean absolutism and in this way, like Shakespeare's Henry V (1599), celebrates the theatricality of power. Chapman also celebrates this theatricality, but the kings in his early tragedies are reduced to empty characters who play minor roles. Chapman uses these ineffective monarchs as the sharp contrast to a heroic commoner's soaring ambition.

Perhaps it would be useful to touch on a few other aspects of Chapman's social and historical situation which would have been common knowledge for most of Chapman's audience. In doing so, we see that a prominent historical figure whom Chapman uses is the Duke of Guise who as we have pointed out was a leading character in the French civil wars.

In the Duke of Guise we have a famous villain of the French Wars of Religion (1562-1598). Also notable is the fact that the Lorraine family was related to James, and that they had sent special congratulations to the new king James of England. The Lorraines who greeted James included Henri, Duke of Bar; Catharine, the elder Duchess of Guise; her son and brother-in-law the Dukes of Guise and Mayenne; and two other ladies of this stock, the Duchesses of Florence and Cleves. Although the Duke of Guise of the play was assassinated by Henri III in 1588, the name had strong royal associations to

an English audience of the period.

The French Wars of Religion also notably featured Henry III (The Duke of Anjou) and Henry IV (Antoine de Bourbon, King of Navarre), as well as the Duke of Guise. Each played a central part in historical events. Henry IV, a character in Chapman's The Conspiracy and Tragedy of Byron (1608), converted to Catholicism (and recanted back to Protestantism) after the events of St. Bartholomew. This would prove fascinating to a Protestant English audience. And each contender earned a crown as the result of persuasion, bribery, and brute force ("And policy shall be flanked with policy," BD IV.ii.161).

The imaginations of English play-goers were seeded with images of French warfare between Protestants and Catholics, and these three princes were out to capture a throne: each felt they had kingship within themselves. The Huguenots were rebels against their king, and as has been noted, were gradually developing a theory of legitimate political resistance. Mary Tudor's refugees had also come to think in this way, and the later opponents of Charles I (1625-1649) actually brought such ideas of "levelling" into action and formed a new English government which emerged under The Commonwealth (1649-1660). And Chapman, in a 1605 letter from prison "To His Most Gracious Majesty," recommends a possible tone to be taken when actually approaching the sovereign.¹⁰

In the case of Chapman's letter from prison, Chapman suggests that he had misjudged the terms under which a king wished to be considered. He had perhaps forgotten his lines

from D'Ambois: "A Prince's love is like the lightning's fume which no man can embrace but must consume" (III.i.112-113). In another letter Chapman suggests that duties to virtue, for a statesman, are sacred, as he states in a letter "To The Earl of Suffolk: The Lord Chamberlain."¹¹ And Chapman reinforces this approach in another letter to the Lord Chamberlain.¹²

John Stubbs, in The Discovery of a Gaping Gulf (1579), remarks that kings do not always comply with their words of honor: "A King falsified his sworn work, the marriage of a King's sister imbrued with blood; a King murdered his subjects."¹³ Henry III (Valois) had engaged in serious treachery: knowing that chief Huguenots would be in Paris to attend a wedding, and having agreed to a truce, Henry had them murdered anyway.

Stubbs also attacks the proposed match of Elizabeth and the French prince, the Duke of Anjou (the brother of Henry III and "Monsieur" in Bussy D'Ambois). The official response to Stubbs was to cut off his hand.

Like Jonson and Shakespeare, Chapman takes his place in a literary tradition that questions what is going on in the royal palace. His treatment, for example, reminds us of Shakespeare's handling of Henry Tudor, the Earl of Richmond (king 1485-1509). Shakespeare and Chapman are each interested in the usurpation of power through sheer military force in the field; usurpers often come to power by the shedding of blood, and they often leave by that means. As Henry IV says: "I am grown, by right of birth and arms, into a greater kingdom" (BC I.i.118-19).

Shakespeare's history plays, which treat the Wars of the Roses, also explore some of these questions of power and authority. In fact, many of the dialectic and contextual methods used in this study might be useful to Shakespeareans, or anyone seeking to better understand Jacobean heroic tragedy. What particularly sets Chapman apart is the way he uses historical allegory.

Chapman's Historical Sources: Notes

¹ The following is a brief reading list which has been helpful in shaping my thought about the historical context of Chapman's early dramas : Patricia Pascoe, "The Political Ideas and the Historical Background in the French Tragedies of George Chapman," diss., U. of Denver, 1982; Paul Johnson, "A Study of George Chapman's use of his Sources in his Tragedies," diss. Notre Dame U., 1970; Kathleen Shafeeq, "The Problem of order and Authority in the Jacobean History plays of Ben Jonson and George Chapman," diss. U. of Oklahoma, 1979; Maurice Lee, Jr., James I and Henri IV: An Essay on English Foreign Policy 1603-1610 (Urbana: U. of Illinois Press, 1970); H.M. Richmond, Shakespeare's Political Plays (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1977 [1967]); Hugh Trevor-Roper, Renaissance Essays (London: Fontana, 1986); J.R. Hale, War and Society in Renaissance Europe 1450-1620 (London: Fontana, 1985); Christopher Hill, Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England (Middlesex: Penguin, 1986 [1964]); Christopher Hill, The Century of Revolution 1603-1714 (New York: Norton, 1961); Robert Pierce, Shakespeare's History Plays (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1971); R.B. Wernham, The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy, 1558-1603 (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1980); Roger Lockyer, Tudor and Stuart Britain (New York: St. Martin's, 1964); and Michael Pulman, The Elizabethan Privy Council in the Fifteen-Seventies (Berkeley: California UP, 1971).

² See also F.C. Montague, The History of England, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907, 3. "Some of his utterances to the privy council and to Gondomar are almost incredible in their abject want of dignity. His cowardice took away some of the merit and much of the honour due to his love of peace. His grotesque appearance, his rickety walk, his rolling eyes, his tongue too large for his mouth, although mere outward blemishes, gave a peculiar emphasis to all that was unkingly and unmanly in his character."

³ See Jean Jacquot, "Les Sources du Bussy D'Amboise de Chapman", Revue de Littérature Comparée XII (1932), 587-95.

⁴ See also Montague, The History of England, 3: "James political doctrine is most clearly stated in his tract, The True Law of Free Monarchies. A free monarchy differs from elective kingship or the authority of any republican magistrate. A monarch in the proper sense is created by God and accountable to God only. He is above the law, as both its author and the gover of strength thereto. All other

authorities in the state derive their power from him, and owe him absolute obedience."

⁵ See John Griffiths, Ed., The Two Books of Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches, 568:

How horrible a thing against God and man rebellion is, cannot possibly be expressed according unto the greatness thereof. He that nameth rebellion nameth not a singular or one only sin, as is theft, robbery, murder, and such like; but he nameth the whole puddle and sink of all sins against God and man; against his prince, his country, his countrymen, his parents, his children, his kinsfolks, against God and all men heaped together nameth he that nameth rebellion.

⁶ Tudor absolutism voices a doctrine by which a new dynasty intended to eliminate opposition and to centralize power. This might in part account for the dramatic tension that Chapman tries to exploit.

⁷ Background reading for this topic may include John Figgis, The Divine Right of Kings; J.W. Allen, A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century; William Dunning, A History of Political Theories from Luther to Montesquieu; and Ivor Brown, English Political Theory.

⁸ An impetus for developing this aspect of the study is the challenge offered by S.R. Gardiner, History of England (New York: AMS, 1965): "If ever there was an act in which the nation was unanimous, it was the welcome with which the accession of the new Sovereign was greeted."

⁹ Thomas Dekker, The Wonderfull Yeare 1603 (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1966) 30.

¹⁰ See Appendix A: A.R. Braunmuller, ed., A Seventeenth-Century Letter-Book. Newark, N.J.: University of Delaware Press, 1983, 370.

¹¹ Braunmuller 374.

¹² Braunmuller 381.

¹³ John Stubbs, The Discovery of a Gaping Gulf. (London, 1579).

CHAPTER III: A NEW KING

Chapman plays with ideas of king, and, while describing divine right monarchy, he outlines a history of the natural origins of humanity. Chapman develops a natural philosophy, in a sense utopian.

More specifically the natural, noble individual is contrasted to the other courtiers and especially the king. It is the king and D'Ambois who in a sense reverse roles, the king becoming a mere man, while D'Ambois is recognized as holding kingly superiority in virtù. It becomes a fine Jacobean review of discussions contesting the duty of sovereign and the respective duty of subject.

Chapman explores examples of how king was used at the time, something of what it meant and how some of those variations cast light on ambiguous meanings in Chapman's early tragedies, and particularly in Bussy D'Ambois.

Just as in 1603 we find James Stuart rising to the throne of England, so too do we find Chapman's D'Ambois ambitiously aiming high, for kingliness. Both figures, one historical and one literary, seek reward for their true natural merit. Chapman inverts their roles and in doing so he touches on the timely topic of the rights, duties, and privileges of sovereignty.¹ This considers individual sovereignty as well as the sovereignty of monarchs.²

D'Ambois, a rugged individualist, bursts into the play as he decides to leave the pastoral solitariness of the forest. He identifies an ambition that will involve him with the royal court. The virtues he learned in that wilderness do not represent skills which will ultimately enable him to survive at a worldly court. He is in a natural, Adam-like condition, pure in motivation and yet, in the end, destroyed because of his natural qualities.³ It is this conflict that in large part destroys D'Ambois. But D'Ambois is not without support at court, even though his course is apparently set to perish as a sort of martyred Hercules.

Ironically his primary supporter, though a superficial and weak individual, is the king of France. In a scene that highlights the positive qualities of D'Ambois, the king who takes notice of the natural gifts D'Ambois has brought to the court. D'Ambois serves to remind the king of:

Man in his native noblesse, from whose fall
 All our dissentions rise; that in himselfe
 (Without the outward patches of our frailtie,
 Riches and honour) knowes he comprehends
 Worth with the greatest: Kings had neuer borne
 Such boundlesse eminence ouer other men
 Had all maintain'd the spirit and state of D'Ambois;
 III.ii.91-97

D'Ambois knows, like the king, that he is blessed with power. D'Ambois knows that his power is rooted in the primal sources of nature, before anyone had a sense of property:

Nor had the full impartiall hand of Nature,
 That all things gaue in her originall,
 Without these definite terms of Mine and Thine,
 Beene turn'd vniustly to the hand of Fortune:
 Had all preseru'd her in her prime, like D'Ambois;
 III.ii.98-102

It is as if D'Ambois is perceived by the others as being

in an original, untouched state when it comes to making politic judgments.⁴ Because of this D'Ambois may be thought of as a type of pastoral overreacher Achilles. And the type of overreacher presents a new sort of courtier.⁵ The king says:

No enuie, no disiunction had dissolu'd,
Or pluck'd out one sticke of the golden fagot,
In which the world of Saturne was compris'd,
Had all beene held together with the nerues,
The genius, and th'ingenuous soule of D'Ambois.⁶

III.ii.103-107

Bussy D'Ambois, brilliant adventurer at the court of Henry III, notorious for his daring, his insolence, his duels and amours, realizes in this scene his highest courtly ambition, the support of his king and thus his assured success as a courtier. It is perhaps ironic that it is the king who best articulates the kingly qualities he perceives in D'Ambois. The speech itself is spoken by the king in order to halt D'Ambois and the Duke of Guise from advancing any further in their dispute, which is escalating towards a duel.⁷ The king points out that D'Ambois has many favorable qualities hitherto unappreciated by the Duke. These points, taken as a unit, provide a startling speech to feature in an age of divine right kings.⁸

For Henry III Chapman makes kingship a social limitation that is necessary due to humanity's fall from a natural and honest condition. This state of being describes his "native noblesse," a state which is realized in Bussy at all times. Within this realm D'Ambois intuitively knows that he has become party to a higher form of nobility which does not

depend upon the trinkets of wealth or hierarchical honors. D'Ambois simply knows that he is equal to the greatest kings, and acts as such without hesitation. There seems to be something of the Leveller in such an attitude.⁹ The king nevertheless identifies his own role as that of holding his subjects together in spite of their fiercely maintained individualities.

Let my hand therefore be the Hermean rodde
To part and reconcile, and so conserue you
As my combin'd embracers and supporters.

III.ii.108-110

The king symbolizes their individualities in one arm of government; himself. He serves the people as a caduceus parting fighting serpents, thereby conserving them as his combined supporters and subjects. The king performs his primary role by keeping the peace among his subjects, ensuring thereby that he has subjects. Kings had apparently become necessary in a world characterized by deceit, flattery, and Machiavellian policy.

Yet D'Ambois seems to function as if these worldly weaknesses were not evident. He is an idealistic knight, his spirit is exemplary, as Monsieur notices when he needs to recruit more support, for "'Tis fit I get resolved spirits about me" (I.i.44).¹⁰ Monsieur, too, has ambition to be king, although his realm would be slightly different than that of D'Ambois.

There's but a thread betwixt me and a Crown;
I would not wish it cut, unless by Nature;
Yet to prepare me for that likely fortune,
'Tis fit I get resolved spirits about me.

I.i.40-43

If all people behaved in the kingly manner of D'Ambois, kings as they had come to be known would no longer be necessary. As Chapman suggests in the play, the institution came about as a convention made necessary by the inherent injustice of humanity. Injustice exists, so the play seems to suggest, because people are not strong and upright enough to do without it.

It is a return to a primitive state of existence, uninfluenced by civilization or artificiality. Possessions would play little role in such a world, thereby eliminating envy. Such a vision resembles the classical Golden Age of Saturn where all people were equal and where fraud and violence were unknown. This is the only realm which may take precedence over kingship. Chapman further develops this idea in his comedy of 1605, The Gentleman Usher:

And whats a Prince? Had all beene vertuous men,
There neuer had beene Prince vpon the earth,
And so no subiect; all men had been Princes;
A vertuous man is subiect to no Prince,
But to his soule and honour.

V.iv.56-60¹¹

In a similar way D'Ambois threatens the equilibrium of the state.¹² Not everyone, however, conducts themselves as D'Ambois does. The state which has evolved seeks to maintain order in a nation of those who are not in command of their inherent nobilities. We also find confirmation of this in Byron's Conspiracy (III.iii.140-5) as well as in Caesar and Pompey (V.ii.8-10), identifying a timely subject for the London public. Rather than seeking to show that playwrights have a profound effect on the citizens, we might argue instead

that playwrights were influenced in their selection of topics by public opinion and perceived general interest.

In this way Chapman uses the coronation of James as a reason to explore the arrival of another new king, a fierce and honest commoner who explodes onto the English stage. Bussy D'Ambois is a bold and direct character, a skilled swordsman and an honest man surrounded by ruthless intriguers. This is an important element in the melodramatic scene which the play conjures on stage. D'Ambois is the fearless hero, and when his honor is challenged he quickly seeks to right the wrongs himself, without interference from outside agencies:

If my wrong passe the power of single valour
To right and expiate, then be you my King,
And doe a Right, exceeding Law and Nature:
Who to himselfe is law, no law doth neede,
Offends no King, and is a King indeede.

II.i.200-204

So pure is the fervor of D'Ambois that he is recognized by nearly everyone as a king in their own right: "The King and D'Ambois now are grownen all one" (IV.i.114).¹³ And as he is metamorphosized into a king of sorts, so too is king Henry transformed, but into a mere mortal being, a man. Tamyra offers us a vision of a reduced sense of king: "Man is a name of honour for a King" (IV.i.48). As the words man and king begin to form transitions of meaning in Chapman's tragedies, so too do we find the social realities of England undergoing significant transition.¹⁴ Thus we find man and king, king and man, facing one another on the same ground.¹⁵

Henry has sensibilities which are refined enough to recognize D'Ambois as a fellow spirit, and D'Ambois in turn

sees Henry as above the others. But unlike Henry's kingdom the kingdom of D'Ambois is a vast inner one which falls into no other sovereign's jurisdiction.

In D'Ambois we are introduced to a vision of humanity as capable of regality, a product of a natural nobility not based on social achievement, monetary wealth, or high birth. D'Ambois is sustained by the regal suppleness of his own considerable abilities. This is the source of his true sovereignty and nobility:

When I am wrong'd and that law failes to right me,
Let me be King my selfe (as man was made)
And doe a iustice that exceeds the law.
II.i.197-99

Chapman's inquiry into the limits of freedom under an absolute monarchy has tantalizing democratic implications.¹⁶ Perhaps we are seeing a new way of expressing a more individualized role of the citizen in society. In Chapman's early tragedies we witness a Jacobean effort to articulate the rights and identity of the individual. And these rights hinge upon the will of the monarch. If the monarch should err, upon what rests the rights of the individual?¹⁷

D'Ambois has formulated a set of ethics, a new code of honor, based on the concept of the immediate inner voice played out in the field of action. Valorous deeds uphold his view, and no single individual in the play, including the king, really seems capable of challenging it. The kingly honor of D'Ambois appears invincible, that is, until he is ultimately crushed by a conspiracy of court factions united against him. And only that combined strength is able to

defeat him.

But it is as an individual that Chapman's hero emerges. Through highlighting an absolute individual sovereignty, hierarchy itself is played on stage, ironically calling all in doubt.¹⁸ In Act II the Duke of Guise, the ruthless leader of a notorious faction in the play as well as in historical France (leader of the Holy League), seeks to have king Henry assert his absolute right of law after D'Ambois has killed three of the court's best minions in a duel.¹⁹ Such a query offers insight into Chapman's vision of Jacobean absolutism: "D'Ambois is pardond: wher's a king? Where law?" (II.ii.24). The duke seems to foresee the political chaos that accompanies inversion.

Inverted, the king is diminished and D'Ambois is exalted. In the play an audience considers the nature of the ruler, the nature of an upright citizen, the obligations of a prince to his people, and the duties of a subject to his prince.²⁰ We see that the subject's role is not necessarily impassive: "See great D'Ambois / Stand like an Atlas underneath the King (III.i.97-99). Though D'Ambois is beneath the king in some senses, yet it is D'Ambois who is greater than the king.

Audiences apparently were recognizing that in a changing class system, people were reconsidering their roles in the larger society. And when the head of the society is questioned, so is the rest of the society brought under examination.

In an age of questioning that included Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Brahe and Bruno, the long-held concept of

humanity as microcosm to the universal macrocosm was also undergoing review.²¹ It was above all a time for asking questions about the structure of the cosmos, and thereby questions about the place of citizen and monarch in that changing cosmos. King Henry suggests this microcosm idea in:

But, as Courts should be th'abstracts of their
kingdomes,
In all the Beautie, State, and Worth they hold;
So is hers, amplie, and by her inform'd.
The world is not contracted in a man,
With more proportion and expression
Than in her Court, her Kingdome: Our French Court
Is a meere mirror of confusion to it:
The King and subiect, Lord and euerie slave
Dance a continuall Haie; Our Roomes of State,
Kept like our stables; No place more obseru'd
Than a rude market-place: I.ii.19-29

Courts should be a microcosm of the kingdom, a mirror image of it. The mirror image reflecting life at court turns out to be not very different from life in a common a market-place. This is in contrast to the perceived prerogatives of kings and princes, who had on the contrary seen themselves as law incarnate.

A Prince: and their prerogatiues
Are, to their lawes, as to their pardons are
Their reseruatiions, after Parliaments
One quits another: forme giues al their essence:
That Prince doth high in Vertues reckoning stand
That will entreat a vice, and not command:
II.ii.120-25

Humanity as microcosm is examined along with laws thought to maintain world and universal order. The function of each principle of the cosmos is, in the Renaissance, held in place according to laws of analogy. However, as Chapman and others raise questions in our minds about the fallibility of kings and church.²² We are set to be introduced to

D'Ambois, who carries within himself the natural principles needed for the good life. We see this in:

That I may so make good what God and nature
 Haue giuen mee for my good: since I am free
 (Offending no iust law), let no law make
 By any wrong it does, my life her slave. II.i.193-96

Suggesting that there is unjust law undermines the concept of law itself.²³ And we need to consider the source of law, which is divine providence. As we shall see, this line of thinking also runs through the notion of nobility and through the institution of matrimony. What might be the just and the unjust attributes of a law? What law makes a king a king? This is a subject on the mind of the public, particularly with a new Scottish king who is not universally popular.

The play poses the question that if a prince is incompetent, then to what degree is he still to be thought of as a servant of providence? And along with that Chapman seems to be suggesting that Providence, too, created humanity in the image of that Providence, and that the kernel of universal law may be therefore inherent in each individual. This inherent nobility may not always be evident, but the case of D'Ambois seems to suggest that it may be able to rise to the forefront.

The non-king braves the sovereign himself, in spite of that sacred space which traditionally existed between a sovereign and subject.²⁴ Something must allow for such a risk of disfavor, and it may well be the hunger for gaining crowns as well as a Crown. A bold front is being presented, no matter the eventual confrontations. It is as if the hero

plays each moment as fully as possible, savoring that and not allowing concern for unpolitic consequences to get in the way. Each event or moment has taken on an emphasis of individual sovereignty, regardless of the consequences.²⁵ Instead of attempting to do the "politic" thing at court, the accepted hierarchy of degree has been replaced by the natural abilities of D'Ambois:

Mons:		Hee's the better man.
B.	And therefore may	doe worst?
M.		He has more titles.
B.	So Hydra had more	heads.
M.		He's greater knowne.
		III.ii.70-74

In his play Chapman is presenting newly emerging concepts of democracy and individual sovereignty. But D'Ambois argues that in fact his kingliness is superior to courtly nobility. Nature has seen to it that D'Ambois is full of merit, rather than placed by noble birth:

B.	His greatnesse is the peoples,	mine's mine owne.
M.	Hee's noblie borne.	
B.	He is not, I am noble.	
	And noblesse in his blood hath	no gradation,
	But in his merit.	III.ii.75-79

Merit is termed as recognizable through virtuous action. Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586) suggests in The Defense of Poesie (1595) that:

So that the end of all earthly learning being virtuous action, those skills that most serve to bring forth that, have a most just title to be princes over all the rest; wherein, if we can show, the poet is worthy to have it before any other competitors."²⁶

In Act II.i.193 we find a distinguishing between law and nature. Perhaps law of nature and law of reputation are the same: nature and law are opposed as law of reputation and

positive law are opposed. Only when positive law fails D'Ambois does he assume control of law.

The king is above law and nature since the prince is accountable only to Providence. In V.ii.7 we observe that nature is blind because it follows only custom or necessity. There is not much evidence of divine justice in the tragedy. In V.ii.23 Chapman explores value systems by arguing for a plan in nature, but he also suggests that nature is incomplete.

The laws of Providence are brought into question when a "flawed" king comes to power. D'Ambois establishes the three principle laws: king's law, nature's law, and positive law. Chapman develops the idea of nature and the king in association is developed in II.i.141.

What we have been suggesting here, that Chapman was taking dramatic liberties with the ideas of kingship, stretching and inverting the definitions, may be confirmed when we consider what the government censors thought about portions of the plays. We find that Chapman receives as much government attention as any playwright of the period.

It seems pertinent to mention that in 1605 Chapman and Jonson (Marston apparently left the city limits) were imprisoned for their collaboration in composing the comedy Eastward Ho. In the play they make direct allusion to the king sufficiently derogatory to warrant official governmental disapproval. Further, in a 1608 spring performance of the Byron plays appeared an inexpedient theatrical representation of the living French Queen. The performance provoked angry

protests from the French Ambassador as well as substantial textual excisions.

As has been indicated in recent studies, some modern scholars have attempted to interpret Shakespeare as a writer committed to the Tudor cause. Yet compare the final speeches of Richard II with those of Henry VII who conquered him in Richard the Third, and it will be seen that Shakespeare, like Chapman, does not always try very hard to create convincing and sympathetic portraits of monarchs. Shakespeare, like Chapman, does not always appear to be a definite supporter of divine right kingship. As we see in Richard II, Shakespeare's king can be reduced to his merest mortal self:

Mock not flesh and blood
 With solemn reverence, throw away respect,
 Tradition, form, and ceremonious duty,
 For you have but mistook me all this while:
 I live with bread like you, feel want,
 Taste grief, need friends--subjected thus,
 How can you say to me, I am a king?
 III.ii.171-77

Shakespeare is apparently capable of saying to both Lancastrians and Yorkists, "curse both your houses!"

Shakespeare, then, also questions aspects of the legitimacy of divine right kingship, although the histories of the Wars of the Roses are more safely distant in time than some of the tragedies of Marlowe and Chapman. Thus, Shakespeare's allegories, while pointed, seem less obviously topical than Chapman's.²⁷

But Shakespeare does, in his history plays, show the indirect paths by which Plantagenets, Yorkists, Lancastrians and Tudors reached the English throne. And like Chapman, he

just as thoroughly develops pictures of how kings leave their thrones. In Richard II, we observe the common mortality of kings and their lack of influence in the face of superior opposing force:

I'll give my jewels for a set of beads:
 My gorgeous palace for a hermitage:
 My gay apparel for an almsman's gown:
 My figured goblets for a dish of wood:
 My sceptre for a palmer's walking-staff:
 My subjects for a pair of carved saints,
 And my large kingdom for a little grave,
 A little little grave, an obscure grave.
 III.iii.147-54

Chapman and Shakespeare, and presumably their theater audiences, are interested in knowing whether or not the laws of divine providence are being observed through ruthless force of arms and by political assassination?

Central dramatic texts of the period indicate Hamlet's Claudius and Richard III as infamous Machiavellians. And if we add Marlowe's The Jew of Malta we may observe a critique of the English system of government taking the form of Florentine republican theory as presented to a predominantly royalist English theater audience.

A number of other contemporary writers considered the cynical attitudes maintained by princes of the period. Innocent Gentillet, for example, in A Discourse Upon the Meanes of Wel Governing and Maintaining in Good Peace, A Kingdome, or other Principalite, (1602), suggests that:

A Prince may as well be hated for his vertue, as for his vices, a Prince ought to know how to wind and turne mens minds, that he may deceive and circumvent them."²⁸

Additionally a Prince ought to have "the meanes to keepe

subjects in peace and union," and should be able to control them, since to "hould them from rebellion is to keepe them always poore."²⁹ Subjects must be kept in their places, just as sovereigns should be maintained in theirs. And if the prevailing order appears challenged, the challenge must be met to avoid chaos, one of the great fears of Elizabethans who remembered the chaotic Wars of the Roses.

Further, in A Discourse Upon the Meanes Gentillet goes on to provide a judgment that does, however, limit strict politic as the only method for making decisions. Gentillet would limit Machiavelli's influence:

So may they know how wicked impious and detestable the doctrine of that most filthie Atheist is, who hath left out no kind of wickednesse to build a tyrannie accomplished of all abominable vices."³⁰

Baldessor Castiglione in The Courtier (appears in English in 1603) adds to our view. In the chapter "The Life of a King a law to the people," we find:

Therefore if the Prince will execute these offices aright, it is requisit that he apply all his studie and diligence to get knowleage, afterward to facion within him selfe and observe unchangeable in every thinge the lawe of reason, not written in papers, or in metall, but graven in his own minde, that it maye be to him alwayes not onelie familier, but inwarde, and live with him, as a percell of him.³¹

The king is not answerable to the people, but only to providence. In True Law of Free Monarchie (1598) James Stuart writes a reply to the argument that the king is not responsible to the people.³² It is argued that the state must be preserved from democracy, and at all costs the principle of autocracy must be maintained. The state is

controlled by the crown and in part the church with the prince exercising authority of a confident society. And that growing society is ordered by a fixed protocol, since it is providence that places kings firmly upon their thrones. The concept of dynasty includes the prince as personal landowner, with other landlords owning the rest of the countryside. The system is maintained by means of military nepotism, embellished with parliamentary form.

Jacobean absolutism emerges from the play as a topic for public debate. Questions are asked about the legitimacy of the monarch. Is the king's position purely hereditary, or hereditary under certain legal conditions, or, if elective, is it proper that the elected should have the same attributes and rank as persons of a noble heritage. Such questions were, as Bussy D'Ambois witnesses, clearly becoming a matter of discussion on the stage of London theaters.

Chapman goes on to explore these questions in his other tragedies of this period. Analogies of king and subject, divine and worldly, are, for example, also raised in Chapman's The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois (1613):

What said the Princesse (sweet Antigone)
 In the graue Greeke Tragedian, when the question
 Twixt her and Creon is, for lawes of Kings?
 Which when he vrges, shee replies on him;
 Though his Lawes were a Kings, they were not Gods;
 Nor would shee value Creons written Lawes
 With Gods vnwrit Edicts: since they last not
 This day and the next, but euery day and euer;
 Where Kings Laws alter euery day and houre, /
 And in that change imply a bounded power.

RBD II.i.113-22

Thus, if kings are less than perfect representatives of Providence, then:

Why should Kings be praid
 To acts of Iustice? tis a reuerence
 Makes them despis'd, and shows they sticke and tyre
 In what their free powers should be hot as fire.
RBD IV.iv.8-10

When claims to divine right monarchy were advanced by means of assassination and the exercise of cunning policy, thinking London citizens began to question the basis of the matter in ways which were rarely considered before.

King James publicly seeks to clarify some of the questions by outlining for his son the proper attitude that a king should observe in ruling a kingdom. Contrary to what some critics have indicated, James was not unanimously welcomed; it was a perilous times for monarchs. James thought that his son, the heir apparent, would find his father's advice useful.³³ James does some of this in Basilicon Doron, or "His Majesty's Instructions to his dearest son, Henry the Prince" (1599):

God gives not kings the style of Gods in vain,
 For on his Throne his Scepter do they sway:
 And as their subjects ought them to obey,
 So Kings should fear and serve their God again,
 If then ye would enjoy a happy reign,
 Observe the Statutes of your heavenly King,
 And from his Law, make all your Laws to spring:
 Since his Lieutenant here ye should remain,
 Reward the just, be steadfast, true and plain,
 Repress the proud, maintaining aye the right,
 Walk always so, as ever in his sight,
 Who guards the godly, plaguing the profane:
 And so ye shall in Princely virtues shine,
 Resembling right your mighty King Divine."³⁴

It is this type of interest which Chapman develops in his French history plays. Chapman seems to search for counter arguments to James's views. Dramatic discussions of the period tended to be critical of Puritans and nobles, and

unkind reference to Kings goes counter to Wyclif's 'Make the Kyng honourable' (1382).³⁵ That is, the king at Whitehall.

Such a reversal suggests a developing sense of self-command. This sense is also reversed in Byron's Conspiracy (1608): "Teach Kings to command as they could serve, and subjects to serve as if they had power to command" (II.ii.79-81). Such is the power of command that in Byron's Conspiracy we observe the source of such nobility: "Your wit is the true Pierian Spring that can make anything of anything" (II.ii.84-85). One's wit or one's sense of conscience becomes the true source of justice, the primeval subconscious source of the good. This seems to describe D'Ambois' ability to make something out of nothing. The wit of D'Ambois is also able to interpret law in an instant and then act upon it.

There may be laws that transcend laws made by king or parliament, universal laws not susceptible to error in human judgment. This is in contrast to the understood proverb recorded by Cotgrave under Roy: "The King and Law have but one will and pleasure; the Law is wholly governed by the King; even as he will so is it interpreted, so understood."³⁶ Perhaps D'Ambois' will, like that of a king, serves as interpreter of law.

Chapman challenges this concept by developing the idea that each person is a king ("as man was made"), inasmuch as they are able to express it in life. Shakespeare's Richard II articulates the view that D'Ambois seems to overwhelm: "The breath of worldly man cannot depose / The deputy elected by the Lord" (III.ii.54) We see that Chapman takes this subject

into several of his later tragedies, and particularly in RBD.

Why, after all, should the subject hold the sovereign in higher esteem than the sovereign holds the people? In Byron we read: "Dear friend, we must not be more true to kings than kings are to their subjects," holding up a mirror image. In a temper of misrule, we find an inversion of order:

I griue that vertue liues so undistinguisht
From vice in any ill, and though the crowne
Of Soueraigne Law, shee should be yet her foot-
stoole,

RBD IV.i.86-88

Virtue and vice are inverted. Which of them now takes the predominant position? A king who may have once been virtuous and whose right to rule is founded upon sacred rites, now turns to ambush and murder:

Sent for to Councill, by the King, an ambush
(Lodg'd for the purpose) rusht on him, and tooke
His Princely life; RBD V.v.140-42

So corrupt is the usually accepted social order that now the king may be viewed as flawed and incomplete. In an age of Machiavellian usurpers and murderers, it is little wonder that Chapman finds the subject timely, interesting, and relevant to the audience. Perhaps seeing James inspired Londoners to think more deeply about complete and incomplete monarchs:

What corrupted Law
Leaues vnperform'd in Kings, do thou supply,
And be aboute them all in dignitie.

RBD V.i.97-99

As the royal person is corrupted, so may the law become corrupted itself. The inverted monarch may then try to enforce inverted laws:

Will Kings make treason lawfull? Is societie
 (To keepe which onely Kings were first ordain'd)
 Lesse broke in breaking faith twixt friend and
 friend, / Then twixt the King and Subiect?

RBD IV.iii.41-44

Perhaps it is better "not to be" than to be reduced to the mere servant of a state that has inverted values: "Better a man were buried quick, than live A property for state, and spoil to thrive" (RBD IV.v.58-59).

Who is truly ambitious requires a king's help, and for such a person to not break laws is tantamount to independence. It emerges as the opposite of Thomas Hobbes's (1588-1679) concept of the body politic.³⁷ The king's supporters had sought to unite the kingdoms, as we see in 1603 when Francis Bacon had suggested for the crowns of England and Scotland, united in James I, the name of "Great Britain"; an expression of the "perfect union of bodies, politic as well as natural."³⁸ Something similar to this is echoed in Chapman's early tragedy. This is also reflected in:

Men publique, that is, being sworne or married
 To the publique good, being one body made
 With the Realmes body politique, are no more
 Priuate. RBD IV.i.69-72

In the third book of Basilicon Doron we also find that King James refers to this matter by offering practical advice to his son about how an individual who sums up the nation in his person may properly conduct himself.

It is a true old saying, That a king is as one set on a scaffold, whose smallest actions and gestures all the people gazingly do behold; and therefore although a King be never so precise in the discharging of his office, the people who seeth but the outward part, will ever judge of the substance by the circumstances. Be careful then, my son, so to frame all your indifferent actions and outward

behaviour as they may serve for the furtherance and forth-setting of your virtuous qualities."³⁹

In a king "all places are contained"; in a king is all the kingdom.⁴⁰ And in self interest anything may be justifiable in the service of the monarch.⁴¹ And so, it may be hypothesized, it is possible to commit any sort of activity in the interests of the king. Placing himself above the law is the true source of the injustice of monarchs. No crime is considered unacceptable, since the cause seems just. It is as if might makes right, and law becomes something like a nation owned by and answerable to the king alone. We hear echoes of a Machiavellian misuse of royal privilege in The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois:

Your Highnesse knowes
I will be honest; and betray for you
Brother and Father: for, I know (my Lord)
Treacherie for Kings is truest Loyaltie;
Nor is to beare the name of Treacherie,
But graue, deepe Policie. RBD II.i.29-34

D'Ambois is a subject who undergoes a metamorphosis into a king. He flirts with the idea throughout the play. And this metamorphosis is based on the concept of the natural nobility of D'Ambois: "It rests as all kings seals were set in thee" (III.i.42), as D'Ambois sets out to claim his own due crown, claiming his birth right.⁴²

Playing with the words crown (for example as money, the top of a head, or a royal crown), king, sovereign, and royal is consistent. Contrasted to the royal person, D'Ambois poses as a type of Prelapsarian man, 'As man was made,' natural as before the Fall. Only through such a device is it possible to discover justice that exceeds the law of the state. We see

this in: "He, whose end is cast in this set figure, is of noble parts, and by his military valour rais'd to princely honours, and may be a king" (BC III.iii.48-51). We see something similar in Randle Cotgrave's A Dictionarie of French and English Tongues (1611) under "Roy: Chacun est roy en sa maison" also in a proverb of the period, "Everie one is a King in his owne house." Each maintains an individual will to sovereignty. D'Ambois sees himself king, and he advances and speaks to the king as if they were equals. It is as if Chapman is directly challenging the Elizabethan proverb (Cotgrave, Roy): "Not everie one that would, may speake to kings."⁴³

As Medieval knights would test truth by valor through force of arms, so too, D'Ambois seems to suggest, might the natural man who wishes to do right. And the greater the danger, the greater the honor to be gained. Not until the magnitude of the wrong done him exceeds his efforts may he consider crowning another king, in place of one's own rights, to do a Right, exceeding Law and Nature. And it is the nature of that crowning and designation of authority which Chapman is keen on apprehending, and on having an audience view, in Bussy D'Ambois.

We observe echoes in this and in other of Chapman's early tragedies. In each person is set the image, the imprint of sovereignty. There may come a time when that birthright will need to be exercised. D'Ambois, as a natural sovereign, goes to court seeking acceptance of his natural merits. He seems to require this kind of instant acceptance, rather than

depending, like the other courtiers, on services rendered:

The king hath now no more vse of my valure,
 And therefore I shall now no more enjoy
 The credite that my seruice held with him;
 My seruice that hath driuen through all extreames,
 Through tempests, droughts, and through the deepest
 floods;
 Winters of shot: and ouer rockes so high
 That birds could scarce aspire their ridgy toppes.
 BT I.i.7-13

As we come to understand the extent of Byron's service to his king, we realize what he must undergo when seeing its contrary, its inversion. We see aspects of inversion occurring in the Byron plays as well as in the D'Ambois plays, and it appears to have been a favorite device of Chapman's.

The world is quite inuerted: vertue throwne
 At Vices feete: and sensuall peace confounds
 Valure and cowardise: Fame and Infamy;
 BT I.ii.14-16

As the nobles of the kingdom are hungry for more rights, wealth, and lands, so too are kings-to-be. There is ambition in some people which is difficult to resist. Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618), in The History of the World (1614), gives a glimpse of a healthy Jacobean attitude:

For the rest, if we see a reason of the succession and continuance of this boundless ambition in mortal men, we may add to that which hath been already said, that the king and princes of the world have always laid before them the actions, but not the ends, of those great ones which preceded them. They are always transported with the glory of the one, but they never mind the misery of the other till they find the experience in themselves. They neglect the advice of God while they enjoy life, or hope it.⁴⁴

The unorthodox Raleigh had attracted individuals of ability and unconventional beliefs. His allies included Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland (the "wizard Earl" because of his studies of science), Matthew Roydon, Thomas Harriott

(among the greatest of English mathematicians), Christopher Marlowe, and George Chapman. This elite group was suspected of the darkest irreligion, and we may see echoes of it in Dr. Faustus and in Bussy D'Ambois.

During this period state hierarchy was considered to be a reflection of heavenly hierarchy, and as one respected divine providence so one upheld the king. In 1535 Miles Coverdale (1488-1568) writes in his translation of 1 Peter ii.17, "Feare God. Honoure the kynge."⁴⁵ God and the king are to be always thought of (so the ideology suggests) as in the same faction or party. Chapman echoes this by referring it to the lower side of the hierarchy. The relationship between a monarch and subjects is sacred, as we see in "By the reverence due to the sacred space 'twixt kings and subjects" (III.ii. 67).

Here is a statement suggesting the nature of both the subject's as well as the king's duties to one another. And yet we soon find this sacred space disrupted in: "Here would I make thee cast that popular purple, In which thy proud soul sits and braves thy Sovereign" (III.ii. 69). The king has become just another man, which we also observe in BC, as Henry IV reports that: "I am enforc'd: I have no power, more than yourself, in things that are beyond my reason" (V.i.82-4).

Seeking an example of how natural man was thought by Jacobean to have lived, one is led to several reports. And, just as is argued in the following passage, these are to be thought of as degrees. There are several "degrees" or senses of king to consider, just as there are degrees to the sense of

nobility. This view is clearly in contrast to reports coming in from the new world.

The system of individuals having sovereignty over others was found to be practiced among the "natural" peoples of North America. In 1624 Captain John Smith (1580-1631) writes in A True Relation of . . . Virginia Since the First Planting of That Colony (1608) II, 37: "The forme of their (Indians') Commonwealth is a Monarchicall government, one as Emperour ruleth over many Kings and Governours."⁴⁶ Kings are seen as potentates with wide territories and also with influence over the smallest units of society. We find in Samuel Purchas's (1577-1626) Pilgrimage (1614) 836, "Their Kings were no other then the chiefe in every Cottage, which consisted of one kindred."⁴⁷ Kings were at least as numerous as cottages.

When D'Ambois enters into the royal court and begins his mission to bring honesty into court procedure, he should perhaps expect resistance. For, not every person of noble carriage was a monarch. Richard Hooker (1554-1600) suggests that:

If we maintain things that are established, we have not only to strive with a number of heavy prejudices deeply rooted in the hearts of men, and speak in favour of the present state because thereby we either hold or seek preferment but also to bear such exceptions as minds so `verted beforehand usually take against that which they are loth should be poured into them."⁴⁸

We begin to see, then, how Chapman questions degree and the measure of merit applied to nobility in the play. In the opening scene Chapman plays with crowns: Maff.

"(aside) Humour of Princes! Is this man inbu'd / With any merit worth a thousand crowns? " (I.i.140-1). Merit and value are recurring themes in the play.

Robert Ashley (1565-1641) adds to our contextual perspective by writing in Interchangeable Course, or Variety of Things in the Whole World (1594):

As you esteem and reckon the men, or rather their merits, as you find them, so you give every one that honor which is fit for him; that is, the greatest unto such as are of greatest excellency, less to the inferior sort, and least of all to the lowest, and yet some unto all.⁴⁹

To take another instance of a writer who expresses doubts about the integrity of life at court, Thomas Nashe (1567-1601) in Pierce Peniless, His Supplication to the Divell (1592) writes:

"Tis rare to finde a true frend in Kings Pallaces; Either thou must be so miserable, that thou fall into the hands of scornful pitie, or thou canst not escape the sting of enuy.⁵⁰

Given the definition of king and courtier as was commonly understood in royal palaces, then friends are, indeed, difficult to find. Yet, this disruption may be reflected in the state of the kingdom itself.

If a prince, the head of a kingdom, is not in direct communication with Providence, then to whom is a sovereign responsible? Echoing an Elizabethan commonplace, Monsieur, heir to the throne, observes in an aside:

There is no second place in Numerous State
That holds more than a Cypher: In a King
All places are contain'd. I.i.34-36

In a state no one may possess more power than the king, since the king has possession of everything. Again, this may

be an early concept similar to that developed later by Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), who suggests this notion in his Leviathan (1652).⁵¹ We see something of it again in Chapman's

D'Ambois play:

His words and lookes
Are like the flashes and bolts of Ioue,
His deedes inimitable, like the Sea
That shuts still as it opes, and leaues no tracts,
Nor prints of President for poore mens facts:
I.i.36-40

Mysterious are the ways of the prince, for it is not necessary for him to rely upon precedent. Their merest word or look is the only way to gather impressions of what they may concern themselves with.

Chapman presents the delicate balance of this mutual agreement and questions it with the characters he develops in Bussy D'Ambois. D'Ambois does not know very much about the court or its rituals, yet with magnificent self-confidence he proceeds to share his views with the king as well as with the other members of the inner circle. D'Ambois does not retreat before any of these persons, and he is far from intimidated by the royal presence, as he might have been in the person of Lear, who is confident before the storm: "I, every inch a King, When I do stare, see how the Subject quakes." (King Lear IV.vi. 109). After the storm, however, we see Lear reduced to a clearer recognition of his mortal limitations. In that sense we may experience the inversion of a royal person.

If we further pursue the idea, we may observe that this person who maintains a sound grounding in basic and natural instincts recognizes and treats the king as one of his associates. He sees in the king a person of high nobility and

lofty carriage, whose purpose aims at noble endeavors. The commoner who comes from the solitude of the green forest recognizes the king as a close relation. He treats the king as his associate. D'Ambois' recent change of clothing appears to put him on an equal footing with the other courtiers, as well as with the king: "I think your suit sits as well as if't had been made for you" (I.ii.175-76, and also imagery of clothes appears in MacBeth, c. 1605).

The king is pleased to make such an unusual and refreshing ally, and delights in the new company. He, too, from his perspective, sees in this idyllic hero natural nobility and lofty purpose. He recognizes a fellow-king when he sees one. Between two such imperial individuals the communications seem to be crisp and clear, and each appears to satisfy and to understand the other.

It is those closest to the king who are the most dissatisfied with D'Ambois, and it is they who eventually arrange to have him assassinated. The king himself is not challenged by the newcomer. His courtiers are, however, and as they see the status quo somehow being challenged, their hopes for advancement evaporate in the presence of the newcomer. D'Ambois becomes a dangerous force which must be reckoned with. Thus, without being fully aware of his power, D'Ambois has succeeded in turning the world upside down solely by his presence. He is dangerous because his noble simplicity is combined with access to the king, and to certain kingly ways of being.

Chapman's D'Ambois, a person who is close to an idyllic, natural, honest person, seeks to gain entry into one of the most dangerous and ruthless courts of Europe. He wants to do this by being more of a courtier than the courtiers, and being more of a king than the king himself. This topic, then, may predictably be a topsy-turvy one.

The attitudes Chapman represents concerning the Duke appear as yet another aspect of our topic:

What will he send? Some crowns? It is to sow
 them upon my spirit, and make them spring a crown
 Worth millions of the seed crowns he will send.
 I.i. 119-21

What is the possible fruit of sowing the seed of crowns? Chapman exploits the monetary meaning of crown as well as the regal meaning:

Brother I know your suit; these sinful murders
 Are ever past our pardon.
 Mons. Manly slaughter
 Should never bear th'account of wilful murder;
 It being a spice of justice.
 II.i. 148-152

Again, the audience is presented with a selection of views on the nature of human equality which, in the sense that Chapman appears to intend it, disrupts Tillyard's "world picture."⁵²

Equall life is laid
 In equall balance, to scourge that offence
 By law of reputation, which to men
 Exceedes all positive law; and what that leaues
 To true mens valours (not prefixing rights
 Of satisfaction, suited to their wrongs)
 A free mans eminence may supplie and take.
 II.i.153-159

As Shakespeare demonstrates that he is in the midst of a world whose social values are in a state of flux, so too does Chapman. In the "D'Ambois" dramas Chapman offers acute

insight into the nature of conflicting moral worlds. Though the characters in a play can only with difficulty be confused with real people, we may observe in a closer focus on the drama itself the structure of the identities portrayed, how they work towards the outcome of the theatrical values in the drama, and the nature of their conflict.

Chapman's audience must have recognized a link with prince Hamlet, Tamburlaine, and Hieronimo in D'Ambois. Each is a dominant, imperial central character who is destroyed by circumstance. Some of the identity modes which are challenged are kingship, nobility and hierarchy as well as the proper conditions for love, marriage, and also the church's role in defending sacred rites.

Another glimpse of the limits of kingship is in Chapman's 1598 dedicatory letter to his Iliads of Homer. He tells us that:

Since perfect happinesse, by Princes sought,
Is not with birth borne, nor Exchequers bought;
Nor followes in great Traines; nor is possest
With any outward State; but makes him blest
That gouernes inward; and beholdeth theare,
All his affections stand about him base;
That by his power can send to Towre, and death,
All traitrous passions; marshalling beneath
His iustice, his meere will; and in his minde
Holds such a scepter, as can keepe confinde
His whole lifes actions in the royall bounds
Of Vertue and Religion.⁵³

The quarrel of popular right with divine right is a fundamental topic which is constantly creating tension between the lines of the play. Chapman makes it clear that the king goes where he likes; he is the king; yet he also plays with D'Ambois and allows him to go where he likes and to do what he

wants. A king may be able to succeed in doing what he wants, but not the commoner, whose activities will be supervised by the nobility.

But in an age of brutal force, when personal efficiency was everything, a man, if he were vigorous and adroit, could carve a little moral and physical realm for himself. And so, after a fashion, D'Ambois as a king carves out a realm in the (court) of the ruthless Henry III.

Moving further into the idea of carving out a realm of one's own, we find that in a remarkable passage Chapman illuminates the sensitive matter of monarchical assassination. Repeated in the Act III is the idea of the death of the king. The theme is repeated in a way which seems to emphasize its importance. In III.ii.397 D'Ambois is said to play the cuckoo since his note sings of the killing of the king. In a series of passages we hear a sort of refrain:

Mons. Wilt thou do one thing for me then sincerely?
 B. Ay, anything, but killing of the King (III.ii.
 312-13)

Do anything but killing of the King (III.ii. 347).

Do anything, but killing of the King (III.ii.356).

And to all mischiefs, but to kill the King
 (III.ii.371).

Only in royal hope to kill the King" (III.ii.411).⁵⁴

D'Ambois may protest too much, it seems. In the last Act, in a conversation with D'Ambois, the superior devil named Behemoth ("O thou king of flames" V.ii.39) suggests that assassination is merely an instrument of fate.

Buss: Who are Fates ministers?
 Beh: The Guise and Monsieur.

Buss: A fit paire of sheeres/To cut the threads of
kings, and kingly spirits (V.ii.62-3).

The world of the court emerges on Chapman's stage as an artificial world of murder and intrigue masquerading as state policy. The king becomes a murderer or common assassin. "The state of monarchy is the supremest thing on earth," said James I, and so thought Charles I. And yet it is sheer violence which at times first achieves and then maintains a crown. We see some of this in: "These crowns are set in blood; blood be their fruit" (I.i.222).

This chapter has tried to show how selected lines of political allegory are used to illuminate a broader issue of social injustice. Chapman uses a weakened monarchy to advance his ideas of (as Napoleon later puts it) the democracy of ability.

By lowering the potency of divine right rule, and thinning the former standards of nobility with usury, Chapman opens the door for a talented commoner to outdo the courtiers at their own game. D'Ambois seems to succeed at everything he tries, and it is only the blindness of Fortune, which raised him in the first place, that eventually lets him down. It is apparently only this which is able to stop him.

A New King: Notes

¹ Other work helpful in introducing the subject is: Jean Jacquot, introduction Bussy D'Amboise (Paris: Aubier, 1960); Maurice Evans, Bussy D'Ambois (London: Ernest Benn, 1965); Richard Harrier, Bussy D'Ambois in An Anchor Anthology of Jacobean Drama (Garden City: Doubleday, 1963); and Ernst Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957).

² J.G.A. Pocock, The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law (Cambridge UP, 1957) 259: "The endeavours of English humanists in the first half of the sixteenth century, coinciding with the development of the printed book, led to a revival and imitation of Roman and Hellenistic narrative historiography, conceived and presented largely as a literature of counsel to princes. At the end of Elizabeth I's reign and during that of James I, a mood of disillusionment overtook the community of would-be counselor and courtiers, and gave rise to a 'Tacitist' literature--including a historiography--with satirical and occasionally republican overtones."

³ A sense of the origins of natural nobility may be Adam, the first human being in Genesis. Also see Apostle Paul regarding Adam and Jesus of Nazareth, calling Jesus, "the last Adam" (Romans V.12-21, and 1 Corinthians XV.22, 45). Paul also describes man in the image of providence as consisting of knowledge, righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians IV.22-25 and Colossians III.9-10). In the garden of Eden, Adam had been placed there with Eve to maintain it and to keep it in order.

Chapman's heroes appear to inhabit the world before the Fall, as we see in Kenneth Muir's "Royal Man," Shakespeare's Contemporaries (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1961) 234: "Chapman's heroes exist more largely in the world before the Fall than any other figures in tragedy."

⁴ Bussy D'Ambois, an ideal Renaissance hero, combines the qualities of, as Jonson says about the idealized Renaissance Alexander the Great (king of Macedon 336-323 B.C.) who personified:

Pompey's dignity,
The innocence of Cato, Caesar's spirit,
Wise Brutus' temperance: and every virtue,
Which, parted unto others, gave them name,
Flowed mixed in him. He was the soul of goodness;
And all our praises of him are like streams

Drawn from a spring, that still rise full, and leave
The part remaining greatest.

Sejanus I.i.169-176

⁵ See Harry Levin's study of Marlowe, The Overreacher (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1952).

⁶ Kenneth Muir offers a lively discussion of this matter in "Royal Man" 233: "The idea that if man had not fallen there would be no kings or subjects, no mine or thine, recurs in the tragedies, and evokes an image which cannot be described either as a new ideal of society or as a new state of being. Bussy D'Ambois and Byron are unfallen men among the fallen, but their virtues are not Adam's; they are not equipped with innocence, but with native noblesse, spirit and state, genius and an ingenuous soul, the virtues of the Renaissance, Bussy is like a cross between Adam and Achilles crossed again by something quite different, the Renaissance man stepping out of the Middle Ages into a new world."

⁷ Chapman exploits the name Guise, which may conjure in the imagination a false face, a mask-like nature hollowly posing a front. The audience also would have known that the Guise clan was experienced at posing as kings. We may observe an example of this in The Historie of the Life and Death of Mary Stuart Queene of Scotland (London: John Haviland, 1636) 3:

But Francis the second (who succeeded him) and Mary Queene of Scots his wife (by the counsell of the Guises, who were then of great authoritie in France) bore themselves openly as Kings of England and Ireland, neither did they abstaine from claiming the armes, but set them out more and more.

⁸ For other critical views on divine right kings see F.C. Montague, The History of England, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907, 3: "Some of his utterances to the privy council and to Gondomar are almost incredible in their abject want of dignity. His cowardice took away some of the merit and much of the honour due to his love of peace. His grotesque appearance, his rickety walk, his rolling eyes, his tongue too large for his mouth, although mere outward blemishes, gave a peculiar emphasis to all that was unkingly and unmanly in his character."

Among other views are Lehman: "His kings are stock characters, only slightly differentiated. He has respect for 'the divinity that doth hedge a king' no matter how despicable the sovereign may be" (23).

James I also had articulated a political doctrine:

James political doctrine is most clearly stated in his tract, The True Law of Free Monarchies. A free monarchy differs from elective kingship or the authority of any republican magistrate. A monarch in the proper sense is created by God and

accountable to God only. He is above the law, as both its author and the giver of strength thereto. All other authorities in the state derive their power from him, and owe him absolute obedience," (Montague, The History of England, 3).

See also J.G.A. Pocock, The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: "But when James I was thought to be claiming too wide and undefined a power--and was known to hold, as a point in political theory, that all laws, customs and privileges were derived ultimately from his will--it became possible to argue that these things were rooted in ancient custom and consequently were not derived from his will, which came to be thought of as a power divorced from custom and standing over against it" (233-34).

And a final reference might be John Milton, The Prose of John Milton, Ed. J. Max Patrick (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967). For discussion of the background and limitations of divine right monarchs, see "The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates" (1649); "Eikonoclastes" (1650); and "The Readie and Easie way to Establish a Free Commonwealth" (1660).

⁹ The Levellers formed an English political movement active in the 1640's that advocated universal male suffrage, parliamentary democracy and religious tolerance.

¹⁰ In Jonson's Sejanus Tiberius asks, "Are rites / Of faith, love, piety, to be trod down, / Forgotten, and made vain?" Sejanus: "All for a crown" (Sejanus II.ii.48-51).

¹¹ "He that to nought aspires, doth nothing need; Who breaks no law is subject to no king" (RBD IV.v.24-25).

¹² See also Ronald Meyers, "The Royal King and Loyal Subject: Changing Political conceptions reflected in the drama of Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher, and George Chapman," diss., New York U., 1963,

¹³ Related to the subject of equality between a monarch and a commoner, consider the Elizabethan proverb, "Every man is a king in his own house"; 1594 Peele, Battle of Alcazar II.ii.CI^V, "King of a mole-hill had I rather be, Than the richest subject of a monarchie"; as well as The Malcontent: "Why, man, we are all philosophical monarchs or natural fools" (I.iv.32-33).

¹⁴ Pocock 375: "Hume had before him the theses of Bacon and Harrington, which located the sources of change as far back as the reign of Henry VII, but early informed Adam Smith that he would begin with the accession of James I because only then did the English political outlook begin to alter. He was inclined to explain this by unrelated changes in the field of religion, but wrote also of 'a revolution in manners' connected with the transition from a feudal to a commercial society."

15 For a possible intellectual source, see also Rabelais, The Five Books of Gargantua and Pantagruel, Trans. Jacques Le Clerq (New York: Modern Library, 1936):

He is Anarchus, King and monarchus of his own vile carcass. I intend to make a decent man of him. The trouble with these cursed kings here is that they are stupid calves. All they ever plan or do is to visit misery upon their unfortunate subjects and trouble the whole world with war for their own detestable pleasure. . . the luckiest thing that ever happened to you was to lose your throne!" (281).

Pantagruel gave them a little cottage in a humble quarter and a stone mortar to pound out their sauce. Here they settled and carried on their little business, Anarchus becoming the prettiest little crier of greensauce in all Utopia" (282).

16 F.S. Boas, Bussy D'Ambois and The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1905): note 151: "If ever Nature's bond maintained its strength, when subjected to the severe test of bridging the distance between sovereign and subject, both sprung from the same seed, now prove that in elevated stations she can show her nobility."

See also Pocock 286: "Selden asserted in 1628 'the supremacy of common law over all other forms of law in England.'"

And J.W. Lever adds in The Tragedy of State (1971) 38, the following: "Bussy and Clermont alike stand above the height of common men. In their courage or their consistency, their passion or their rationality, they claim an inherent right to judge rather than be judged, to decide the merits of laws and the rulers who make them, since the essence of justice and kingship lies in themselves."

17 See Pocock 284: "It could thus become a disturbing implication that insofar as any king--and a king of England was no exception--was not bound to observe the forms of law, he enjoyed such an authority and could claim to have acquired it by conquest. This assertion need not be made good by demonstrations drawn from secular history. James VI of Scotland and I of England, to whom it was axiomatic that a king derived his power immediately from God, did not attach much importance to the processes of secondary causation by which he might have acquired it, but had no objection to considering conquest as a normal and typical method of acquisition."

18 See Jonathan Goldberg, James I and the Politics of Literature (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1983) for a more detailed discussion of this matter.

19 The minions killed by D'Ambois and his supporters in the duel were Barrisor, L'Anou, and Pyrhot.

20 I am indebted to Charles Kennedy, "Political Theory in the Plays of George Chapman," The Parrott Presentation Volume (Princeton, 1935) for an articulation of these principles.

21 See Arthur Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1978 [1936]).

22 This is consistent with the Elizabethan proverb, "the King's word is more than another man's oath," and particularly stand out in a 1554 letter of Princess Elizabeth (to Queen Mary) in Original Letters II (1827) 155.ii.255: "This olde saynge, that a Kinge's worde was more."

23 George Savile, the Marquess of Halifax, Miscellanies (London: Gillyflower, 1750) 52: "The Authority of a King who is Head of the Law, as well as the Dignity of Publick Justice, is debased, when the clear stream of the Law is puddled and disturbed by Bunglers, or convey'd by unclean Instruments to the People."

24 See Edwin Muir, "The Royal Self," 233.

25 See Muir for a discussion of the full moment: "'A doctrinal and witty hieroglyphic of a blest kingdom': this is the hypothesis on which the real drama of Chapman's heroes is grounded, an action elevated above the ostensible action. This blest kingdom is not set in the past, a mere recollection of the Golden Age, nor in the future, a prophecy of a coming society, but rather in a perpetual present apprehended and to that degree lived in by the hero, the unfallen man" (234).

26 See Sir Philip Sidney, An Apology for Poetry, (London, 1595).

27 Also see, however, Leeds Barroll and his work in progress on Shakespearean historical allegory regarding the Earl of Essex.

28 Gentillet 378.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 Baldessor Castiglione, The Courtier. Trans. Sir Thomas Hoby (London: Thomas Creede, 1603) chapter on "The Life of a King a law to the people," 315.

32 See James Stuart, True Life of Free Monarchie (1598). See also Ernest Kantorowicz 149: "Needless to say, the king's status 'above the Law' itself was perfectly 'legal' and guaranteed by Law. His supra-legal rights, serving 'those things which pertain to jurisdiction and peace' and their protection, were granted to the king by Law itself." Also,

Kantorowitz 73, n.74.

As to James's authorship, it is interesting to note that he was the most prolific royal author since Alfred the Great. Most of his books are written in the Scottish dialect since he never learned to speak London English without an accent. His topics generally covered the defense of demonology and witchcraft, opposition to tobacco, and show him to have been an advocate of the theory of divine right kings.

Note also John Wieler, George Chapman: The Effect of Stoicism on his Tragedies (1969) 45: "He who is a law unto himself, provided such law be rational, is above all other laws and is . . . a chief tenet of Stoicism."

33 See also S.R. Gardiner, History of England (1965) 24: "If ever there was an act in which the nation was unanimous, it was the welcome with which the accession of the new Sovereign was greeted."

In addition we find that Henry of Navarre is said to have referred to James as the wisest fool in Christendom.

34 James Stuart, Basilicon Doron (London, 1599). See also Jonson's Sejanus in which the Emperor Tiberius (emperor of Rome 14-37) might hope to underemphasize his godlike qualities:

Take not away our human nature from us:
Look up on us, and fall before the gods.
S: How like a god speaks Caesar!
Sejanus I.ii.142-44

35 Wyclif's Bible, 1540.

36 Cotgrave's Dictionary (1611).

37 Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan (London, 1651).

38 Francis Bacon's Brief Discourse Touching the Happy Union of the Kingdoms of England and Scotland, discussed in J. Spedding, Letters and Life of Francis Bacon, London 1861-74, 201.

39 Basilicon Doron, Book III.

40 Consider the varieties of royal "duplications" which Shakespeare has represented in Richard II: "Thus play I in one person many people" (V.v.31), are those present in the King, the Fool, and the God. For other references to this concept see Shakespeare:

I had forgot myself, am I not king?
Awake thou coward majesty! thou sleepest,
Is not the king's name twenty thousand names?
Arm, arm, my name! A puny subject strikes
At thy great glory. (RII III.ii.83)

See also Ernst Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies 27: "The duplications, all one, and all simultaneously active, in Richard--'Thus play I in one person many people' (V.v.31)--are those potentially present in the King, the Fool, and the God. They dissolve, perforce, in the Mirror. Those three prototypes of 'twin-birth' intersect and overlap and interfere with each other continuously."

41 Jonson's Sejanus states that "All power is to be feared, where 'tis too much" (II.ii.88).

42 Again, we hear echoes of this idea in the work of Jonson done during this same period:

To have raised Sejanus up, and in an hour
O'erturn him, tumbling down, from height of all;
We are his ready engine: and his fall
May be our rise. It is no uncouth thing
To see fresh buildings from old ruins spring.
Sejanus III.iii.127-30

43 Cotgrave Dictionary.

44 Sir Walter Raleigh, The History of the World.
(London, 1614) 604.

45 Coverdale Bible, 1535.

46 John Smith, Virginia II, 37.

47 Purchas Pilgrimage (London 1614) 836.

48 Richard Hooker, Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall
Politie Book I (London, 1593) 488.

49 Robert Ashley, Of the Interchangeable Course, or
Variety of things in the Whole World (London, 1594) 485.

50 Thomas Nashe, Pierce Penilesse, His Supplication to
the Divell (London, 1592)

51 Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan (Middlesex: Penguin,
1975). See also John Locke, Two Treatises of Government (New
York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1963).

52 E.M.W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture
(NY: Vintage, 1946).

53 Chapman's The Iliads of Homer, To the High Borne
Prince of Men, Henrie Thrice Royall inheritor to the United
Kingdoms of Great Brittain, &c., 2.

54 See Shakespeare's Richard the Second for a staged
bringing down of a king:

And tell sad stories of the death of kings--
 How some have been deposed, some slain in war,
 Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed,
 Some poisoned by their wives, some sleeping killed;
 All murdered--for within the hollow crown
 That rounds the mortal temples of a king,
 Keeps Death his court, and there the antic sits
 Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
 Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
 To monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks,
 Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
 As if the flesh which walls about our life,
 Were brass impregnable: and humoured thus,
 Comes at the last, and with a little pin
 Bores through his castle wall, and farewell king!
 III.ii.156-70

See also Marston's The Malcontent: "No king so huge but
 'fore he die may fall" (I.v.20).

CHAPTER IV: THE KNIGHTS

James, upon becoming king in 1603, created thousands of new knights. Chapman alludes to the new knights in Bussy D'Ambois and in several other plays of the same period. He appears to focus on the new courtiers in such a way as to diminish the dignity of life at court and to diminish the absolute authority of the monarch, as well.

The new knights are dramatically used to suggest a decline at court in the qualities of the inner life. While it is all good sport on the surface, Chapman's references to the knights indicate his concern with the confusion of human values in English society. In Bussy D'Ambois Chapman suggests some of the ways his ironic references to these new knights work to entertain a Jacobean audience.

In 1603 and 1604 we see that Chapman is keenly aware of changing events at the English court in the way that he swiftly integrates timely events of the period into his plays. And these events are at times thinly disguised (if at all) in Bussy D'Ambois, where they point to Chapman's tendency to favor historical allegory. This study seeks to connect some of these tendencies in Bussy D'Ambois to similar dramatic inclinations which Chapman manifests in several of his other plays of the same period. We will also look at other works by his contemporaries which will help us to see how Chapman's

mind works in some of the scenes in the play.

Chapman uses King James's disposition to create new knights in staggering numbers.¹ The playwright makes fun of these knights in several of his plays. He almost pillories these new knights who must have appeared uncouth and unrefined to London playwrights.² What Chapman seems especially interested in is the idea that nobility has somehow become subverted through an increasing interest in material gain.

Chapman's early tragedies, and particularly Bussy D'Ambois, in a sense mark an end to chivalry in England, and perhaps in western Europe. James had brought with him a group of ravenous and at times ill-mannered Scots who were enthusiastic about the new London furnishings.³ In order to raise more funds the king sold new knighthoods as well as appointed new ambassadors en masse. James desired luxuries unheard of in Elizabeth's court.

Dramatic interest, for Chapman, is focused on the expansion-and in a sense degeneration-of knighthood. A duke and the minions recognize D'Ambois as "some Knight of the new edition" (I.ii.110); and L'Anon, one of the courtier-soldiers, sees D'Ambois as, "Out of doubt, some new-denized Lord" (I.ii.154). Maffé, Monsieur's steward, also sees D'Ambois as one of the new knights:

A pleasant fellow faith: It seemes my Lord
Will have him for his Jester; and believe it,
Such men are now no fooles, 'Tis a Knights place.
I.i.196-98

Further, King Henry, as he notices D'Ambois, comments on the new knights but not before the count of Montsurry comments

on the newcomer's suit. Clearly some attempt is being made to make sport of the new knights:

A new fashion, which becomes them
Like Apes, disfigur'd with the attires of men.
Henr. No Question they much wrong their reall worth,
In affectation of outlandish Scumme;
I.ii.47-50⁴

On Chapman's stage the knights and courtiers had apparently undergone a transformation or, that is to say, a noticeable degeneration from legendary feudal knights. The new knights were certainly not always high and mighty noblemen, however; nor did they always seem worthy of their positions. Their chief qualification was an ability to purchase. New knighthoods were becoming commonplace, and so much so that, "I / thought you would ha' been knighted, as I am / An honest woman, I would ha' dubbed you myself" (Eastward Ho I.ii.115-17).

The Marquess of Halifax, though of the next generation, clearly articulates this aspect of life at court and allows us a broader perspective about ambitious newcomers to court:

The Court may be said to be a Company of well-bred fashionable Beggars. At Court, if a Man hath too much Pride to be a Creature, he had better stay at home.

A Man who will rise at Court must begin, by creeping up on All-four; A Place at Court, like a Place in Heaven, is to be got by being much upon one's knees.⁵

D'Ambois, however, refuses to serve his patron on any terms but on his own; he does not bow on his knees before anyone.

We may also consider a supreme courtier and knight, Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626), who at the accession of James sought royal favor by profuse claims of loyalty. And for his

services of attempting to unite England and Scotland-and for making speeches favoring monarchical and parliamentary reconciliation-he was among those knighted in 1603. Bacon offers us the attitude of a professional courtier:

Men in great place are thrice servants, servants of the Sovereign, or State, Servants of Fame, and Servants of Business, so as they have no freedom, neither in their persone, nor in their actions, nor in their times.⁶

Samuel Butler (1612-80) also recommends that courtiers are useful only insofar as they are willing to serve those above:

A Huffing Courtier is a Cypher, that has no value of himself, but for the Place he stands in. All his Happiness consists in the Opinion he believes others have of it. His Business is only to be seen and he performs it with admirable Industry, looking wonderfully Politic and cautious whom he mixes withal.⁷

Much like the Spaniard Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616) whose ironic Don Quijote de la Mancha (Pt. I 1605) suggests an end to chivalry in Spain, so too does Chapman's drama parodies a once exemplary knighthood. Chapman selects an exemplary knight, Bussy D'Ambois, based on a vigorous French knight whose chivalrous skills knew few rivals. Dramatic interjections of this bold adventurer place the other courtiers in a weak light.

Chapman's selection of a notable contemporary figure for this central character is important to our understanding of the drama. interesting. The noble knight in question, Louis de Clermont, Seigneur de Bussy (1549-1579), was a great swordsman who was raised at the French court. He became governor of Anjou, was known for his personal courage, and had a violent duelling temper. He also engaged in numerous love

intrigues at court. He was a flashy character, bound for trouble. In selecting from historical sources, Chapman, like Shakespeare, takes those elements which he believes will advance his dramatic purpose and eliminates those elements that are not useful. Among the qualities adapted for the drama is the historical Bussy's intrepid spirit in love and in war. Yet in contrast to the historical personage, Chapman's D'Ambois is impoverished.

In part due to his poverty, Chapman's D'Ambois seeks Fortune to make amends. Fortune smiles on him when he is solicited to enter the service of Monsieur, the king's brother. D'Ambois accepts one thousand crowns, after some negotiation, and enters into the decadent court. But the hand with which he accepts Monsieur's one-thousand crowns with is an honest hand, not a politic one. Monsieur does not fully understand that D'Ambois intends to start a new fashion at court called "honesty," but believes he is like the others and will do obedient bidding.

Monsieur, like D'Ambois, is based on a historical figure: the Duke of Alencon, the Monsieur who once courted Queen Elizabeth. In the drama Monsieur seeks ambitious and daring men to help support his interests at court, particularly since he is aware that he is in line to the throne. A malcontent such as D'Ambois might do good service, since "To prepare me for that possible fortune 'Tis good to get resolved spirits about me" (I.i. 43-44). Monsieur needs men who are bold but who can also be easily manipulated. Monsieur describes how he sought to enlist D'Ambois: "I followed D'Ambois to this green

retreat; / A man of spirit beyond the reach of fear, / Who
(discontent with his neglected worth) / Neglects the light,
and loves obscure abodes" (I.i.45-48).

Up to this time D'Ambois is completely oblivious to courts and court life. Instead he resides in his natural forested habitat (and Chapman several times compares humanity to large cedar trees, as in I.i.5). D'Ambois, like the cedar, stands against the storm. A thought that preoccupies D'Ambois is the assessment of his true worth as compared to his apparent, or outside, material worth. Combining this with Monsieur's hint concerning good fortunes ahead moves D'Ambois to try and apply his code of virtue as a courtier.⁸

Impoverished and unknown, soldiers out of work such as D'Ambois were a common sight in Jacobean London. James's policy of not involving his treasury in war had freed soldiers from the Low Countries to wander at liberty in London. Many war veterans appeared in London during this period, since in 1603 France (under Henri IV) and the Dutch Republic were both allies of the English crown. Migration of gentlemen to the cities, however, meant rural decay and urban vice since the country was drained of its wealth to indulge those who could spend it at court or in the city.

In the seventeenth century the court was something of a public place. For example, James would dine in the presence of citizens who were allowed to crowd in for a view. Once, when James gave a banquet for the Constable of Castile, guard rails were erected to keep the crowd from pushing too near the royal tables. Budding court-directed ambitions were no doubt

nourished by such spectacles.

The court of James I was also noted for drunkenness and vice. In fact, uncontrolled extravagance left debts to Charles I (1625-1649). James had identified a developing tendency, for as Thomas Wilson suggests in his Arte of Rhetorique (1553): "What man I pray you, beeing better able to maintaine himself by valiaunt courage, then by living in base subiection, would not rather looke to rule like a Lord, then to liue like an vnderling."⁹

Chapman's D'Ambois is a former soldier, in the sense of someone who always followed the orders of others. He seeks to reverse his limited prospects for wealth and fame by entering into the French court. Social climbers were numerous and particularly ambitious during this period since, as has been pointed out, many new knighthoods were created. Elizabeth had occasionally sold knighthoods, but not to the degree that James did when he came to power. James sold titles for forty pounds.¹⁰ We know that James actually created 2,323 new knighthoods, nine hundred of them in 1603.¹¹

We know that Chapman was fascinated with this reversal of fortunes at court, because he goes on to mention it in another play of the same period, Eastward Ho (1605):

- 1 Gentleman. I ken the man weel, he's one of my
thirty-pound knights.
- 2 Gentleman. No, no, this is he that stole his
knighthood o'the grand day for
four pound, giving to a page all the money
in's purse, I wot well.

IV.i.197-201&za&

The qualities of these new knights are apparently quite uneven, reminding us of a passage in Chapman's tragedy,

Byron's Conspiracy: "What monstrous humours feed a prince's blood, / Being bad to good men, and to bad men good!"

(III.ii.108-09). Gaining a knighthood had become a fairly simple matter, as we also find this view mentioned later on in Eastward Ho: "And I /thought you would not ha' been knighted, as I am / an honest woman, I would ha' dubbed you / myself" (I.ii.115-119). Dubbing knights was becoming a cursory matter in 1603-05.

So common was this practice of creating new knights that Chapman consistently plays with the implications. But the authorities were not always pleased with this type of attention. When the collaborators Ben Jonson (1572-1637), John Marston (1576-1634), and Chapman presented a scene in Eastward Ho that was controversial, the government administrators were furious, the play was closed, offending lines were removed, and Jonson and Chapman spent some weeks in prison, with Marston exiling himself from London:

Only a few industrious Scots perhaps, who indeed are dispersed over the face of the whole earth. But as for them, there are no greater friends to Englishmen and England, when they are out on't, in the world, than they are. And for my own part, I would a hundred thousand of them were there (Virginia); for we are all one countrymen now, ye know, and we should find ten times more comfort of them there than we do here.

Eastward Ho III.iii.44-52¹²

Hawthornden reports that Jonson "was delated by S^r Iames Murray to the King for writting something against the Scots in a play Eastward how& voluntarily Imprissonned himself w^t Chapman and Marston, who had written it amongst y^m. The report was that they should then had their ears cutt &

noses."¹³ Sir James Murray was himself knighted by James on 5 August 1603.

The sudden surge of social mobility removed some of the boundaries between ruling and subject classes. And perhaps this was in part due to a new sense of personal merit introduced through Italian humanism: such thinking suggests that the human being is a noble creature worthy of study.

But still one danger of altering a time-honored social system was thought to be social turmoil. Or at least this was one of the fears of the official censors:

Cler: how dangerous it is
 For any man to press beyond the place
 To which his birth, or means, or knowledge ties him.
RBD III.iv.48-50

The patron system (I.i.164) was creating an identity crisis for those newly entering into the court life as well as for those courtiers who had been long-established. And in addition, aristocrats began to feel were insecure given the presence of marginally qualified social climbers. We sense something similar when Lear asks, "Who is it that can tell me who I am?" Perhaps we hear an echo of the challenge of evolving identities in the court of James.

Perhaps such a policy would engender the worst sort of abuses from courtiers:

So our soft French nobles,
 Chain'd up in ease and numb'd security
 (Their spirits shrunk up like their covetous fists,
 And never open's but Domitian-like,
 And all his base obsequious minions

When they were catching, though it were but flies.
RBD II.i.162-67

The only time the nobles open their fists is when, like

the Flavian Roman Emperor, Domitian (81-96), they are cruel, suspicious and censorious tyrants. And "flies" may be an echo of King Lear when he says "as flies to wanton boys are we to th'gods" (IV.i.36), which is another example of what is coming to be thought of as the diminishment, rather than the expansion, of the human horizon as one result of a new vision of the universe.

Also, Chapman's early tragedies demonstrate a sort of nostalgia for the frugal and colorful times of Queen Elizabeth. D'Ambois as a Natural man is a foil working against a materialist society (II.ii.72). Or at least this is what the other courtiers might well have thought on first viewing the court's newest aspirant. Clearly D'Ambois could be mistaken for one of the newly created knights. The other minions and the nobles are having the same problems that most members of the English court were experiencing: how can one recognize who can be trusted at court? How does one tell an honest person when one is seen? We find other writers of the period who were also interested in contemplating the ramifications of the creation of the new knights.

An interesting document is an anonymous ballad of the period entitled "Verses upon the order for the making Knights of such persons who had 40 pounds per annum, in King James the First's time."¹⁴ It is almost as if Chapman were thinking of this anonymous ballad when he writes:

Authority heere
Goes with corruption; something like some States,
That back woorst men: IV.i.38-40

The Scots who had come with James did draw English

attention, and the new king realized, as we see from some of his public statements, that trouble would have to be avoided, if possible,

Another incident which irritated many Englishmen was the removal in 1603 of Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618) from the Captaincy of the Guard. His was only one of the more notable changes in favour of Scots which agitated the court and the country.

As a man of action and a war veteran, D'Ambois is not likely to be content for very long with contemplation in a forest.¹⁵ So he is directed towards the light, and drawn into a corrupt court with the promise of one thousand crowns. Acceptance of service, however, should not be seen as proof of D'Ambois's corruption. Rather, it only prepares the scene for the challenging difficulty of virtuous activity in a corrupt world.¹⁶ But, since he is taken as an outsider into a nobleman's house, it is the mission of D'Ambois to achieve reknown. Castiglione describes this delicate situation for us:

Where there are two in a noblemans house, which at the first have given no prooffe of themselves with workes good or bad, as soone as it is knowne that the one is a Gentleman borne, and the other not, the unnoble shall be much lesse esteemed with everie man, that the Gentleman, and he must with much travell and long time imprint in mennes heades a good opinion of himselfe, which the other shall get in a moment, and onely for that he is a Gentleman.¹⁷

D'Ambois must work to demonstrate that he belongs at court, and so his achievement resembles that of one of Marlowe's ambitious overreachers. Uncorrupted, D'Ambois may "deserve

more than my outside shows" (I.i. 186). Unlike the fops at court who consider only show, his strength lies in his inner qualities, And yet D'Ambois finds only two characters in the play who are able to appreciate his qualities: Tamyra, and the king.

Aristotle suggests that there are two main types of friendship: that between equals and that between unequals. Incredible as it may seem, D'Ambois finds a brother in king Henry, not in his patron, Monsieur.

I may deserue more than my outside shewes:
I am a scholar, as I am a souldier,
And I can Poetise; and (being well encourag'd)
May sing his Fame for giuing; yours for deliuering
(Like a most faithfull Steward) what he giues.
I.i.182-86

We find that D'Ambois is no better able to judge people by their appearance than he is to judge them by their rank at birth, since most people "judge by wealth alone" (I.i.145). So too do the court minions judge him solely by his appearance. In I.ii.115 we see that style is central, pointing out a theme which reoccurs in the drama: the distinction made between the inner and the outer man (IV.ii.190).¹⁸ In I.ii.40 Chapman formulates a satire on English adjustment to French fashion. After he is fitted into a new courtly suit, he is taken for one of the new knights, or some new denizened lord: "Out of doubt, some new denizened Lord; and thinks / that suit come new out o'th Mercers book; A fellow that has newly shaken off his shackles" (I.ii.150). Or consider "Clothes make the man" (I.ii.133). However, "outward meanes alone do not up hold us" (I.i.104). The

promotion of D'Ambois was perhaps too rapid, since courtiers report that "Such a sudden Courtier saw I never . . . he was too sudden, which indeed was rudeness" (II.ii.4).

He appears naive in his "virtuous" demeanor, yet we should not believe that by entering, for whatever reason, into the court, D'Ambois has sacrificed his good qualities.¹⁹ It is the good qualities which eventually get him into trouble.

Nor should we confuse D'Ambois with a "natural" saint or a noble savage. The skills of D'Ambois are those required on battlefields, not in monasteries. And he daringly enters the court in a spirit of adventure, not as one having made a pact with decadent corruption. D'Ambois is a stylized explorer of Renaissance ethics.

With such an attitude D'Ambois overcomes nearly every problem that he confronts; while under pressure, he is sustained by confidence in himself. In I.ii.164 the minions refer to D'Ambois as a mere cock crowing on a dunghill, while D'Ambois envisions himself as an eagle or a falcon. This is in contrast to the ubiquitous Renaissance ambivalence about self-praise, which follows from the clash between Christian and classical ideas of virtue. Inner resources protect him against turmoil and corruption, allowing him to take up the challenge to test his ideals in a field of action (the court).

Almost immediately upon entering the royal court D'Ambois becomes embroiled in disputes with the king's minions. These disputes lead D'Ambois to challenge them fairly to a duel in which five men are slain. The audience is to understand that since he cannot fairly judge others based upon outward

appearance, he therefore will not tolerate others to judge him. This seems to be his "free man's eminence."²⁰ He has little toleration for insults, as one of his minion opponents who mocked him points out: "This jealousy of yours, sir, confesses some close defect in yourself that we never dream'd of" (I.ii.197). As a soldier his merit lies in his strength and instinct for action. And he seems to succeed at most of what he attempts at court. D'Ambois becomes a victim to Machiavellians much in the same way that Harry Hotspur is a victim in I Henry IV.

D'Ambois stands so far above the others in the play that the king perceives the courtiers are envious of his forward, fearless manner. D'Ambois and other court swordsmen begin to quarrel, and the king comments: "This desperate quarrel sprung out of their envies To D'Ambois sudden bravery, and great spirit" (II.i.1).²¹ And it is this brave spirit which in the end shows D'Ambois ineffective in court intrigue, for "a smooth, plain ground / Will never nourish any politic seed" (I.i.122-23).

Such volatile relations between nobility and commoners is also well expressed by Arthur Dent in The Plaine Mans Pathway to Heaven (1603):

Phila.: Is it everymans case? Are not Dukes and Nobles, Lords and Ladies, and the greate Potentates of the earth exempted from it?
Theol.: No surelie. It is the common case of all both high and low, rich and poore.²²

There is an extraordinary scene in the first act of The Tragedy of Bussy D'Ambois where D'Ambois pays court to the Duchess of Guise in the fustian of a low actor and goes on to

insult the duke so obscurely that one can scarcely make out what he means. It is a scene of fantastic vulgarity, yet it draws a fine encomium on D'Ambois from Monsieur ("His great heart will not down"). Courting the ladies is another phase of the newcomer's intuitive levelling.

The Duke of Guise must have been a member of the courtly entourage who was easily recognized by a Protestant English theater audience as the "monster of St. Bartholomew's Night" and "the blood hound of France." Of the members of the French court, the duke would have been among those closest to the throne and to the inheritance, a clear rival to Monsieur, and therefore the most envious of the success of D'Ambois. Upon hearing of the duel's outcome the Duke of Guise engages in an ironic reversal by calling D'Ambois a murderer (because he has killed the former's allies). But the connections of the Guise branch are more topically relevant than merely to be recognized as source material adapted from Marlowe.

Since the King pardons D'Ambois, the Duke becomes increasingly impatient. Maintaining his innocence, D'Ambois observes that in theory he should be placed beyond the precinct of the laws of the state. It seems reasonable to Henry III, who raises D'Ambois to highest courtly favor, that the qualities of D'Ambois might be useful at court. However, it sets a dangerous precedent for the other courtiers. Castiglione allows us some insight into the forces which must affect any newcomer to court:

They are not of small account all of them that helpe to purchase a man the favour of a Prince, which is necessarie (as wee have said) before the courtier

adventure to teach him vertue, the which (I troive)
 I have shewed you may bee learned, and profiteth as
 much as ignorance hurteth, whereof spying all vices,
 and especially that false liking a man hath of
 himselfe."²³

D'Ambois accepts eminence and, totally ignoring protocol, proceeds to commit disobedience of every courtly custom, He stands in full, natural and unaffected defiance to authority.

Chapman has D'Ambois say that the virtuous person is above the law. In the second act we also find the law of reputation being developed. In II.i.150 we see that D'Ambois suggests that the law of reputation reigns supreme over the law of governments. Line 157 of the same act and scene informs us that positive law does not take account of the law of reputation. This suggests that men may take law into their own hands. But rather than resulting in chaos, it is pointed out for us in line 168 that justice will ultimately distinguish the good from the bad users of the law of reputation. Chapman was well versed in Aristotle, who likewise distinguished between the general point of view of the statesman and the particular insight or wisdom of the private citizen.

The character of D'Ambois is an image of humanity in all its original virtue, harkening back to the Saturnian or Golden Age when people were equal and fraud and violence were unknown. In the world of Saturn passions were direct and pure, unlike during the new age, when the honesty of passion had no chance against policy. The rash choler of D'Ambois and Tamyra's headlong desire is brought into contrast with Monsieur's politic patronage and cold-blooded lust is shown

to be the nobler.

The virtuous courtier merely acts and speaks as the inner voice of natural inclination leads him. It at first may seem strange that the king should support the "levelling" vision of D'Ambois, however the king also understands the self-sufficiency which the "natural" man projects. Laws unto themselves, neither of them is accountable to anyone. And in both cases the equilibrium of the then emerging modern state might be upset.²⁴

Returning to Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois, it is soon clear that D'Ambois is a unique phenomenon, since as a courtier he does not bow to his betters, but confidently speaks to them as equals. It becomes clear that he is no politic courtier, and that not only is his bold manner widely observed, but also he observes how different he is from the others at court. He does not engage in the usual politic habits, such as speaking with:

Two Tongues, and be good only for a shift;
Flatter great Lords, to put them still in minde
Why they were made Lords: or please portly Ladies
With a good carriage, tell them idle Tales,
To make their Physicke worke; spend a mans life
In sights and visitations, that will make
His eies as hollow as his Mistresse heart.

I.i.90-96

Instead, D'Ambois is surrounded by flatterers and Machiavellians who exercise, as Cotgrave suggests, "subtill policie, cunning roguerie." D'Ambois is aware of the dangers, but advances in spite of the risks. He refuses to serve a prince except only as he himself determines the right. D'Ambois will not blindly follow the advice of his patron.²⁵

Instead, the politicians advance their interests by the empty putting-on of fronts:

Let in my politique visitants, let them in,
 Though entering like so many moving armours;
 Fate is more strong than arms, and slier than treason.
 V.iii.85-7

D'Ambois has gone the wrong way about the matter; but he is not the sort of man who retreats; on the contrary, he is one of those who makes up for being indiscreet by being insolent. D'Ambois has entered into the court, as has Byron, in a manner which has "given more preferment to your courage / Than to the provident counsels of your friends" (Byron's Tragedy IV.i.131).

D'Ambois is perceived by some courtiers as a danger to the status quo at court. They have difficulty understanding what motivates him because D'Ambois is a reversal of what they know: he is like a being from another world.

To do none good, but those that have no neede;
 To gaine being forward, though you breake for haste
 All the Commandements ere you breake your fast,
 But beleue backwards, make your Period
 And Creedes last Article, I beleve in God;
 And (hearing villanies preacht) t'vnfold their Art
 Learne to commit them? Tis a great mans Part.
 I.i.97-103

The great statesman has learned that to secure ends one must employ means. The play becomes a type of conceit of policy. And if, based on the conception of law held by the monarch and in turn held by the court, the policy is corrupt, then the source of law itself may be founded on a weak basis. Laws, and lawyers, are subjected to dramatic criticism: "Shew me a Lawyer that turns sacred Law / Into a Harpy, that eats all but's own" (III.ii.49-54).

Still D'Ambois's strongest virtue remains that he can stand on his own, apart from faction. The Guise tells him that "You've stuck us up a very proper flag / That takes more wind than we with all our sails" (III.ii.131-32). An individual like D'Ambois is equal to factions or political corruption, at least in the short term. "Tush, valor stands not in number. I'll maintain / it that one man may beat three boys" (I.ii.211-12). D'Ambois boldly challenges the minions to a duel.²⁶

It is not wise to quarrel with the courtiers, in a political sense, except that perhaps the interests and territory of his patron are being established through his apparently reckless statements. Monsieur, a consummate politician, attempts to use his stratagems in courting the married Tamyra: "Take (with a politic hand) this rope of pearl; / and though you be not amorous, yet be wise: / Take me for wisdom" (II.ii. 90-92).

The new knights are sufficiently ignoble to cast doubt on the importance of court life altogether. Chapman makes sport of the knights of the "new edition" in Bussy D'Ambois and continues that dramatic strategy into his later tragedies. Now, although some of the new knights appear "countrified," opening up knighthoods to new blood also allows a person of character such as D'Ambois to enter into court and to demonstrate his talents. This is perhaps yet another of the mirror-like paradoxes which Chapman is in the habit of considering.

The Knights: Notes

¹ The ambassage theme was a popular one in the early years of James' rule when ambassadors sprang up in abundance.

² Medieval knights were feudal tenants who gave military service as a mounted man-at-arms. Knights were usually high-born medieval gentleman-soldiers raised by a sovereign to privileged military status after serving as a page and as a squire. Such knights were usually holders of non-hereditary dignity conferred by a sovereign in recognition of personal merit or service to the country.

Medieval knights also were defenders and champions of a cause or a principle. Sometimes such a knight would be the champion of a lady. Also, we should remember that knights are chess pieces that can be moved two squares horizontally and one vertically, or one vertically and one horizontally.

³ See also Marston's The Malcontent which seems to echo a rough-hewn nobility:

Would thou wert of a lusty spirit! / Would thou wert noble!

Why, sure my blook gives me I am / noble, sure I am of noble kind; for I find myself possessed with all their qualities: love, dogs, dice, and drabs, scorn wit in stuff- / clothes.

III.iii.57-63

⁴ See also the following:

As when an ape, the counterfeit of man,
By grinning schoolboy dressed in silken coat,
Leaving his backside bare, is ushered in
To amuse the dining guests! (Claudian).

And see also Thomas Dekker, The Gull's Hornbook (London, 1609) 52-53--the chapter on "How a Gallant should behave himself in a Playhouse:

It shall crown you with rich commendation, to laugh aloud in the midst of the most serious and saddest scene of the terriblest tragedy, and to let that clapper, your tongue, be tossed so high, that all the house may ring of it: your lords use it; your knights are apes to the lords, and do so too.

⁵ George Savile, First Marquess of Halifax, The Complete Works of George Savile, Ed. Walter Raleigh (New York: Kelley, 1970 [1912]) 228. These writings of Halifax were

first published in 1750, having been written during the early Restoration period. Relevant chapters, or pamphlets within the complete works, which help to illuminate aspects of our study include A Character of King Charles the Second and Political, Moral and Miscellaneous Thoughts and Reflections.

For further background on courtiers and the politics they had to play at court, see Norma Solve, Stuart Politics in Chapman's Tragedy of Chabot (Ann Arbor: U. of Michigan, 1928); J.Q. Adams, "Eastward Hoe and its Satire against the Scots," Studies in Philology 28 (1931); Jane Craig, "Chapman's Two Byrons," Studies in English Literature 1, v. 22 (winter 1982); Irving Ribner, The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare (Princeton, 1957); Richard Ide, "Exemplary Heroism in Chapman's Odyssees" SEL 1, 22 (Winter 1982); John Briggs, "Chapman's Seaven Bookes of the Iliades: Mirror for Essex," SEL 1, 21 (Winter 1981); Leonard Goldstein, George Chapman: Aspects of Decadence in Early Seventeenth Century Drama (Salzburg, Aus.: Institut fur Englische Sprache und Literatur, 1975); Patricia Pascoe, "The Political Ideas and the Historical Background in the French Tragedies of George Chapman," diss. U. of Denver, 1982; Kathleen Shafeeq, "The Problem of Order and Authority in the Jacobean History Plays of Ben Jonson and George Chapman," diss. U. of Oklahoma, 1979; Richard Erlich, "Wise Men and Fools: Values and Competing theories of Wisdom in a selection of Tragedies by Tourneur, Marlowe, Chapman, and Shakespeare," diss. U. of Illinois, 1971; Ronald Meyers, "The Royal King and Loyal Subject: Changing Political Conceptions reflected in the drama of Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher, and George Chapman," diss. New York U., 1963; Carl Bridenbaugh, Vexed and Troubled Englishmen (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968).

⁶ Francis Bacon's essay "Of Great Place," 399.

⁷ Samuel Butler, preface to Hudibras (London, 1633)
ii. See also Jonson's Sejanus (1603) for an example of degrading oneself in service at court:

Flatter, and swear, forswear, deprave, inform,
Smile, and betray; make guilty men; then beg
The forfeit lives, to get their livings; cut
Men's throats with whisperings; sell to gaping
suitsors

The empty smoke, that flies about the palace;
Laugh when the patron laughs; sweat when he sweats;
Be hot and cold with him; change every mood,
Habit, and garb, as often as he varies.

I.i.32-39

⁸ Raymond Waddington, The Mind's Empire (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1974) 20: "Thus Bussy charts a course of action for his life, not as virtuous guide to the great Monsieur but as himself a great man guided by a code of virtue."

⁹ See Thomas Wilson, Arte of Rhetorique (London, 1553), Appendix E. For a fuller account, see also what Marston's The Malcontent adds to our context: "Better play the fool, Lord than be the fool lord" (V.iii.52-3) and a cautionary statement, "No man securely / breathes out of deserved ranks" (V.v.26-28).

¹⁰ Selden, Table-Talk (1689) Arb.52: "The King cannot make a Gentleman of Blood . . . but he can make a Gentleman by Creation," refers to the seventeenth century proverb "The King can make a knight, but not a gentleman."

¹¹ For further information on these knights, see John Philipot, Perfect Collection or Catalogue of all Knights Batchelours made by King James, since his coming to the Crown of England. (London, 1660). See also the proclamation of James concerning elections in Carl Stephenson and F.G. Marcham, Eds., Sources of English Constitutional History (New York: Harper & Row, 1937) 406-07. See from James I, "Proclamation Concerning Elections", 1604 (Rymer, Feodera, XVI, 561 f):

Further, we do command that an express care be had that there be not chosen any persons bankrupts or outlawed, but men of known good behaviour and sufficient livelihood, and such as are not only taxed to the payment of subsidies and other like charges, but also have ordinarily paid and satisfied the same.

¹² References to Eastward Ho are through the edition of R.W. Van Fossen, Eastward Ho (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1979).

The politically dangerous remark about the Scots that King James found so offensive and that landed the authors in prison was not admitted by any of them. However, Marston shows a further tendency to criticize Scots with references in The Malcontent to "Scotch barnacle" (III.i.53) and to "Scotch boot" (III.i.90).

¹³ See Drummond of Hawthornden, Notes of Conversations with Ben Jonson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1966) for further mention of James Murray. See also Appendix C for a fuller account of those knighted.

¹⁴ See Appendix F.

¹⁵ Also see Raymond Waddington, The Mind's Empire (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1974) 29: "Man must make his peace by transforming his society, not by fleeing it."

¹⁶ See J.W. Lever, The Tragedy of State 37: "The roots of evil are not in themselves, but in the world they inhabit."

17 Baldassar Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, Trans. John Florio (London, 1603) Book four vita contemplativa.

18 See I.i.84: Enchanted glass plays on the two senses of glass, which reflects outward form and sees through to the interior man. He asks if he shall imitate the courtiers as a mirror imitates the external world.

19 See Ennis Rees, The Tragedies of George Chapman (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1954) 33, who instead maintains that "When Bussy ceases to be poor, he ceases to be virtuous; and to Chapman's way of thinking, his change is essentially 'manless.'" However, is entering into court service a sign of corruption, no matter the individual involved? Is it possible to maintain a sense of human purity in the midst of a capitol (population 40,000 in 1604) of sin?

20 Rees 37, however, again offers an alternative view: "The pardoned Bussy, with little gratitude and less humility, is loud in the proclamation of his own selfishness and moral irresponsibility."

21 To this issue may be added Halifax, Political Thoughts and Reflections 215: "It is thought an unsocialable Quality in a court to do ones Duty better than other Men."

22 See Arthur Dent, The Plaine Man's Path-Way to Heaven (London: Robert Dexter, 1603) 221. For fuller citation see also Appendix G.

23 Castiglione 156.

24 Raymond Waddington, The Mind's Empire (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1974) suggests on page 23 that "Since men have not maintained the spirit and state of D'Ambois, D'Ambois is a threat to the equilibrium of the state that has evolved. It might have been better if Kings had never borne "boundless eminence," but they do---what is natural in another context becomes monstrous within the frame of their world, and to them D'Ambois is a sport of nature."

25 Marston echoes these sentiments in The Malcontent:

Thinkest I'll sustain myself by flattering thee,
because thou art a prince? I had rather follow
a drunkard, and live by licking up his
vomit, that by servile flattery.

IV.v.68-71

26 Chapman bases the duel between the six men on Brantome's Sur les Duels and on Pierre de l'Estoile's Journal de Henri III. On 27 April 1578 Henry III's minions Quelus, Maugiron, and Livarot fought partisan's of the Duke of Guise: D'Entragues, Riberac, and Schomberg.

CHAPTER V: FORTUNE NOT REASON

The play begins by having D'Ambois observe that Fortune does not necessarily always reward those who are most meritorious. This would support what Chapman has observed in terms of kingship and knighthood. It is Chapman's way of reducing those members of the hierarchy who were previously on top. The universe, as it had been understood, was no longer functioning upon the same lines as before.

Fortune has taken precedent over Christian fate. Disorder rules the day in Chapman's dramatic scheme of things, at least as he plays them out in Bussy D'Ambois. The play opens with the statement that "Fortune, not Reason, rules the state of things" (I.i.1). In one sense Chapman's earliest extant tragedy is an exploration and query into how an honest and energetic person may negotiate a world tossed by errant Fortune.¹

D'Ambois seeks to invert Fortune which up to this time left him unrecognized, in spite of his naturally given talents. Discontent with his neglected worth raises ultimate questions about the nature and destiny of the human race. It seems to echo Hamlet's observation that the world is out of joint. Overlooking D'Ambois, Fortune has not overlooked other contenders who would seem to be less worthy. Then, the true good man is overlooked in favor of empty counterfeits:

"great" men who are all show and no substance.² Fortune may randomly appoint leaders who are not the best candidates, as we see in, "Nature's a Courtier and regards no merit" (IV.i.102).³

Chapman is interested in the incalculably mysterious ways of Providence which are seemingly inaccessible to the reason of humanity. It is as if the order of the cosmos is knowable only through means of divine intervention, thereby confounding human attempts at ordering a reasonable cosmos. Thus, Fortune appears as a form of disorder or random selection, as we see in I.ii.212 where Fortune is compared to a game of dice.⁴

In such a world that seemingly depends upon chance and random selection, where might a person with vision and integrity find upright societal recognition as well as personal satisfaction?⁵ The play is in part a celebration of and a lament to Fortune, whirling the universe at random.⁶ D'Ambois tries to "Make the violent wheels of Time and Fortune stand still" (II.ii.164). As we also see in Henry V (1599) III.vi.: "Fortune is painted blind,"⁷ As commonly represented by Renaissance mythographers were also interested in themes of Fortune.⁸ Yet, so the teaching might go, history has shown that others have risen to prominence from obscurity: Themistocles, Camillus and Xerxes, for example.⁹

We see that those members of society who have established for themselves a place at court are not the most worthy members of society. Chapman's 1605 comedy All Fools further develops the subject:

Fortune the great commandresse of the world,
 Hath diuers wayes to aduance her followers:
 To some she giues honour without deseruing
 To other some deseruing without honour,
 Some wit, some wealth: and some wit without wealth:
 Some wealth without wit, some, nor wit nor wealth
 But good smocke-faces: or some qualities,
 By nature without iudgement, with the which
 They liue in sensuall acceptation,
 And make show onely, without touche of substance.
 V.i.1-10

The "great" men at court are perhaps among the least honorable or trustworthy members of the society. At least this is how Chapman presents the characters in his play. Fortune has placed weaklings, debauchees, murderers and decadent fops in control of the state, as we see in "I would to heaven I were an errant ass, / For then I would be sure to have the ears / Of these great men, where now their jesters have / them" (I.i.198). Fortune has contrived to reward those who are least deserving, as we see in Marston's The Malcontent: "Though the common usher of prince's presence, Fortune, / hath blindly given these better place" (IV.v.74-75). In I.ii.47 these fashionable courtiers are contrasted with true great men, as see in IV.i.75: "great men and their bawds." And in Byron's Tragedy we find that "Being courtiers, they should cast best looks on men / When they thought worst of them" (BT IV.i.77). Monsieur, as the king's brother, is among the most powerful of the courtiers. He hints, with this power, that D'Ambois's politic use of the wheel of Fortune may soon be on the ascendancy.¹⁰

Chapman introduces his audience to an exemplary hero obliged to live in a flawed society. Such an individual must rely on his own immediate judgment and reaction, not

recalling past ages or calculating possible utopias. He is an unfallen man who sees the world in his own way through his own inner vision. He seems intent on eliminating corruption at court.¹¹ The innocence of D'Ambois is not precisely the innocence of Adam, but rather an innocence whose origin is the region of absolutes, framed by the four elements.¹²

Sudden turns of Fortune's wheel require that human beings be able to adapt quickly to changing events. D'Ambois is a Renaissance man boldly stepping out of the Middle Ages into a new and uncertain cosmos.¹³ As Machiavelli suggests, we might each take advantage of Fortune, since, given its blindness, everyone runs equal risk. Great risks may be run while testing Fortune. Even state policy about war was believed to operate fundamentally according to random principles.¹⁴ Given this state of affairs, in The Widow's Tears (1612), Chapman suggests qualities useful for someone who accepts the challenges of Fortune:

Be free, all worthy spirits,
And stretch yourselves for greatness and far height,
Untruss your slaveries; you have height enough
Beneath this steep heaven to use all your reaches;
'Tis too far off to let you, or respect you.
Give me a spirit that on this life's rough sea
Loves t'have his sails fill'd with a lusty wind.

III.iii.130-36

We also see in I.i.75 that great men have fame and examples, which are the chief ambitions of Elizabethan heroes.

The play opens with scenes that touch upon a theme repeated throughout the drama: the unfortunate idea that Reason is evidently not the motivating force in controlling the state of things, and that blind Fortune has adjusted

events to fit her fancy. This represents an exploration of the mystery of greatness. Thus, those who are worthy of reward are often not rewarded.¹⁵

Fortune, not Reason, rules the state of things,
 Reward goes backwards, Honor on his head;
 Who is not poore, is monstrous; only Need
 Giues forme and worth to euery human seed.
 As Cedars beaten with incessant stormes,
 So great men flourish; and doe imitate
 Vnskillful statuaries, who suppose
 (In forging a Colossus) if they make him
 Stroddle enough, stroot, and looke big, and gape,
 Their worke is goodly. I.i.1-10

Where we would hope and expect reason to exercise the most influence, we instead find that fortune (blind chance) selects and empowers faithless counterfeits to direct events of state.¹⁶ This constitutes another of the several inversions that appear in Bussy D'Ambois.¹⁷

D'Ambois stands out clearly as an Elizabethan malcontent.¹⁸ As a poor man he criticizes courts and honors and rails against a universe that would allow such injustice to take place. Though humanity is a part of nature, nature at times proves to be humanity's fiercest enemy. D'Ambois is disillusioned with courts because, "Since good acts fail, crafts and deceits are us'd" (RBD V.i.21). This is above reason, as "All the Christian world / And all her laws, who observation / Stands upon faith, above the power of reason" (RBD V.i.23).

Great men understand the inherent injustice of the universe and function accordingly. In The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois Clermont (Bussy's brother) also finds himself opposing "great" courtiers: "Shall we revenge villainy with

villainy?" Char. "Is it not equal?" Cler. Shall we equal be / With villains? Is that your reason?" (RBD III.ii.96). Chapman develops this scene based on tragic verse sententiae of Plutarch's (c. 46-c. 120) De Fortuna.

In a 1602 work by Charles Estienne, Paradoxes Against Common Opinion, we find in Declamation one (for Povertie) an argument that "it is better to be poore than Rich,"¹⁵ and, "noble hartes were more commanded by want; then the height of worldly fortunes." Estienne goes on to say: "To followe the studies of Philosophy, to throw all the golde and silver he had about him into the sea, imagining, that vertue and riches coulde never partake together."¹⁹

This seems to present the sort of position Chapman recommends in "who is not poor is monstrous." The world is actually ruled by the rich with their money. Material values form the chief determination of worth, and much showing-off is done with such a value system in place.

Appearances, again, may be deceiving. It is mere duplication. In Byron's Tragedy we see that the other courtiers "keep all / To cast in admiration on the King; / For from his face are all their faces moulded." Another good illustration of this matter is Baldessar Castiglione, The Courtier (1561):

God the defense of Good Princes begins: For God delighteth in, and is the defender not of those Princes that will follow and counterfaite him in shewing great power, and make themselves to be worshipped of men, but of such as beside power, wherby they are mighty, endeavor themselves to resemble him also in goodness and wisdom, whereby they may have a will and a knowledge to do wel and to be his ministers, distributing for the behoofe of

man, the benefites and gifts that they receive of
him."²⁰

Some individuals have duplicated an image which is in essence the look and behavior of cheap statuary: forged, in imitation of the real; a fake, made from false materials and shaped to a false form.

The "bark" and the "storm" are recurring symbols of tragedy to be found in numerous passages throughout the play.²¹ And one of the best ways to survive the storm is to protect oneself with ruthless action. In this way one may be able to force Fortune's hand:

So our Tympanouse statistes
(In their affected grauity of voice,
Sownesse of countenance, maners crueltie,
Authoritie, wealth, and all the spawne of Fortune)
Thinke they beare all the kingdomes worth before
them; Yet differ not from those Colossicke Statues,
Which with Heroique formes, without o'respread,
Within are nought but mortar, flint and lead.
I.i.10-17

Mortar, flint, and lead are common substances which when used in certain combinations provide light, warmth and cheer, but when used in malicious ways provide a tool of war. "Tympanous statistes" conduct their affairs in an inflated style: bombast with a hollow, loud, empty, tympany-like resonance. So resonate those great ones who run the state. The outward show of wealth is merely gold leaf covering a base metal, masking a corrupted interior which is heavy and lifeless in dull tyranny. Byron's Tragedy adds to our understanding of Chapman's device: "Fall on your knees then, statistes, ere ye fall, / That you may rise again: Knees bent too late, / Stick you in earth like statues" (BT V.iv.253).

Inner and outer, style and substance: these are some of the value concepts which Chapman contrasts. The values of court are merely form, i.e. devised for show. To this effect, in Byron's Conspiracy Chapman goes so far as to have a character say that "Faith, love, sincerity, are but words, nothings, / Merely devis'd for form" (I.ii.)

The writer is moving the audience to see that one should not be so easily impressed by the colossal or monumental. The true qualities and worth of a person are within. Stone statues are only replicas and symbols of human beings, not to be confused with real people. We hear an echo of this in Julius Caesar (I.ii.136): "He doth bestride the narrow world like a colossus."

Other notable references to the colossus may be found in Chapman's Caesar and Pompey: "A Colossus, and can stride from one province to another" (CAP II.i.38-39); and again in the same play: "Poor, and a Colossus that could so lately straddle o'er a province" (CAP IV.i.17-18). Webster is also interested in the image of a colossus: "So some men i'th Court seeme colossusses in a chamber" (The White Devil V.i.117-18).²²

Even if an individual believes that she or he has everything, it might be nothing more than a mistaken love of the material world and its goods. The materials of a world in flux can have little lasting value. Chapman questions the relationship between not only happiness and material, but also happiness and moral.

Chapman addresses the popular Renaissance concept of "Fortune". It is Fortune which does not take into account the hopes or desires of thinking humanity. Though Fortune has not yet rewarded D'Ambois for his merit, Fortune has provided him with splendid features, as Monsieur describes D'Ambois to us:

Yoong, learned, valiant, vertuous, and full mand;
 One on whom Nature spent so rich a hand,
 That, with an ominous eie, she wept to see
 So much consum'd her vertuous treasure;
 Yet, as the windes sing through a hollow tree,
 And (since it lets them pass through) let it stand;
 But a tree solid, since it giues no way
 To their wilde rages, they rend vp by th'roote:
 So this full creature now shall reele and fall,
 Before the franticke puffs of purblinde Chance
 That pipes thorow emptie men. V.iii.38-48

The generality of this statement ought to preclude the idea that the play is "about" the conflict between an individual and his society which should be noted mainly as a reflection of the corruption of Nature.²³ The dominance of Fortune becomes grotesque in "Reward goes backwards, Honour on his head"; and the concrete grotesquerie becomes explicit in the next line: "Who is not poor, is monstrous." This idea is developed in "only Need Gives form and worth to every human seed." How are those whom Fortune has not graced with favors to interpret their exclusion?

In the English class system, people were counseled to accept their respective places in society. Their status at birth was to remain their status throughout their life. D'Ambois, however, seems not to be willing to resign himself to his assigned place in society, and instead longs for advancement. He is: "A man of spirit beyond the reach of fear, / Who (discontent with his neglected worth) / Neglects

the light, and loves obscure abodes" (I.i.46). He is poor, yet brings with him all that he needs to oversee the pursuit of his good fortune: "Do thou but bring / Light to the banquet Fortune sets before thee" (I.i.61).

D'Ambois is a man of superior quality in every regard and is not likely to remain motionless for very long. His nobility is inherent, and from it his fortune will come. We also glimpse this idea in Byron's Conspiracy: "I am a nobler substance than the stars, / And shall the baser overrule the better? / Or are they better, since they are the bigger?" (BC III.iii.109). This combination is likely to bring D'Ambois his fortune, for "vertue" implies "qualitie" or "fruit" which is to be borne.

The nobility of need may refer to a more abstract sense of necessity as distinct from a free will than is needed to satisfy the sentence: the human seed grows healthy under a regimen of sustained discipline. This idea governs the rapid shift to the other end of the scale: "As cedars beaten with incessant storms--so great men flourish."

Cedars resisting storms are defying circumstance (the necessity of submission) as much as "great men" stand outside of the restrictions of poverty; so both senses of "need" inform these lines and condition the double sense of "flourish": one may see that the cedar flourishes in spite of, or perhaps because of, the ceaseless storm. The cedar is able to withstand the storm, but it also has the sense of boastful gesturing, and that is developed in the image of the

hollow statue. This ambiguity is sustained. Poverty does not itself have form and worth: a search for growth turns up empty braggarts. In I.i.18 we see that "Man is a torch borne in the wind" or, that is to say, the opposite of a resilient cedar.

A torch, however, is also a common emblem for "Reason". The next object of contemplation is the type of reason used by great seamen, who use all "their powers and skill" successfully to "Put a girdle round about the world." This image of human capacity is itself reduced to vulgar arrogance in i.31: "As if each private arm would please the world"--and so we are returned to the final affirmation of humble virtue. Nothing else has been recommended; yet it would be absurd to claim that this and this alone is what the speech is about. Implicit throughout is an emphasis upon the development of human capacities, whose reach should approach the infinite; and that also serves a positive role without which anything has value. We have been concerned with the other meaning of virtue. It has become difficult to distinguish a great man from a good one.

Chapman's note at the bottom of page fifty in his Penitentiall Psalms offers more on the subject: "A great & politicke man, such as is, or may be opposed, to good or wise. The privation of a good life, and therein the joyes of heaven, is hell in this world."²⁴ Chapman, in one of his short poems, "Of Attire", writes:

In habit, nor in any ill to th'eye,
Affright the vulgar from philosophy:
But as in looks, words, works, men witness

thee
 Comely and checkless, so in habit be.
 For if a man shall show me one com-
 mended,
 That goes fantastically, and doth fit
 The vulgar fashion, never think his wit
 Is of a sound piece, but hath bracks in it.
 If slovenly and nastily in weeds
 Thou keep'st thy body, such must be thy
 deeds.
 Hence, to the desert, which thou well
 deservest,
 And now no more for man's society servest.
 External want to this height doth express
 Both inward negligence and rottenness.²⁵

Likewise, in Richard Hooker's Laws of Ecclesiastical
 Politie (1595), we find "The pole-star of the world, and that
 according thereunto she guideth her hand to work by imitation;
 although we rather embrace the oracle of Hippocrates, that
 each thing both in small and in great fulfilleth the task
 which destiny hath set down."²⁶

The opening speech of the play had set this theme in
 motion. It resembles a prologue in that it establishes a
 thematic atmosphere and direction for the play. It should be
 no surprise after this that Bussy's heroic battle is also seen
 as a vulgar murder, or that his heroic love is also a cheap
 adultery. The pursuit of virtu (manly attributes), however
 honest, inevitably ends in conflict with plain 'virtue'
 (Christian humility). Such is a function of D'Ambois' speech;
 but it is not simply Chapman speaking through actors, either.
 The rhetorical surface is Bussy's grandiose justification of
 his own poverty; the complexity subsumed under that surface is
 not available to Bussy's consciousness.

This is the apex of the hero's ascendance, the fullest
 statement of the value at which he aims; it is immediately

followed by signs of envy and disjunction. Monsieur and Guise plot with Montsurry, exacting knowledge of the adultery in a scene of nicely poised trivial prose: Henry insinuates the knowledge, and Bussy explodes in violent rant, "that nature has no proportions" and that the hero's soul sustains the play's main theme."

D'Ambois exceeds Monsieur's rational comprehension: "I fear him strangely, / and may resemble his advanced valour / Unto a spirit rais'd without a circle" (ii. 258-300). The subsequent dialogue is conditioned by this fear; in echoing the opening of the scene it offers an analysis of Bussy as braggart and bully, opposite Henri's encomium. It involves Bussy in the language of corruption which attends Monsieur's influence as Chapman presents it. It is as if Chapman challenges the structure and existence of English nobility and Fortune, as Shakespeare suggests when he writes, "Stand aside, Nobilitie" (1596, I Henry IV II.iv. 429). Another illustration of this sentiment is in a speech by King Henry:

Stay them, - stay, D'Ambois; - Cosin Guise, I wonder
Your equall disposition brookes so ill
A man so good, that only would vphold
Man in his natiue noblesse, from whose fall
All our dissentions rise; that in himselfe
(Without the outward patches of our frailtie,
Riches and honour) knowes he comprehends
Worth with the greatest: Kings had neuer borne
Such boundlesse eminence ouer other men
Had all maintain'd the spirit and state of D'Ambois;
Nor had the full impartiall hand of Nature
That all things gaue in her originall,
Without these definite terms of Mine and Thine,
Beene turn'd vnjustly to the hand of Fortune:
Had all preseru'd her in her prime, like D'Ambois;
III.ii.88-102

The events leading up to this encomium (and those which draw

away towards the final scenes) are extremely complex and fully stocked with multi-leveled paradox. They represent the highest realization of D'Ambois: the support of his King. The king attempts to stop D'Ambois and the Duke of Guise from advancing any further in their dispute which is rapidly escalating towards a duel. The King points out that D'Ambois has many favorable qualities hitherto unappreciated by the Duke. These combined points provide a stunning speech to feature in an age of divine right monarchies. For Henry III Chapman makes kingship necessarily evil given humanity's fall from a former self. This state of being, described as "native noblesse," is realized in D'Ambois at all times.

Henry argues that Nature, in more recent times evolved into Fortune (with its injustice and uncertainty), would return if more people were like D'Ambois. In 1603 we find James I saying that "the country (being) so full of Nobilitie and Gentlemen of the best sort."²⁷ The country was being filled with such nobility, gentlemen, and individuals who wanted to invest in a title. This was an investment in "fortune", which just then was smiling upon them.

In 1612, in his Essays, 'Nobility' (Arb.) 192, Sir Francis Bacon states: "A great . . . Nobilitie addeth maiesty to a Monarch, but diminisheth power."²⁸ In 1215 the nobles who proposed the Magna Carta demonstrated what a powerful nobility could do to bring a king of England to submission.

Chapman participates in the ongoing interfusion of abstract philosophies and concrete politics. Added to this is his deliberate use of conventions from medieval morality

plays. This does not necessarily involve an inconsistency of dramatic conception, as some of Chapman's critics maintain. Monsieur and Guise each in turn speaks for the royalist social attitudes he represents: the cynical Monsieur believes in a capricious fortune which can be bribed, while the rigid legalist Guise asserts an orthodox teleological argument for Nature's hierarchical orderliness. But these attitudes cannot simply be confined to the men who utter them since they are meant to represent rigid postures the structure of English society in 1603/04.

D'Ambois immediately recognizes the treachery of Fate:
 "Tis enough for me/That Guise and Monsieur, Death and
 Destiny/Come behind D'Ambois--(II.ii.123-5). His body, mind,
 and soul have not yet fulfilled their destiny.

Hen. I like your alteration, and must tell you,
 I haue expected th'offer of your seruice;
 For we (in feare to make milde Vertue proud)
 Vse not to seeke her out any man. I.ii.59-62

Again, outward appearance takes on more significance than the qualities of inherent personality and knowledge--qualities which D'Ambois would appear to excel in. Again, it is a crisis of values or attempt to distinguish what is real ("real worth") from what is false. Ben Jonson, in Discoveries (1640), observes:

I have seen that Poverty makes men doe unfit things;
 but honest men should not doe them: they should
 gaine otherwise. Though a man bee hungry, hee
 should not play the Parasite. That house, wherein I
 would repent me to be honest: there were wayes enow
 open for me to be rich. But flattery is a fine
 Pick-lock of tender eares: especially of those,
 whom fortune hath borne high upon their wings, that
 submit their dignity, and authority to it, by a
 soothing of themselves."²⁹

Likewise, in a letter of Chapman's (dating c. 1612-13), we may observe that he was considering just values and rewards. Chapman makes it clear that he has not been justly compensated.³⁰ Value is based on appearance rather than on the true quality of the production. Again we find inner and outer contrasts:

Guise. I like not their Court forme, it is too
creatfalne,
In all obseruance, making Semi-gods
Of their great nobles; and of their old Queene
An euer-yoong, and most immortall Goddessse.
I.ii.9-13

Much later in the play the Duke still maintains his view of Machiavellian politics in spite of a random Fortune:

Guise. He that obserues, but like a worldly man,
That which doth oft succede, and by th'euent
Values the worth of things, will thinke it true,
That Nature works at randome, iust with you:
V.iii.26-29

In a corrupt world such as this a person can apparently rise by politic action alone. But D'Ambois insists on having it his own way, as Monsieur points out (aside):

His great heart will not downe, tis like
the Sea
That partly by his owne internall heat,
Partly the starr's dailie and nightly motion,
Ardor and light, and partly of the place
The diuers frames; And chiefly by the Moone.
I.ii. 138-43

People will base their obedience on parchments instead of reading a man's title to nobility in the flash of his eyes or of his sword.

In Petrarch's Seven Penitentiall Psalms, we observe a short poem of Chapman describing good men:

A good man want?
His lawes, his witnesses, his ministrie?

Which onely for examples he maintaines
 Against th'unlearned, to prove, he is, and raignes:
 And all things governs justly: no neglects
 Things humane, but at every part protects:
 A good man so, that if he lives or dies,
 All things sort well with him.³¹

In other words, the good man will not necessarily be recognized by how far he has gone, but by the way in which he gets there. Good men who are as if they:

Are glad to giue a warning peece, and call
 A poore staid fisher-man, that neuer past
 His Countries sight, to waft and guide them in:
 So when we wander furthest through the waues
 Of Glassie Glorie and the Gulfes of State,
 Topt with all Titles, spreading all our reaches,
 As if each priuate Arme would sphere the world;
 Wee must to Vertue for her guide resort,
 Or wee shall shipwracke in our safest Port.

I.i.25-33

No person can venture far without some guidance from others. Some people may appear domestic but they could represent a link in the full circle necessary in assuring a successful voyage. Or so Chapman's poetic dramatic language suggests as in part responsible for his intellectual dramatic method and motive.³² It is as if Chapman considered this type of dialectic to be a poetic duty.

Fortune Not Reason: Notes

¹ Irving Ribner, Jacobean Tragedy (Barnes and Noble, 1962) 21: "Bussy D'Ambois is deliberately shaped as a dramatic symbol of humanity, faced with a problem which all mankind must face. In this we have much of the difference between moral exemplum and the kind of philosophical exploration which is tragedy. It is this range which links Chapman to Shakespeare. In Bussy D'Ambois Chapman set himself to answer in drama the ancient question of how man, endowed by his creator with reason, strength and knowledge of virtue, can live in a world corrupted by evil. But to this question Chapman can find no answer, and the total impact of his play, conveyed with a striking emotional force, is to affirm that virtue cannot survive, for it must inevitably be corrupted and destroyed by the baseness of the world in which it is forced to live."

Ribner suggests that this mars the play. Yet, does Shakespeare offer any better answer to such a question?

² See Cotgrave (1611) on Fortune: "Hap, chaunce, luck, lot, hazard, adventure; also destinie, fatal necessitie. Courir fortune: to be in great danger; to incurre a great hazard; to be neere, or next dore, to a shipwracke. Fortune aide à celui qui se veut aider: Pro. Fortune aides him that loves to aid himselfe; for helps on the forward. Fortune n'espargne ny serviteur ny Maistre, elle donne & reprend, tel est son estre: Prov. Fortune spares no man, keepes no covenants, observes no condition."

It should also be recognized that Hermes symbols were profusely provided from antiquity to fire the imaginations of sixteenth century emblematisers. Hermes symbols carried the motto, VIRTVTI FORTVNA COMES, or "Fortune is the companion of manly effort." The emblematiser Andrea Alciati (1492-1550) for example, was applying Hermes symbols in 1522.

³ See also Bacon's epigram in "Of Great Place" in which it is stated that "All rising to great place is by a winding stair," suggesting an indirect path which consists of subtle policy, not directness and honesty.

Webster's malcontent, Bosola, also rails at a society in which worth is unrewarded but fraud flourishes.

And we read in L. Wager, The Longer Thou Livest (1560), that "Fortune can exalte fooles" (D⁴).

⁴ Although Delamothe, II (1592) reports that "Fortune can take away our goods, but neuer our vertue" and Palsgrave suggests in Acolastus (1540) 159, that: "Men saye trewely herein, Fortune is made of glasse, whiche whyle it shineth moste gloriouse, is broken a sonder."

⁵ See also William Drummond, in Flowres of Sion . . . To Which is adjoynd his Cypresse Grove (1623, p. 682), suggests that:

Empires, states, kingdoms have, by the doom of the Supreme Providence, their fatal periods; great cities lie sadly buried in their dust; arts and sciences have not only their eclipses but their wanings and deaths; the ghastly wonders of the world, raised by the ambition of ages, are overthrown and trampled; some lights above (deserving to be entitled stars) are loosed and never more seen of us; the excellent fabric of this universe earthlings thus to be handled complain!^{&v&}

⁶ W.R. Elton, King Lear and the Gods (Huntington Library Press, 1966), suggests that "Chapman's Caesar and Pompey (1599-1607) reflecting on the absence of justice in the world attributes the heavens' disinclination to ameliorate such conditions to an inscrutable mystery."

⁷ See also Kyd, The Spanish Tragedy (c.1587), "Fortune is blinde and sees not my deserts" (I.330) and Jonson, Poetaster (1604), "All humane businesse fortune doth command Without all order; and with her blinde hand, Shee, blinde, bestowes blinde gifts" (V.i.54).

⁸ Stephen Orgel writes in his facsimile edition introduction (NY: Garland, 1976) to Andreae Alciati's Emblemata (1621): "Alciati's book of emblems, first published in 1531, was the prototype for a profoundly characteristic Renaissance genre, uniting image and word in a series of speaking pictures. In 1571 an edition appeared with an extensive commentary byt the French jurist and scholar Claude Mignault (Claudius Minos), which in itself constitutes a mythographic and iconographic investigation of great interest. The Padua edition of 1621, which we reprint, includes three additional commentaries and an encyclopedia index. Our copy is from the Bodleian, shelfmark A.6.16. Linc.

⁹ See also Baldwin, Treatise on Moral Philosophy (1547), who cautions, "He that desyreth great charges, desyreth great troubles" (PI^V).

¹⁰ See Shelton, Quixote (1620), "It is not fit that whilst good luck is knocking at our door we shut it: good luck is knocking at our door we shut it: let us therefore sail with this prosperous wind" (II, V.ii.220).

¹¹ Michael Shapiro, Children of the Revels (New York: Columbia UP, 1977) 94: "At one point, Bussy vows to cleanse the land of all corruption. Sounding like a Crites or a Phoenix, he anatomizes three stock targets of satire: the great man who 'rules so much more than his suffering King,' the clergyman 'that hath good living, and a wicked life,' and

finally the lawyer 'that turns sacred Law / . . . Into a Harpy, that eats all but's own' (III.ii.29-54).

¹²Muir 236: "The essential thing about Chapman's heroes, as about Marlowe's, is that they are framed of the four elements, not that they are human beings obliged to live somehow with other human beings; they are nearer to earth, water, air and fire than to us as we know ourselves. Marlowe gives the concoction from which Chapman's heroes were drawn: Nature that fram'd us of four elements,/Warring within our breasts for regiment,/Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds."

¹³ See Gower, Confessio Amantis (c. 1390), "Fortune unto the bolde Is favorable for to helpe" (VII.400).

¹⁴ See also Elton 27: Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois operates in a world where "Fortune not Reason rules the state of things" where all men are "the Spawn of Fortune" a world in effect where man falls "Before the frantic puffs of blind-born chance That pipes through empty men and makes them dance."

Societies are often on the brink of war when they least expect it.

The turning point of the wheel may come at the moment of maximum security and complacency, and its workings underlie Chapman's view of history: no matter which regime it is, the effect remains the same. Even important questions of state policy depend upon chance.

War was also a chance encounter, as we see in the wheel of war and peace based on an idea of Luigi da Porto (c. 1500) derived from a commentary on Dante's Inferno. Selections on the wheel include: "Humanity, Patience, Peace, Riches, Pride, Wrath, War, Poverty." We also observe such a wheel of fortune in Marlowe's Tamburlaine.

Finally, to get another sense of the part Fortune plays in the politics of the history plays of the period, see Henry Kelly, Divine Providence in the England of Shakespeare's Histories 15: "When Richard returned from Ireland, Fortune turned her wheel, and he cursed his fates; nevertheless, the fear of Christ was not yet upon him. The outcome, however, proved that men will not serve a ruler who is not sustained by the Lord."

¹⁵ Charles Estienne, Paradoxes Against Common Opinion (London: Simon Waterson, 1602: "In Declamation one (for Povertie) he argues that 'it is better to be poore than Rich' (page 1) and, 'noble hartes were more commanded by want; then the height of worldly fortunes' (page 2)." Estienne also adds that 'To followe the studie of Philosophy, to throw all the golde and silver he had about him into the sea, imagining, that vertue and riches coulde never partake together" (page 15).

¹⁶ See the Malcontent, "For impudency and faithlessness are the mainstays to greatness" (V.iv.29-30).

17 See Henry Kelly, Divine Providence in the England of Shakespeare's Histories (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1970) 54: "This characterization of Fate is usually applied to Fortune, and it is in fact Fortune and Chance who are blamed for York's downfall in the verses that follow on the battle of Wakefield, and also in Edward's speech in Parliament. This illustrates a tendency we have noticed before, whereby an author describes in providential terms only what seems favorable from his own viewpoint, and describes 'unfortunate' occurrences in literary or classical terms (or else, at times, as engineered by the devil)."

18 Marston is also interested in extremes, as we see in Craig 29: "He is the psychological dramatist par excellence, by native taste and by deliberate intent. The psychology he exploits is not always to our liking . . ."

Also see Harrier, xiv: "Especially in The Malcontent, his best piece, he writes with a personal disgust so strong that a comic dissolution of reality was necessary to escape nervous disorder. Not surprisingly, he left his Insatiate Countess unfinished in 1608, entered the Church of England, and disappeared into oblivion. In fact, his gravestone in the choir of Temple Church bears only the words 'Oblivioni Sacrum.'

19 Estienne 7.

20 Baldessar Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier Trans. Sir Thomas Hoby (London: Thomas Creede, 1603) Book four.

21 Storm imagery was a Renaissance commonplace that anticipated a tragic outcome.

22 See also The Courtier, from the fourth book, "On Great Men," which offers us a possible source for Chapman's thinking about a colossus: "But they are (in my judgement) like the Colosses that were made in Roome the last yeere upon the feast day of the place of Agone, whiche outwardlye declared a likenesse of great men and horses of triumph, and inwardly were full of towe and ragges" (299-300).

23 Consider also Othello, who rises through the ranks after long effort to achieve a high vision, only to have it taken by a cruel and politic fate.

24 See Chapman's poem "A Great Man" in Appendix H, under Chapman's translation of Petrarch's Seven Penitentiall Psalms.

25 See Chapman's poem "Of Attire" in Bartlett.

26 Hooker v.4, 121.

27 James Stuart, cited in Ellis Orig. Lett. Ser.
I.iii.64.

28 Bacon, Essays 192.

29 Jonson, Discoveries (London, 1641).

30 See Appendix D.

31 See Petrarch's Seven Penitentiall Psalms in
Bartlett.

32 See also J.E. Spingarn, A History of Literary
Criticism in the Renaissance (New York: Columbia, 1954) 262:
"The poets are, in fact, wise men, spiritual legialators,
reformers, who have at heart the redressing of wrongs; and in
accomplishing this end,--either because they fear to rebuke
these wrongs openly, or because they doubt the expediency or
efficacy of such frankness with ignorant people,--they hide
their true meaning under the veil of pleasant fables." This
is reminiscent of Shelley's dictum: "Poets are the
unacknowledged legislators of the world."

In dedicating The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois to Sir Thomas
Howard, he writes: "And for the authentical truth of either
person or action, who (worth the respecting) will expect it in
a poem, whose subject is not truth, but things like truth?
Poor envious souls they are that cavil at truth's want in
these natural fictions, material instruction, elegant and
sententious excitation to virtue, and deflection from her
contrary, being the soul, limbs, and limits of an authentical
tragedy."

CHAPTER VI: HONOR UPSIDE DOWN

Thus far we have seen how Chapman's use of social inversions has touched upon the sovereignty of royal monarchs, the nature of nobility, and the indomitability of the individual. We have seen how Chapman selects documents that point to the kind of conflicts he wants to focus on in the play. This chapter considers another phase of inversions: love and marriage, legitimacy and sin, at court.

Chapman's notion of honor in the play depends in great part on issues of the heart. The audience comes to realize that the love of Tamyra (the countess of Montsurry), and D'Ambois, is more "true" than Tamyra's marriage vows to her lawfully wed, lawless, law-unto-himself count.

Some critics of Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois have tended to represent the drama as merely a treatment of excesses of passion, notably in the multiple-meaning "courting" of Tamyra.¹ In I.i.109 we find ourselves considering a "court" play, a "courtly" play, and a play about "courting." Such uses of multiple-meanings also apply to the honor of "courting" and to the play's terms of honor which ironically range from misapplied, to inverted, to perverted.

Conventions and traditional moral laws go down before D'Ambois as he articulates the possibility of new moral laws and definitions of honor. These passages appear to suggest

that D'Ambois personifies an "active" form of Stoicism. However, there also appear to be elements of Epicureanism motivating his actions, when it comes to the ladies at court. And this too is pursued in a highly individualized way.

D'Ambois personifies an individual sovereign honor which does not particularly depend upon outside forces. We have observed that D'Ambois typically maintains a position that individuals have a right and perhaps an obligation to refer to moral laws (common law?) which may transcend laws of the state. In developing his relationship with Tamyra, D'Ambois seems to refer to such laws. He intuitively follows what seems right, and so does she. The individual is to use a sense of what is intuitively right, in a "know thyself" sort of exercise which moves beyond the norms of that contemporary society.

This aspect of the play, like other sections, seems to reflect more than a mere morality play of good versus evil. If anything, the devoted husband and the pandering Catholic friar turn out to be the most surprising and disappointing characters in a play of moral pitfalls. Life at court is full of such pitfalls, and each of the characters must be on guard. Socially acceptable traits are present in each of the major characters (D'Ambois, Guise, Tamyra, the Friar, Montsurry and Henry), and yet we also find that each character has serious limitations in relationship to some of the other characters. We learn that there appear to be positive ideals involved in "honorable" adultery, and that there may be some lawful (or moral) limitations to the rights of church and of legal

marriage.²

Tamyra sets this avenue of development into motion by articulating her right to function as an individual human being, even if it may appear to work against her best interests.³ Her moral position is further supported when her husband stabs and tortures her in the name of honor. This is another of Chapman's inversions turning honor upside down. Like Fortune, we observe apparent reversals in Fortune over reason, and certainly as reversal pertains to the war of the sexes.⁴

It seems arguable that D'Ambois also appears at times to exhibit excessive pride. On the surface D'Ambois may appear to be guilty of excessive pride. But his actions with Tamyra seem morally insufficient to condemn him, since most of the other key characters in the play also appear to exercise excessive pride and open promiscuity, apparently fine qualities in a courtier.⁵ While the other characters may indeed go to hell for their sins, it is D'Ambois who is made a spectacle of in the play. Other, much more "guilty" characters survive D'Ambois. Indeed these qualities are highlighted at court, as if Chapman were making sport of just another French fashion.⁶

A conventional sense of adultery combined with active self-assertion would seem insufficient cause for such strong "moral" retribution. In fact, other characters in the play appear to commit acts which are more reprehensible in the Christian scheme of things than the acts of D'Ambois. The Duke of Guise, for example, is certainly to be thought of as

the most murderous character in the play, while Montsurry tortures his own wife. Why do they go unpunished, then? At court it seems that murder, torture and adultery are a mere matter of course.⁷

Finding one's place in such a court is not going to be easy. At one point the Duchess of Guise tries to make it easier for the newcomer by deciphering the hierarchy of ladies at court. One must begin with the lowest and progress upwards in due time. He must rise by degrees through courting a variety of noblewomen. Such a concept of "love" is certainly different from the chivalrous "true love" of Arthurian romance. Tamyra adds philosophical support to the question by responding to Bussy's ultimate and most true love, the sort that does not regard hierarchy.⁸ These two characters in their quality and intensity of feelings present a lush contrast to the other more emotionally faded characters in the play. And since love is not especially evident in the marital arrangements of the other characters, Tamyra and D'Ambois stand out as idealists of a higher order, echoing the ideals of romance in medieval literature. Thus, a value system is in place, in the play, which encourages politic action at court regarding the throne as well as regarding the heart.

This much should serve to suggest that Chapman, though beginning the drama by hinting at a morality play, adapts his materials as well as his handling of moral positions to fit dramatic purposes which seem to transcend Christian good and evil. The adaptation points to the unchivalrous and politic love which serves most of the other countries as an adjunct

primarily to aid one's rise in social position. At court, "love" is commonly exchanged for favors, as we see when Monsieur tries her with a string of pearls.⁹

D'Ambois will not consider bribery for a moment, however, and loves at first sight the object of his desire. In II.i.211 we find him openly contesting Monsieur for the countess, just as he had earlier vied for the Duchess of Guise in the presence of her husband. On the very instant D'Ambois sees the object of his devotion he dedicates himself to it.¹⁰ At that moment he seems to develop a clear vision of the path to eternity. The light through their eyes has revealed to them their happiness. As the snows of spring melt away under the rays of the sun, so her resistance melts away under the fire of his eyes. Each has begun to live, regardless of past experiences or vows, sacred or profane.¹¹ This type of instantaneous relationship is in the spirit of Marlowe's love at first sight.¹²

The partial responsibility for the preservation of Tamyra's honor is shifted from her husband to D'Ambois.¹³ D'Ambois is a tempting choice, since he is perhaps the most noble and loyal gentleman in France. In what sense is this transfer to be understood as honorable, and to what degree was it understood as an usurpation of legitimacy? Is D'Ambois to be thought of as guilty of adultery, or only of following the natural inclination of his (and her) heart? We observe, again, another aspect of D'Ambois formulating by action his "natural" critique of the "unnatural" (politic) court. He does not accept the way that things have been done, and

interjects immediate and direct honesty where courtiers are accustomed to politic Machiavellian force.

Another point of inversion in the play notably concerns the count of Montsurry, Tamyra's lawful husband before state and church. Montsurry appears to believe it is acceptable for Tamyra to sleep with a courtier of high rank (Monsieur) since immorality is a prerogative of princes, but not commoners.¹⁴ That Tamyra would take her own honor out of her husband's reach to decide for herself, cuckold him against his will, is a violation for Montsurry of the world order as he has understood it and thereby creates the loss of his honor.

Tamyra seems an especially tragic figure since she is caught between two weltanschauung. She is guilty of her "sin" and yet is compelled to follow her heart (or female instinct or passion or nature). D'Ambois does not seem to experience this conflict of sin, nor does Montsurry. But it is Montsurry who takes steps to form a solution to the dilemma.

Montsurry seems to include as a right of marriage the options of stabbing and torturing his wife, at least when it seems necessary to him. Perhaps believing that he could not be loved by others, Montsurry makes certain that he is feared and hated. He follows out what he believes is his unswerving husbandly duty. Tamyra as an individual becomes secondary to what she is as a member of a social unit. So firmly is she held in this position that she submits to torture in order for her husband to learn the details of her rendezvous. This nature of the individual seems to underlie much of what Chapman does with this and other inversions he works into the

play.

The flexible nature of law is suggested in D'Ambois' reference to "Protean Law" (III.ii. 35), but this is not to say that religion and honor cannot be defamed, as Montsurry does when he stabs Tamyra, puts her on the rack, and afterwards forces her to write a letter to D'Ambois in her own blood.

When Montsurry, in the final scenes of the play, ambushes D'Ambois ("Enter Montsurry with all the murderers" V.iii. 114), he appears to extend the limits of his usual duties as husband. In what sense could this be considered an honorable act, regardless of the crimes he believes have been committed against him?

We find that the passages concerning honor are colored by a "racy" Elizabethan flavor of sexual innuendo. Such innuendo appears early in the play and in part colors whatever moral lessons the play offers:

Tam. Has he neuer beene Courtier, my Lord?
 Mons. Neuer, my Ladie.
 Beaup. And why did the Toy take him inth'head now?
 Buss. Tis leape yeere, Ladie, and therefore verie
 good to / enter a Courtier. I.ii.75-9

This passage serves to suggest a date for the play (1604) as well as to suggest a sexual pun. I.ii.99 also plays on sexual multiple-meanings as we see when Tamyra and D'Ambois meet:

T. The man's a Courtier at first sight.
 B. I can sing prickesong, Ladie, at first sight;
 and why not / be a Courtier as suddenly?
 Beaup. Heere's a Courtier rotten before he be ripe.
 B. Thinke mee not impudent, Ladie, I am yet no
 Courtier, I / desire to be one, and (to the
 Duchess) would gladly take entrance
 (Madam) vnder your Princely Colours.
 I.ii.80-86

As we have seen, D'Ambois confronts the court with honesty and wants to introduce it as a new fashion at court. He has apparently learned nothing about advancement by "degree" and he leaps for glory in a moment. Once set into motion, he feels certain that he can overcome any obstacles. D'Ambois strikes like lightning to slay his enemies and to seize upon a woman he loves. He courts the duchess of Guise with the same natural poise that he later courts Tamyra. It is pointed out to him that he had begun his "courting" by aiming too high, not paying attention to his appointed social level and degree. Instead, D'Ambois soars to the top of the ladder, like Icarus in his zeal to soar beyond his means. Tamyra takes notice of the newcomer by exclaiming: "But such a sudden Courtier saw I never," while Beaupré (the duchess' niece) concurs with "He was too sudden, which indeed was rudeness" (II.ii.4-5).

While the women seem accustomed to being courted, D'Ambois still needs to "work his way up." They do him the courtesy of pointing this out, and suggest that he do this before he can be accepted by a "proper" court lady.

Soft sir, you must rise by degrees, first being
the / servant of some common Lady or Knights wife,
then a little / higher to a Lords wife; next a little
higher to a Countesse, yet / a little higher to a
Duchesse, and then turne the ladder. I.ii.94-7¹⁵

Or, the devil be hanged! (kicking out the ladder from under). We are also reminded of Marsilio Ficino's (1433-1499) ladder (and Plato's ladder of love) in "We are no windfalls" (III.ii.240).¹⁶ All things have degree, as does love. In Troilus and Cressida (c. 1601-02) Ulysses recommends

that: "The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre observe degree, priority, and place, insistance, course, proportion, season, form, office, and custom, in all line of order" (I.iii.86).

D'Ambois seems to invert such concepts of degree and order in a flash. He moves relentlessly, swiftly: "Here's a sudden transmigration with / D'Ambois, out of the Knight's ward, into the Duchess' bed" (I.ii.116-17). And D'Ambois has no idea of serving others in mind, as the usual politic courtier should:

Gui. I know not you: whom do you serve?
 Buss. Serve, my Lord?
 Gui. Go to, companion; your courtship's too saucy.
 B. (aside) Saucy? Companion? 'Tis the Guise, but yet those terms might have been spared of the Guisard. Companion? He's jealous by this light: are you blind of that side sir? I'll to her again for that. (To the Duchess) Forth Madam, for the honour of courtship. I.ii.90-98

D'Ambois plays on the Duke's jealousy (I.ii.112) by obstinately continuing the courting (I.ii.149) and by punning with his name (I.ii.110). Perhaps we should note that Monsieur and Montsurry may not be so jealous of D'Ambois courting Tamyra as they are jealous of a commoner who in some sense proved superior to them.

And if the courting of Monsieur and D'Ambois were not enough to confuse matters morally, we also discover that Tamyra had other admirers before Monsieur and D'Ambois, as we see in:

Cam. Lord Barrisor (whom you slew)
 Did love her dearly, and with all fit means
 Hath urg'd his acceptation, of all which
 She keeps one letter written in his blood.
 II.ii. 198-201

When in III.ii.269 Monsieur discovers that D'Ambois has succeeded in seducing Tamyra, although his own efforts (with pearls) had met with no success, he bursts out in amazement and frustration.

Varieties of social and spiritual transformation is in part what D'Ambois is engaged in from the moment he has entered into the court. He has moved from the forest to the city, from common companions to "noble" ones, and he is recognized as a king in the presence of one. He has fallen in love, and this last process of transformation will finally culminate in his assassination and thereby his soul's transmigration into another world. Then, D'Ambois engages in both a worldly metamorphosis as well as in a spiritual one. This seems to suggest that whatever morally reprehensible acts he may have committed, he still finds a type of redemption.¹⁷

Honor itself undergoes a transformation in the drama. Cotgrave tells us that honor is "renowne, reputation, credit, praise, glorie, fame, great account, high reckoning, much estimation; worship, reverence; dignitie, promotion; also, an honourable estate, inheritance, or title, bestowed by a Prince, or great Lord." At court honor is not much evident, at least by commonly held standards.

The king suggests that, "If you have woo'd and won, then Brother wear him" (I.ii.69), at least when it comes to swordplay. D'Ambois, by superior and artfully exercised force of arms seek to determine truth. So, too, does he seek to test the truth of love, and we find that the stakes may be just as high. It is a test of moral structure when society

undergoes political tumult, and it seems as if the very existence of D'Ambois upsets the order of things.

D'Ambois also disrupts the ship of state by threatening to duel in the presence of the sovereign, a practice absolutely forbidden at royal courts. D'Ambois maintains that he has as much right to be a courtier as anyone else, and puts such rights into motion.

- B. Passion of death! Were not the King heere, he should / strow the Chamber like a rush.
 M. But leaue Courting his wife then.
 B. I will not: Ile Court her in despite of him. Not / Court her! - Come Madam, talke on; Feare me nothing: [To / Guise] Well maist thou driue thy master from the Court; but / neuer D'Ambois [Whispers with Duchess] I.ii.132-138¹⁸

To what degree should D'Ambois be considered as guilty of mere adultery? While some critics have described the relationship between Tamyra and D'Ambois as passionate lust, we see that Monsieur's lust is tempered by the civilized techniques of bribery. In sharp contrast to Monsieur's approach we observe that D'Ambois loves his lady with an unquestioning devotion. Nothing stands between them. Their relationship is an embodiment of the passion which is a part of the nature within which they both must live. Inspired by a higher philosophical view of humankind D'Ambois tilts at the largest windmills of social order: kings, nobility, and now the English domestic structure and the church.

Chapman takes aim at the church, too, which is brought into question by the appearance of Friar Comolet.¹⁹ The friar is perhaps the supreme example of hypocrisy in the play. Just as he escorts the spirit of D'Ambois to the other world

(in spite of his apparent sins), he also escorts D'Ambois through the secret passageway to meet Tamyra. In II.ii.179 friar Comolet finds D'Ambois to tell him, "That you (whose worth I have approv'd so long) Should be the object of her fearful love." In II.ii.188 we see that the Friar is not to be thought of as an admirable character. What is being said about a clergy that takes part in a sexual rendezvous? This reminds us of the friars in Romeo and Juliet (1596?). There would seem to be echoes of Rabelais in this, who also presents a derisive tone towards some of those who direct the practice of religion, intermingling these views with racy humor and grotesque invention.

Does the friar regard D'Ambois as a "virtuous man"? If so, would the friar then represent a more "primitive" and natural Christianity? Perhaps this could form a link between the Stoical and Christian concepts of virtue.²⁰ There are not many other references to the church, but in this case the church is apparently treated as corrupt and worldly. The pagan-like pander friar seems to be the primary religious foundation in the play, apart from the spirits of the underworld, who also have parts in the play. Yet these religious forces do not seem to worry excessively about sin.

Sin is apparently more important for Tamyra to worry about. D'Ambois assures her that there is no longer any need to fear sin, since sin is only an invention of politic men seeking to control others.

However, Tamyra falls prey to doubts about her liaison with D'Ambois, particularly when she considers religion:

Before I was secure against death and hell;
 But now am subject to the hartlesse feare
 Of euery shadow, and of euery breath,
 And would change firmnesse with an aspen leafe:
 So confident a spotlesse conscience is;
 So weake a guilty: O the dangerous siege
 Sin laies about vs! and the tyranny
 He exercises when he hath expugn'd:
 Like to the horror of a winters thunder,
 Mixt with a gushing storme, that suffer nothing
 To stirre abroad on earth, but their own rages;
 Is sin, when it hath gather'd head above vs:
 No roofe, no shelter can secure vs so,
 But he will drowne our cheeks in feare or woe.

III.i.4-17

Fear is also a sign of guilt in III.i.7, and in III.i.15 we observe chaos resulting from guilt and sin. But D'Ambois remains free from such moralization, and in III.i.20 he counsels her to disregard the guilt that comes from conventional sin.

Contrast this concept of sin to the sins Montsurry commits while interrogating and torturing Tamyra. Or contrast Tamyra and D'Ambois' affair to the sins that everyone in the theater knows the Duke of Guise had personally committed at the massacre of St. Bartholomew. And the audience knew that Henry III arranged assassinations. The cuckolded Montsurry shows us something of this when he tortures his wife. He can be cruel, merciless and without scruple when it comes to interrogating his wife.

Interrupt no more
 The course I must run for mine honour sake.
 Relie on my loue to her, which her fault
 Cannot extinguish. V.i.20-23

No matter what else has happened, Montsurry sees his commitment to Tamyra as total enough to warrant bodily abuse. Tamyra recognizes that marriage itself is no paradise since it

may be arranged due to a variety of motives. "O had I never marry'd but for form, / Never vow'd faith but purpos'd to deceive" (V.iii. 219). This serves as yet another of the inversions, the lord of misrule analogies, which Chapman returns to throughout the play. Rites of the Church are inverted by this cynical marriage relationship and by means of friar Comolet functioning as pander.

The friar does, however, die at the sight of the atrocities done to Tamyra: "What rape of honor and religion! O, wrack of nature!" (V.i.155), suggesting that Montsurry's "conventional honor" is equivalent to "honor raped." But it is not enough for the friar to die and thereby reveal his torment at the breakdown of the moral order. The friar's plea against Montsurry's revengeful blood (V.i.5-41) is ignored, and Montsurry's torture of Tamyra causes the death of the friar due apparently to excessive horror. Tamyra's torture also serves to turn Montsurry into a screaming forerunner of "the whole frame of things in convulsion" (V.i.178), where the world has "her back-part upwards." Tamyra calls out to her loyal husband: "Now break them as you please and all the bounds of manhood, noblesse, and religion" (V.i.126). Concepts of sin surely appear to be undergoing inversion in the play.

Earlier in the play, while trying to seduce Tamyra, Monsieur identifies an interesting tendency of husbands and wives at the royal court:

Still you stand on your husband, so doe all
The common sex of you, when y'are encounterd
With one ye cannot fancie: all men know

You liue in court heere by your owne election,
 Frequenting all out solemne sports and triumphs,
 All the most youthfull company of men:
 And wherefore doe you this? To please your husband?
 Tis grosse and fulsome: if your husbands pleasure
 Be all your Obiect, and you aime at Honour
 In liuing close to him, get you from Court,
 You may haue him at home; these common Put-offs
 For common women serue: my honour? husband?
 II.ii.72-83²¹

D'Ambois at times seems to transcend marriages and rights and rituals, and, as we have seen, law itself. He is a lonely figure who is confident of the powers of his mind, sword and will. He is a hero surrounded by beings who are not his equal in ability. D'Ambois aims beyond the rungs of the ladder and through sheer willpower becomes a king. He kills brave soldiers and passionately loves the nearest women. He struggles to discover worthy concerns, yet ends, "Like a falling star silently glanced, that like a thunderbolt look'd to have struck and shook the firmament" (V.iv.144). He is unlike every other character in the play.²² Is he punished with death for his sins? For his excesses of will? For his pride? Is he destroyed because he is unable to do other than how his inner voice has led him?

He is not merely a bustling miles gloriosus or titanic Marlovian figure. Though isolated, D'Ambois embodies an idea which Chapman derives from the Stoics, the all-sufficiency of the virtuous man. Destroyed by the world of policy and unable or unwilling to change, he is sustained by championing the cause of an honest and possibly universal nobility.

Perhaps it is this singular way D'Ambois has of returning to themes of the individual consciousness loose in the

disordered cosmos that suggests that D'Ambois is necessarily unmarried. His approach may approximate the higher integration within the personality that seems to preclude marriage.

This seems more true when we consider the marriage of the countess of Montsurry, for example, seems founded on something other than love. And Tamyra does not seem to love her husband the man, who in turn reacts more to the institution and duty of marriage than to the individual woman. It is ironic that Montsurry seeks to confirm the relationship: "By this kiss, receive / My soul for hostage, till I see my love"

(II.ii.139). His kiss for someone who will soon betray him is also ironic in light of what D'Ambois says about mistresses:

"I say Mistress, and I will stand unto it, that if a woman may have three servants, a man may have threescore mistresses"

(I.ii.122). As Chapman made ironical comments about French fashion, so too does he introduce observations about what was believed to be a French proclivity towards extra-marital relations.

The fine line between legitimacy and illegitimacy is drawn in such a way, then, as to suggest paradox and reversal. Even Tamyra's ultimate feelings about the reversals pertaining to D'Ambois are ambivalent.

Tam. I loue what most I loath, and cannot liue
 Vnlesse I compasse that that holds my death:
 For loue is hatefull without loue againe,
 And he I loue, will loth me, when he sees
 I flie my sex, my vertue, my Renowne,
 To runne so madly on a man vnknowne. II.ii.170-75.

Yet she knows enough to run to an unknown man and to leave a

husband whom she does not love. Non-material, idealistic non-politic love takes precedence, in the play, over the string of pearls or a marriage deed. This seems to touch at the heart of the crisis of human values which Chapman explores in the play. And this may well be why Tamyra manages to maintain her virtue, since we see that by V.iv.57 she is still virtuous and still ambivalent.

Tam. If he go backe, I die; I must preuent it,
 And cheare his onset with my sight at least,
 And that's the most; though euerie step he takes
 Goes to my heart, Ile rather die than seeme
 Not to be strange to that I most esteeme.

II.ii.239-43

Again, Tamyra offers a paradoxical and ambivalent view of both sides to the question of adultery (as the church and state might see it).

Tam. One way I am sure
 You shall not pull downe me: my husbands height
 Is crowne to all my hopes: and his retiring
 To any meane state, shalbe my aspiring:
 Mine honour's in mine own hands, spite of kings.

II.ii.55-59

Love is to marriage as natural law is to the law of the state. Chapman's D'Ambois challenges both of the formalized, ceremonial conventions, instead embracing natural law as a superior, more individualized and efficient approach. Simply casting doubt, or asking the very question itself, serves to undermine the concept in its most ideal form, as when we considered matters of Natural Law in previous chapters. In four brief lines Tamyra shifts from maintaining her husband as king to crown all her hopes, to stating that her honor is in her own hands as it has been from the beginning, in spite of kings or husbands.

Each character has an individual sense of honor which, it may be seen, can contradict and diminish that of the other characters. Montsurry, too, is ruled by an unswerving code of honor, and so he has to take revenge on his wife and D'Ambois for their infidelity. Montsurry observed that the love of D'Ambois was opposed to his own view of Tamyra's honor and his sense of honor as husband.

Interestingly, we begin to see that a man's honor and a woman's honor, in the play, may be constituted of different characteristics. Montsurry's honor depends upon a conventional set course taken to an extreme, no matter who he has to harm along the way.²³ For him there is no veering from this course, which convention prescribes is honorable for the married man. Montsurry, however, in torturing Tamyra to get her confession, seems to go beyond prescribed limits. Tamyra's honor demands that she follows what her heart tells her. And her heart has been free, for, in accordance with common courtly practice she has married for social rank. She had not been in love, for their "fruitless love" seems to stand in contrast to the sweeping advance of D'Ambois.

Montsurry presents the full obstacle, as he might say: "My wife before God, you shall give her up before men! My wife is mine as much as my lands are mine; no one can take her from me, not even the King. The nobleman wishes to have a woman and takes her, since he sees it as his right." It becomes a question of property.

Chapman seems to be playing with libertine concepts which reveal a cosmos which may not be ordered by a Christian

Providence. Blind chance rules the state of things in the moral universe of D'Ambois. And it sometimes even bursts the conventional limits set by society. Irreligious attitudes lurk in Bussy D'Ambois: In I.iii.4-6 we find, "No question, sir, he was of no religion; / But, upon false grounds by some courtiers laid, / Hath oft been heard to mock and jest at all."

Friar Comolet also contributes to the moral inversion by acting as pander to the two lovers. Does Chapman go so far as to suggest that the Church is party to adultery?

Cam. I haue put on these exorcising Rites,
And, by my power of learned holinesse
Vouchsaft me from aboue, I will command
Our resolution of a raised spirit. IV.ii.24-27

In a dynamic scene with diabolic apparatus, Behemoth is summoned by the friar's incantation and engages in a dialogue:

Beh. I am Emperor
Of that inscrutable darkness, where are hid
All deepest truths, and secrets never seen,
All which I know. V.ii.52

The darkness deepens and the drama unveils some of the strangest diabolic machinery ever produced on an Elizabethan stage noted for its eccentric ghosts and devils.²⁴ The incantation to raise the devils provides a rich scene in the play. The scene begins:

Occidentalium legionum spiritualium imperator
(magnus ille Behemoth) veni, veni, comitatus cum
Astaroth locotenente inuicto. IV.ii.32-34

It ends having raised Behemoth and Cartophylax, and other spirits holding torches. But working with devils is contrary to what is holy in a Christian scheme of things. Yet another ambiguity occurs regarding the limits of morality

and what actually constitutes the meaning of holy.

Cam. T'our holy mother: be not an apostate:
Your wiues offence serues not (were it the woorst
You can imagine) without greater proofes
To seuer your eternall bonds, and harts; V.i.5-8

But then perhaps Monsieur also had a vision of the young D'Ambois laughing with Tamyra over his disappointed love, putting the duke on the same level with the despised husband, and destructive evil instincts get the better of his positive ones. Well might he think, "You used force as I did; only I, the master, failed, while you, the lackey, succeeded. In this sense, woman too employs treachery to advance her interests and suggests that she may not be a "good" woman.²⁵ This appears as yet another form of inversion employed by Chapman. But Chapman does not seem to be saying that women are necessarily corrupt by nature, at least, not any more than men are.

Love is presented as one of humanity's highest realizations, perhaps transcending marriage and religious orders. When in love, the only real degradation is to cease being loved. A maid servant who loves is higher than a queen who does not love. Tamyra seems to know this, and seizes the opportunity as it is presented to her. She knows a love which is beyond material goods or monetary values, but she also knows fear.

The commonplaces of morality apparently do not have much bearing on the relationship of Tamyra and D'Ambois. In exchange for politic sophisms Bussy offers only truths. The politic sophists, Montsurry and Guise, consider themselves

absolute masters of their women. And the women are usually advised to accept a blind fate that imposed their husbands on them. They have accepted that they must endure for a whole lifetime the consequences of that arrangement. D'Ambois seems to in part believe it is his duty to liberate Tamyra from such a fate.

Only Providence is listening and knows what people's true intentions are; D'Ambois loves Tamyra ardently and will not act like other men. Tamyra loves him in return, and why should she deny it and thereby be classed with those other vulgar politic souls? Tamyra chooses to defy fortune in II.ii.115, like D'Ambois in the beginning of the play, and "devil-may-care" reigns. And yet as late as V.iv.135 we still see reason maintained and contrasted to passion.

Inversion of kings, inverted knights, and inversion of love and marriage emerge as aspects of inverted social attitudes which Chapman plays with in Bussy D'Ambois. So extensively is the honor of love inverted that we are tempted to believe that the courtly lover has more right to the beloved than does her own tyrannical husband. D'Ambois and Tamyra challenge the absolute by re-defining the romantic, the sexual, and the spiritual bases of social theory.

In a possible Manichean framework D'Ambois might be tantamount to one who gets advice from devils, an inversion of Christian conventional and worldly value systems. In the conventional outlook adulterers and other lovers go straight to hell, even if in this case the hero is a rustic priapic (pagan) Pan figure, at least when it comes to love.

Mail: When politique widowes trye men for their
turne, /

Before they wed them, they are harlots then,
But when they wed them, they are honest women:
So, priuate men, when they forswear, betray,
Are periur'd treachers, but being publique once,
That is, sworne, married to the publique good -
Cler. Are married women publique?

Mail. Publique good;
For marriage makes them. being the publique good,
And could not be without them. So I say
Men publique, that is, being sworne or married
To the publique good, being one body made
With the Realmes body politique, are no more
Priuate, nor can be periur'd, though forsworne,
More then a widow, married for the act
Of generation, is for that an harlot,
Because for that shee was so, being vnmarried:

RBD IV.i.60-75

In Chapman's world of inversions we find that true love becomes sin, and that marriage may be a legalized form of rape. Chapman challenges the commonplace of women as property, and suggests that a woman who takes control of her own honor, rather than having a man (or a king) look after it for her, is tantamount to honor upside down, if honor means maintaining one's reputation among a host of politic Machiavels.

Honor Upside Down: Notes

¹ See Randle Cotgrave, Dictionary (London, 1611), for definitions of court:

Court, f. the Court of a Prince; the Estate, or State, of his home, and household; also, his household of servants, or followers; also, the assembly of Nobles about him; also, courtship, the wooing of a wench; also, the court, or yard, or the skillful courtier; to know well the fashion of intertainment, the phrases of complement, the humors and proceedings, used in court. En las Court du Roy chascun est pour soy: Pro. In court men studies onely their owne fortunes. Court: the shortest follies are the best.

² Also consider an Elizabethan proverb: Love is lawless and see Lyly, Euphues (1579): "As loue knoweth no lawes" (I.228).

³ Consider also Lodge, Rosalynde (1590), "Loue lurkes assoone about a Sheepcoate as a Pallaice" (Cl. 95) and a warning from Lyly, Euphues (1579), "Though the beginning of loue bring delyght, the ende bringeth destruction" (I.248). It may be useful to also see Barclay, Ship of Fools (1509), "He that loughth is voyde of all reason" (I.81) and Shakespeare, MND (1595), "Reason and love keep little company nowadays" (III.i.132).

⁴ See also Shakespeare Troilus and Cressida, "To be wise and love Exceeds man's might; that dwells with gods above" (III.ii.153); Francis Bacon, Advancement of Learning (1605), "It is not granted to man to love and to be wise" (II.79); and Marston, Dutch Courtesan (1605), "The Gods themselves cannot be wise and love" (II.ii.104).

⁵ In Eastward Ho we read, "The offence [adultery] is too common to be respected." See also The Malcontent: "Hercules, whose back bore up heaven, and got forty wenches with / child in one night" (IV.v.57-59).

See also Thomas Dekker, The Gull's Hornbook (New York: AMS, 1971) 51, on "How a Gallant should behave himself in a Playhouse:

By sitting on the stage, if you be a knight, you may happily get you a mistress; if a mere Fleet-street gentleman, a wife.

6 Adultery was believed to be common at court, at least as far as it is useful on the Jacobean stage.

7 Marston's The Malcontent (1604) spectacularly suggests: "No courtier but has his mistress" (V.iii.44); "Do your husbands lie with ye? That were country fashion, i'faith" (II.ii.30-31); "I would sooner / leave my lady singled in a bordello than in / the Genoa palace" (III.iii.30-32); and "I'll make thee acquainted with my young / wife too. What, I keep her not at court for nothing. 'Tis / grown to supper time; Come to my table; that, anything I / have stands open to thee" (I.iv.69-72).

8 See also Michael Shapiro, Children of the Revels (New York: Columbia UP, 1977) 107: "Instead of using bawdry to accentuate this disparity, the 1607 quarto of Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois, which is the version acted by the Children of Paul's around 1604, deemphasizes the sexual immaturity of the actor playing the title role. In this version it is Tamyra, the heroine, who initiates the liaison with Bussy, as it is she who first speaks of her love and who decides to use the Friar as a go-between. However, in the 1641 quarto, which is probably the version of the play revised for an adult troupe, Bussy is given a speech in which he says that his love for Tamyra 'hath long been vowed in heart' (II.i.209), and his conversation with the Friar in the middle of II.ii. implies that he is pursuing Tamyra rather than being pursued by her."

9 See Marston's The Malcontent: "Courtiers attempt to gain a ladies favor by means of diamonds, rubies, and a purse" (I.vi.62-9).

10 The lovers, unable to lawfully wed, exchange vows of eternal common law fidelity.

11 Again The Malcontent offers echoes: "Yet I, like a wretch given o'er / To hell, brake all the sacred rites of marriage" (IV.v.37-39).

12 See Marlowe's Hero and Leander (1598): "Where both deliberate, the love is slight; Who ever lov'd, that lov'd not at first sight?" (I.174). This concept is a Renaissance commonplace that is particularly echoed by playwrights of the period, as we see that Shakespeare also quotes this in As You Like It (III.v.82) as does Chapman in The Blind Beggar of Alexandria, "None euer lou'd but at first sight they lou'd" (X.127).

See also Hardin Craig, "Ethics in the Jacobean Drama: The Case of Chapman" in Essays in Dramatic Literature (Princeton UP, 1935) 31: "Under the figure of a mistress and an insincere servant, Bussy, the first heroic man of passion in Elizabethan drama to do so, cynically declares for the flesh against the spirit, for passion against reason (V, iv, 78)."

Or, does Chapman instead idealize the woman whose marriage has 'borne no fruit'?

13 See also Frances Chivers, "George Chapman's Philosophy and Treatment of Love," diss. U. of Buffalo, 1959; John Bean, "From Britomart to Tamyra: Chastity and Visions of Order in Spenser, Shakespeare, and Chapman," diss. U. of Washington, 1972.

14 See Irving Ribner, Jacobean Tragedy (NY: Barnes & Noble, 1962) 30: "Even Montsurry counsels his wife to bear the advances of Monsieur, since immorality is the prerogative of princes (II, ii, 68)."

15 1641 edition only.

16 For reference to Ficino's ladder see Plato's Symposium. Also see Paul Kristeller, Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance (Palo Alto: Stanford UP, 1964) 43: "He revived the Neoplatonic doctrine of the world soul, and made astrology a part of a natural system of mutual influences. Now since for Ficino thought has an active influence upon its objects, and since love, according to Plato's Symposium, is an active force that binds all things together, and since the human soul extends its thought and love to all things from the highest to the lowest, the soul becomes once more, and in a new sense, the center of the universe."

17 Richard Ide, Possessed with Greatness (North Carolina, 1980) 75: "Bussy's attempt to unmetaphor an epic conception of self leads to astonishing yet morally reprehensible actions that are incompatible with society's standards of acceptable behavior."

18 This probably refers to the Duke of Guise's attempt in 1587 to claim to French throne. The coup attempt was at least successful enough to force the king to withdraw to Blois.

19 Lehman, 22: "The little we know about the subsequent life of the dramatist seems to indicate that he remained a member of the Church of England. The men to whom Chapman addressed his letters for aid were Protestants, as were those to whom he dedicated his poems and dramas."

20 In The Courtier virtù appears as civility, refinement, grace, taste, learning, physical, mental and spiritual vigor; a noble spirit, not necessarily of noble blood, was a requirement.

21 See also The Malcontent: "I have heard of a sect that main- / tained when a husband was asleep the / wife might lawfully entertain another man, for then her husband was as dead."

22 Muir 231: "These heroes really exist in another dimension from the rest of the characters, and have a different reality from the action in which they are involved. They wander about, like Chapman himself, enclosed in a dream of greatness and breathing the air of that dream."

23 Military honor, Falstaff sees, is literally an end in itself and will not live with the living; being true to his own ends he rejects it.

24 This scene seems to echo Marlowe's Dr. Faustus (c. 1589):

All things that move between the quiet Poles
Shall be at my command: Emperors and Kings,
Are but obey'd in their severall Provinces.

I.i.55-7

See also Maurice Evans, Ed. Bussy D'Ambois (London: Benn, 1965) xii: "The plays of Marlowe are another major literary influence on 'Bussy'. The presence of Dr. Faustus can be felt in the Morality play element and perhaps, too, in the necromancy of the play, but the influence of Tamburlaine is much greater here and in the plays about Biron which follow it."

25 See Appendix for Chapman's translation of Petrarch's Seven Penitentiall Psalms in which is discussed just what makes up a "good" woman.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois, an important early Jacobean heroic tragedy, manages to incorporate a number of what were at that time prevailing Renaissance philosophies. These philosophies are dramatically and dialectically tantamount to an omni-directional selection of attitudes regarding social philosophy.¹

Among the philosophical views referred to by allusions in the play are Christian (moral, adultery, friar), Stoic individual (death of D'Ambois), Saturnian alchemical (all is one / large, versus small individual sovereignty), Epicurean development of an individual's senses (Duchess of Guise, and Tamyra, Countess of Montsurry), and French Protestant resistance to centralization. It has been shown how Chapman, in dramatic terms, develops the human individual's place in new and uncertain Reformation and Counter-Reformation world views.

Further, Chapman works these views into his play as if he were taking the measure of a new and enlarged cosmos. This seems to make more sense when we begin to consider the work of Copernicus and Chapman's friend Bruno, who were also interested in determining the new-found center of the solar system and then humanity's place in this omni-dimensional reality. Kepler offers an added optical inversion, suggesting

that in reality the human eye sees the world upside down.

The play seems to tell us that in a universe at least temporarily disordered, humanity must somehow endure a storm of blind philosophical contradictions. Chapman voices these contradictions with the commonplace Jacobean lament, "all coherence gone." We also see that Chapman's heroic tragedies arrive at their truths by disclosing contradictions in opposing social arguments.²

In this and in some of his melodramatic tendencies his work may be seen as a chief precursor to Jacobean revenge and heroic tragedies. He is a major figure in this innovation, just as we have also seen his development of the comedy of humours, pre-dating Jonson's comedy of humours by one year. Chapman's early drama seems to suggest that, in the example of D'Ambois, a true man cannot be destroyed, he can only be temporarily defeated.

Chapman's favorite philosophers seem to be Ficino, Plato, Aristotle and Seneca. Chapman, like these thinkers, was interested in the moral and legal foundations of the Renaissance state, and he at times uses the stage to play out some of these views.

It is as if Chapman is saying "here's what we know in 1604 (state-of-the-art knowledge) about where the human race stands in relation to the rest of the universe. This is a dynamically different place in terms of moral choices than, say, where we were fifty years ago." Is human redemption still possible in such an emerging system?

The tragic hero's personalized redemption is symbolized

in the fiery imagery of V.iv. Fiery D'Ambois seems made of the highest of the four elements, which may signify that he ascends to the highest levels of knowledge. And it is the kind of knowledge needed for a life of contemplation then put into motion in the "state of things."

D'Ambois is an active Herculean hero who is also an arrogant individualist. He formulates problematic Counter-Reformation situations on stage. He seems to do this in a way calculated to draw the attention of a Protestant audience first by means of his intense individualism and then through reference to the debased friar.

D'Ambois is an epic hero calculated to inspire an audience in a time when the universal scheme of things has gone awry (V.i.163). Chapman appears to disrupt magnificently the prevailing world view: everything in its place and dedicated to order.

It has been suggested that with Bussy D'Ambois begins a series of heroic tragedies, components of which formulate historical and political allegory. The allegory forms a web of analogies uniting microcosmic humanity with beliefs about the macrocosm then being lived in by London intellectuals. At times these allegories are so shallowly concealed as to get Chapman into trouble with the authorities. While the authorities pounced on several of Chapman's most blatant libels, we have sought to identify other textual incidents which suggest that the play asks questions about the nature of the Renaissance individual in a Renaissance state. The early tragedies at times focus upon the practice of King James

in making new knights. Chapman develops the implications.

Chapman appears to sustain a momentum for causing this kind of trouble with his collaboration in a domestic comedy (Eastward Ho) in which he makes sport of Scots. And he is in trouble again with the Byron plays (1608) where he is reproached for a scene dramatically depicting the queen of France brawling with a mistress of her husband, the king.

In these scenes allegory rises to the surface of the text in such a way as to catch the attention of the censors. But Chapman's allegories take on greater complexity as one peels away onion-layers of meaning that he habitually wove into his early tragedies.

Chapman insists on taking his allegories further. He complicates the themes he based his allegories on by evolving them into spiraling paradoxes, word-game reversals, and inversions of meaning. Chapman's Bussy D'Ambois suggests a variation on a lord of misrule topos.

Bussy D'Ambois ends as a play which offers neither a predominantly Christian nor a predominantly Stoic point of view. The meaning of an ambiguous universe seems inverted, like MacBeth's, a universe where "fair is foul, and foul fair" (I.i.2).³

In the seemingly ceaseless storm of moral allusions a single, final moral is "lost in the shuffle," as if Chapman were telling his audience that each approach has equal validity. In the world of Jacobean politics we observe equal elements of passion, violence, cruelty, compassion,

hopelessness and hope, together forming the vision of a universe which does not really favor any particular party. Chapman seems to suggest that in such a world of opposing philosophies, it is important to be acquainted with all of them. Chapman appears to resist taking sides by neither believing in determinism nor in chance. And this forms an ironic unity of a type which Chapman capitalizes on, as a dramatically successful ironist.

What motivates Chapman in forming his storm of allusion? Allusion, paradox and riddles (riddles are a favorite device of Chapman, as we see in III.ii.250) are among the furnishings of the cunning world of Elizabethan drama (II.ii.149).

Other representatives of the drama of this period, Marlowe and Shakespeare, for example, in the morally ambiguous endings of Dr. Faustus (?1589) and Hamlet (?1600), also appear to de-emphasize traditional Christian endings. Chapman emerges as a dramatist who in this case seeks to invert meanings and to oppose apparently contradictory views to one another. This is his "truth," although we must be cautious, like Plato, about literary works.⁴

If we accept that wonder is an aim of Renaissance dramatists, then we may be able to understand the astonishment of a 1604 London audience when they experienced these plays. Chapman tells us of: "A tale so worthy, and so fraught with wonder" (II.i.29).

Through his plays Chapman gives a public voice to the effort to find order in situations of social disorder. The national order (and thereby universal hierarchy) was under

public scrutiny at this time, and this in part explains why dramatists, particularly since the history "plays" of Baldwin's The Mirror for Magistrates (1559), gave the public more of what they were already interested in.⁵

Chapman suggests that the condition and composition of the court is something less than ideal and thereby voices explicit criticism of the social order. Further, so inverted are social values that it proves disastrous for an honest man to be placed into an environment such as exists at court.

As has been suggested earlier, James was not universally welcomed to the throne of England.⁶ Adding fuel to questions about the nature of sovereignty were the appearance, character, and actions of the new king. Many London citizens were shocked to observe some of James's habits exhibited at court. These habits suggest that, perhaps, the king might not, after all, have the infallible final word as spokesman for providence on earth. Perhaps there are laws to which even a king must give heed.

Bussy D'Ambois presents an allegory concerned with the courts of Europe. We see that they were not necessarily made up of smoothly functioning administrators or bureaucrats controlled by divinity's representative on earth, unless one would also venture to redefine the nature of Renaissance divinity.

The study has also argued that the play allegorically examines Tudor and Stuart approaches to divine right monarchy. Through reference to other documents of the period the study

offers pertinent social context by which lines of the play are colored. Contemporary tracts, sermons, proclamations, letters, and literary works provide material to analyze the king's as well as the citizen's understanding of their respective roles as well as the roles that the existence of D'Ambois seems to challenge. Because of the timely public awareness of and curiosity about divine right monarchy, Chapman and other playwrights were keen on exploring these ideas on stage.

Further, the study has sought to identify aspects of the social and intellectual world of the early Stuart courtier as it pertains to the text of Bussy D'Ambois. This study examines the meaning of the concepts of nobility and honor (has there ever been such a thing?) in the context of the sudden growth of the nobility's numbers. Such expansion also allows for differing notions of greatness, which has been considered, as well as evolving strategies for advancement at court. The relationship of the monarch to the law is also considered, with Machiavellian policy of the great contrasted to an honest, natural (and "good") hero.

Through direct contrast to the natural hero, the authority of the crown is brought into question, then, early in the play. Crowns are associated with authority, blood, money, cuckolding, and Machiavelli. Chapman's crown imagery offers us a glimpse into various means of force used as an instrument of government. This fact allows usurpers to at times lay claim to thrones.

The multiple nature of crowns as monarchs as well as coin

of the realm, the top of the head, and then regal ornament for the head, is treated in the first scene. Maffé had come to sow a thousand crowns in D'Ambois. D'Ambois had struck Maffé after he had tried to give D'Ambois only ten percent of what had been the agreed amount. As Maffé also suggests early in the play, "These crowns are set in blood, blood be their fruit" (I.i.216). Blood begets blood. This blood does not always come only from the movement of one's heart, however.

Tamyra allows that the blood as a corporeal part flows from some vessel other than her true "me," suggesting that the spirit is the true source of self. We are therefore presented with another inverted set of meanings and oppositions which appear in the play. And as these oppositions are presented without apparent favoritism, the audience is philosophically puzzled as to whether or not in the final analysis the play is Christian. The evidence suggests that though Christian elements are present in the play,⁷ so are Stoic,⁸ hermetic, and libertine elements, as well as others.

Synthesis, however, appears unlikely to some critics. Let us propose that the play forms a unity that shows itself in sets of oppositions such as inner and outer, king and commoner, love and marriage, and corporeal as opposed to spiritual. Chapman seems to formulate a remarkable balance in the play, where inverted pairs add up to form these unities. We observe another example of the latter in Tamyra's submission to the torturing by her husband: "I'll write, but in my blood that he may see, / These lines come from my wounds and not from me" (V.i. 168-70).⁹ Her body expresses itself,

and yet her inner wishes, the realization of herself, is not necessarily a party to that.¹⁰

B. Man is of two sweet courtly friends compact,
A mistress and a servant: let my death
Define life nothing but a Courtier's breath.

The separation of body and soul is both a Platonic ideal and a Christian concept.¹¹ Such abstraction of elements occurs later in the final death scene and also early in the scene where D'Ambois meets the ladies of the court.

But the final scene shows D'Ambois at his fiery best. He resists to the end tyranny in any of its forms. Perhaps death may be thought of as the greatest tyranny of all. To die is to submit to a form of tyranny. To tyrannize, and to be tyrannized, are close in resemblance, as D'Ambois points out: "I loathe as much a deed of unjust death, / As law itself doth; and to tyrannise, / Because I have a little spirit to dare / And power to do, as to be tyrannis'd" (II.i.186). D'Ambois observes the inversion of tyranny, and this is part of Chapman's tragic art.

Art is at times used by Chapman as a means of relating the higher, beyond-thought super-state to the average worldly consciousness. In this way human beings are at once natural and divine as they relate to the universe around them. Tamyra identifies these natural sources in, "Man is a tree, that hath no top in cares; / No root in comforts; all his power to live / Is given to no end, but t'have power to grieve" (V.iii. 66). Such a view is also represented in the work of Castiglione, who says in The Courtier:

I say, that like as the soule and the body in us are two things, so is the soule divided into two partes: Whereof the one hath in it reason, and the other appetite. Even as therefore in generation the body goeth before the soules, so both the unreasonable part of the soule goe before the reasonable: the which is plainely to be discerned in young Babes, who (in a maner) immediately after their birth utter anger and fervent apeteite, but afterwarde in processe of time reason appeareth. Therefore muste the bodye bee cherished before the soule: after that, the appetite before reason: but the cherishing of the body for a respect to the souldes, and of the appetite for a respect to reason.¹²

The ideal attempt to serve truth and to pierce through the superficiality of materialistic life is articulated in some of D'Ambois's actions. And yet the tragedy is part mortality and part honesty contrasted to Machiavellians.

The nature of mortality includes the tragic element, with humankind caught between the past and the future, waiting to be consumed:

Like bonfires of Contributorie wood
 Euery mans looke shew'd; fed with eithers spirit,
 As one had beene a mirror to another,
 Like formes of life and death each tooke from other;
 And so were life and death mixt at their heights,
 That you could see no feare of death, for life;
 Nor loue of life, for death: But in their browes
 Pyrrho's Opinion in great letters shone,
 That life and death in all respects are one.

II.i. 44-52

This seems to echo Shakespeare's "Men should rejoyce, not sorrow, at the storms of adversity" (Troilus and Cressida I.iii.45). Yet some storms are needful of attention, as Chapman suggests about the adverse events of the French court of Henry III and of the English court of James I.

Chapman contrasts D'Ambois with the Machiavellian Duke of Guise and captures a symbol of the conflict of goodness and greatness. Chapman has miniaturized a vision of the cosmos

which is thrown out of order. Through numerous inversions he suggests that versions of cosmic order which had been long accepted were no longer to be accepted without question. This is true whether we are to consider Plato's cosmos, that of Pythagoras, or that of Renaissance Protestantism.¹³

Richard Hooker offers a view of such disorder in his Of the Laws of Ecclesiasticall Polity (1594).¹⁴

If here it be demanded what that is which keepeth nature in obedience to her own law, we must have recourse to that higher law whereof we have already spoken, and because all other laws do thereon depend, from thence we must borrow so much as shall need for brief resolution in this point. Although we are not of opinion, therefore, as some are, that nature in working hath before her certain exemplary draughts or patterns, which subsisting in the bosom of the Highest, and being thence discovered, she fixeth her eye upon them, as travellers by sea.¹⁵

Hooker describes what Chapman cosmologically insinuates in his tragedies, that "Some brack's in the frame of nature" (RBD IV.iii.5). The order of nature itself has been overthrown, particularly in the case of D'Ambois becoming a king and noble. For once D'Ambois seems to have a chance at overturning "Blind nature" (V.ii.4) failing to function in accordance with the accepted forms of advancing through a hierarchy. Rather than merely allowing Machiavellian assassins to direct events, D'Ambois seeks in some part control the perilous nature which, as the Duke of Guise says, "works at random" (V.iii.26), leaving humanity to try to interpret how "nature lays a mass of stuff together" (V.iii.12).

There are, then, a number of mutually opposed ways of looking at the world, or nature in the widest sense of the

word. The one, motivated by scientific curiosity, strives towards the inexhaustible multiplicity of appearances, and, to the extent that it accumulates experiences, becomes itself multiple and dismembered. The other strives after the spiritual center, which is at once the center of humanity and of things, while supporting itself on the symbolic character of appearance. Thus one may contemplate the realities immutably contained in the divine intellect.

The Renaissance doctrine of the reciprocal correspondence of the cosmos and the human being is also founded on the idea of the unique and transcendent intellect, whose relationship to what is commonly called reason is like a source of light to its reflection. Reason, then, may be compared to a convex lens first developed by Kepler in 1604, which directs the light of the intellect or spirits. Thus things proceed in their circle, and thus the empire is maintained.¹⁶

This is a form of macrocosm and microcosm, and as D'Ambois inverts social order (a reflection of the cosmos), so then must the heavens also be thrown into disorder. A central aspect of microcosm/macrocosm thinking is Hermeticism.¹⁷

Additionally, in his Advancement of Learning (1605) Sir Francis Bacon discusses the ancient opinion that "Man was microcosmus, an abstract or model of the world."¹⁸ And in his History of the World (1614) Sir Walter Raleigh writes: "because in the little frame of man's body there is a representation of the universal; and (by allusion) a kind of participation of all the parts there, therefore was man called micro-cosmus, or the little World."¹⁹ And Sir Thomas Browne

(1605-1682) in Religio Medici (1642), also observes an inverse reflection:

We carry within us the wonders we seek without us: there is all Africa and her prodigies in us; we are that bold and adventurous piece of Nature, which he that studies wisely learns in a compendium what others labour at in a divided piece and endless volume.²⁰

Chapman's "All is one" (RBD IV.v.12) universe echoes the Hermetic perspective, which proceeds from the view that the universe (or macrocosm) and humanity (or the microcosm) correspond to one another as mirror-images; whatever is in one must also in some form be in the other. Chapman appears to give form to a world-view which unifies a multi-dimensional, multi-faceted universe which seems to range beyond good and evil.

Chapman also specifically makes reference to this matter in III.ii.108, where King Henry makes his purpose one which will, "Let my hand therefore be the Hermean rod to part and reconcile, and so conserve you, as my combine'd embracers and supporters." The Hermean rod holds the subjects together.

The Hermes staff (the caduceus) displays two snakes that entwine themselves on the world's axis.²¹ Their opposition is shown by the two phases of the sun's course (a sun-king ascending and the descending) corresponding to the opposition between heaven and earth.

In Hermetic teachings it was believed that the materials of the planets were linked to earth materials. Chapman refers to the concept of lead, an alchemical mediator through Saturn, with, "the golden faggot in which the world of Saturn was

compris'd" (III.ii.105). He illustrates the alchemical principle that whatever is below is like that which is above. This forms the sort of microcosm and macrocosm inversion we have seen would be likely to interest Chapman.

Further, the symbol for Saturn, or lead, is a crescent attached to the lowest arm of a cross. Lead is related to the lowest element of the material order; therefore it was thought to be the densest and the most "chaotic" of metals.

In such a framework Saturn corresponds to darkness, decay and death. The entire cycle of life is represented in the image of Saturn, the planet of greatest thought and insight, but the least significant when handling mortal matters. Whatever is below is like that which is above, and whatever is above is like that which is below, to accomplish the miracle of one thing, in a sense drawing disparate qualities into a unity, where at last we find the full cycle, "unity and order restored" (V.iv.219). Chapman inserts alchemical references into his plays on a regular basis:

Hot, shining, swift, light, and aspiring things,
Are of immortal and celestial nature;
Cold, dark, dull, heavy, of infernal fortunes
And never aim at any happiness.

BC I.ii.112-15

In Hermetic notions of reality the "gradation" of the metals, inasmuch as they resemble gold, is inverted to that of the planets. Planets hold higher rank in the hierarchy the further their orbit is from the earth center.²² Saturn, in addition, represents the highest planet from the sun, and lead the lowest of the metals. Saturn, whose orbit is widest from the point of view of the earth, corresponds to intelligence.

The moon, however, whose orbit is nearest to the earth center, is analogous to the "vital spirit" which binds soul and body to one another. Then, these are the two outermost poles of the soul's capacity, for the vital spirit, which governs the involuntary activities of the body, such as growth and digestion, and which for this reason had an "existential" rather than a "rational" character, is in a certain sense opposed to the intellect. Between these two outermost poles, the other faculties of the soul are ranged. So argued hermetic teaching.

Having noted this much, we should also observe that no world picture can ever be absolutely right, for the reality which human observation takes cognizance of is conditioned, dependent, and endlessly multiple. This is not to say that reality does not exist, or that meanings dependent upon mere human powers of observation are not worth pursuing.²³

Chapman sees the opposite poles of truth, extremely and one-sidedly, not attempting to harmonize them, not even observing that they might need to be harmonized. This is perhaps why it is understandable that so many critics have been troubled by Chapman's early tragedies.

Like Francis Bacon, Chapman seems to take all knowledge as his province, as if he wants to peer at each element for awhile before moving on. John Racster, in The True Art of Living Well (1605), offers us a model by which to search the Renaissance world of meanings that may help us to better calculate the quality of Chapman's ambition:

Introspicere, to looke into matters. And this worke of discretion introspicere, to looke into things, is of two sorts: the one is generall, to looke into all things, & discernere, and to discerne betweene vertue and vice, betweene bad and good: & the other is more particular; to looke into the good, & pretium rerum astimare, to esteeme of everie thing as it is woorth. The first work of discretion is to discerne betweene good and bad: for there be certaine vices, that beare the face of vertues. Crueltie is covered with the name of justice, remisnes called lenitie, covetousnesse is cloathed like thrift, pride like liberalitie; so that a man may be deceived in them.²⁴

Chapman's definition of history does not appear to have been "a true story which teaches a moral lesson," as is the case with most humanists of the time. He intersperses high moral matters with blasphemous doctrines such as in V.i.162, where the world is thrown out of order. And in V.iii.46 we see that the world is a riddle, it is confusion and chaos. The place of humanity in the order of things is unclear. We get a sense of human impermanence and insignificance in: "Man is a Torch borne in the winde; a Dreame / But of a shadow, summ'd with all his substance" (I.i.18-20).

To try and control nature is a difficult task. There are unruly forces of nature outside of humankind as well as within each individual. Human life is like the flame born into a life of uncertainty, like a silhouette equipped with a blueprint. The silhouette possesses the qualities necessary to find the way, yet the possibility always remains that one will fall short.

Chapman has a vision of temporal humanity. Yet even in that brief time, his play seems to suggest, it may be possible to establish the dignity of the human race, a Sisyphean-like

resignation to mortality and yet an indomitable Stoic spirit in the face of destruction. Knowing this much seems to place humanity on its own level, a sort of Pascalian realization. We see such a realization in some of Chapman's qualities of endurance, as may be seen in Byron's Conspiracy:

I haue a will, and faculties of choise,
 To do, or not to do: and reason why,
 I doe, or not doe this: the starres haue none;
 They know not why they shine, more then this taper,
 Nor how they worke, nor what: ile change my course,
 Ile peece-meale pull, the frame of all my thoughts,
 And cast my will into another mould.

III.iii.112-118

D'Ambois, like Byron, is also a character of high ambition and unlimited will. His drive for self-fulfillment causes him to have an undeniable impact on those around him. His bold manner encompasses women and men, nobles, kings, and servants. He does not seem to adjust his actions politically to differentiate between the other characters. He does not merely go as "the wind blows."

For D'Ambois, challenging the Duke of Guise and the King of France, facing devils, courting the ladies of the court, and finally, when he is treacherously ambushed, to die like a Senecan Stoic; these are some of the results of the boundless self-confidence that D'Ambois had exercised at court.

D'Ambois is the only character on the stage who sustains the self-sufficiency of the virtuous man, virtuous as Romans understood it: the sum of the physical and mental excellences of humankind.²⁵ And for these excellences D'Ambois stands out among the courtiers as someone who needs to be made an example of, in the interest of maintaining the empire.

D'Ambois is condemned without appeal and without mercy. He is a type of anti-hero suggesting the end of chivalry. It is almost as if, from the beginning of the play, he were destined for destruction. D'Ambois ends, like Byron, tempted to cast away all hope:

I forfeite all the fashion of a man;
 Why should I keepe my soule in this dark light?
 Whose black beames lighted me to loose my selfe.
 When I haue lost my armes, my fame, my minde,
 Friends, brother, hopes, fortunes, and euen my
 furie? / O happie were the man, could liue alone,
 To know no man, nor be of any knowne!

BT V.iv.68-74

D'Ambois may be viewed as a new sort of Renaissance type, clearly neither wholly Christian nor wholly Stoic, embodying a vision which drives him to advance the possibilities of the immediate present. He fluently functions without the moral and legal apparatus of church and state, finding nourishment in simple Stoic virtues in an age whose thinkers were seriously questioning the political, theological, and philosophical foundations of their society. Like Hamlet, D'Ambois in Act V might say, "Man delights not me", or in The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois: "My faith to God; all's one / Who hath no faith to men, to God hath none" (III.iii.238-39).

Chapman's long familiarity with Homeric heroes, his absorption in Roman history and in Senecan tragedy, and his familiarity with the lives of Renaissance princes, equips him to place onto the English stage newly styled heroes. Though unique, D'Ambois is strangely familiar to an Elizabethan audience.²⁶

The tragedy of D'Ambois is his own tragedy, whereas

Hamlet, for example, finds himself in the position of having murdered his friends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, caused the madness of Ophelia and the death of her father, as well as the murder of his uncle. However, D'Ambois has killed "justly" and according to the laws of his own honor. He fights in a duel pitting skilled swordsmen against one another, another scene in which D'Ambois does not seem to show any sign of fearing death.

The Stoic merging of life and death is also apparent in Byron's Conspiracy, which says, "There is no danger to a man that knows/what life and death is: There's not any law / Exceeds his knowledge; neither is it lawful / that he should stoop to any other law" (BC III.ii.140). This seems to be similar in spirit to what Chapman is saying in Bussy D'Ambois, "That life and death are in all respects one" (II.i.52). Or, in the recognition of D'Ambois that his end is approaching, he begins to appear like a martyr, like Hercules, stoically accepting his mortality:

O fraile condition of strength, valure: vertue,
 In me (like warning fire vpon the top
 Of some steepe Beakon, on a steeper hill)
 Made to expresse it: like a falling starre
 Silently glanc't. V.iii.184-88

Chapman is conversant in humanist hermeneutics and in the veneration of the ancients. Hercules is presented as an exemplary martyr of constancy and virtu. Tasso, also, is interested in valiant pagan martyrs. D'Ambois's death is presented as a model of comportment worthy of imitation. He tries to keep his thoughts focused on ethereal matters, and resists the idea that there apparently are no ultimate values.

more significant than the triviality of the court: "Let my death / Define Life as nothing but a Courtier's breath" (II.i.131-2), a fleeting wisp. The abstract of all things is represented as , "a dream but of a shade" (I.i.18-19). But D'Ambois can restore his confidence by a Stoical death: "I'll not complain to Earth yet, / but to heaven . . . (I.i.135)." Then, "Here like a Roman statue, I will stand. / Till death hath made me marble" (II.i.143-45). D'Ambois will not fall, will not be defeated. Even in death he will be sure to take many of his enemies with him, knowing he has somehow lived fully.

But the wounds also suggest a sign of weakness and failure. Rather than suggest, as do the wounds of Coriolanus, that valiant service has been performed, the wounds of D'Ambois suggest that the more scars one has, the more vulnerable one is and the closer one comes to the triumph of weakness. The truly exemplary humanist hero, in this sense, like the "virtuous" woman, must have minimal or no violation of the body.

Full recognition of the tragic fate of D'Ambois is realized in his death scene. During his metamorphosis into the experience of death he is altered by the knowledge he has gained and draws the physical world and the spiritual world, again opposed opposites, into a single unity. Nature is a courtier and knows no merit.²⁷ Once again, Chapman uses his vision to see through his early tragedies. Through fully envisioning the Platonic nothing (V.iv.85), he has intellectual access, like "God's spies", to everything.

Conclusion: Notes

¹ For background reading on this topic see Paul O. Kristeller, Renaissance Thought (New York: Harper & Row, 1955); Albert Tricomi, "The Hero and the Upstart in Chapman's Comedies and Bussy D'Ambois, diss. Northwestern U., 1969; Brian Vickers, Ed., Occult and scientific mentalities in the Renaissance (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984); Albert van Helden, The Universe: Cosmic Dimensions from Aristarchus to Halley (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1985); Wayne Shumaker, The Occult Sciences in the Renaissance: A Study in Intellectual Patterns (Berkeley: California UP, 1972); Robert DeKosky, Knowledge and Cosmos: Development and Decline of the Medieval Perspective (Washington, D.C.: UP of America, 1979); Frances Yates, The Occult Philosophy (London: Ark, 1979); Ernst Cassirer, The Renaissance Philosophy of Man (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1948); Ernst Cassirer, The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania UP, 1963); S.K. Heninger, Jr., Touches of Sweet Harmony: Pythagorean Cosmology and Renaissance Poetics (San Marino: Huntington Library Press, 1974); and Paul Oskar Kristeller, Renaissance Thought and its Sources (New York: Columbia UP, 1979).

² Other, later forms of this type of dialectic are most notably those developed by Hegel and by Marx. Each arrives at the truth by disclosing contradictions in opponent's argument and overcoming them.

The Hegelian process of change is an ideational entity, a thesis, is transformed into its opposite, an antithesis, and preserved and fulfilled by it. Combining the two resolves in a higher form of truth, a synthesis. See Hegel's critical method for the investigation of this process.

The Marxian process of change takes place through the conflict of opposing forces, whereby a given contradiction is characterized by a primary and a secondary aspect, the secondary succumbing to the primary, which is then transformed into an aspect of a new contradiction. The contradiction between the two conflicting forces viewed as the determining factor in their contrasting interaction.

³ Bussy D'Ambois, like MacBeth and King Lear, draws pagan and Christian images without either seeming to gain control. This may be a humanist attempt to mix pagan and Christian history into an ideal of social action. We also see this inverted world ready for anything and manifested and in part seen in The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois:

This Senecal man is found in him,
He may with heaven's immortal powers compare,

To whom the day and fortune equal are;
Come fair or foul, whatever chance can fall,
Fix'd in himself, he still is one to all.

IV.v.42-45

⁴ Plato would not have poets in his ideal republic, since they are addicted to not telling the "truth."

Among other sources on this subject is J.E. Spingarn, A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance (New York: Columbia, 1954) 262: "The poets are, in fact, wise men, spiritual legislators, reformers, who have at heart the redressing of wrongs; and in accomplishing this end,--either because they fear to rebuke these wrongs openly, or because they doubt the expediency or efficacy of such frankness with ignorant people,--they hide their true meaning under the veil of pleasant fables." This seems similar to Shelley's later dictum: "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world," and Sidney's Apologie for Poetrie (1595).

Spingarn adds: "The dissatisfaction of the human mind with the actual world; and its purpose is to satisfy man's natural longing for more perfect greatness, goodness, and variety than can be found in the nature of things.

Poetry therefore invents actions and incidents greater and more heroic than those of nature, and hence conduces to magnanimity; it invents actions more agreeable to the merits of virtue and vice, more just in retribution, more in accordance with revealed providence, and hence conduces to morality; it invents actions more varied and unexpected, and hence conduces to delectation" [277].

⁵ William Baldwin's A Mirror for Magistrates (London, 1559), introduces English history as material for dramatic exploration.

⁶ Norman Rabkin, "The Double Plot: Notes on the History of a Convention," Renaissance Drama VII (1964) 63-66.

⁷ See especially V.iv.112, "I forgive them", and V.iv.203, "I do", both of which suggest Christian reconciliation.

⁸ Chapman's Stoic sources tend to focus on the complex and eclectic nature of reality, the importance of truth in so far as it is good and useful; the search for the first cause of being, in order to discover the final goal of life. Wisdom, or theoretical and practical virtue as a goal, is a teaching which influences Chapman. In Stoicism mind and body are two aspects of one and the same reality.

The highest good, according to Stoicism, is to practice virtue for its own sake, doing one's duty. When anything else (fortune, honors, pleasures) becomes the sole object of one's strivings, then the degeneration of virtue is unhealthy for the individual.

⁹ The opposition of "inward" and "outward", of the world of the soul and the physical realm, is also woven into

Shakespeare's The Tempest (1611).

10 Evans xiv: "Chapman is a Renaissance Neo-Platonist, accepting the traditional hierarchy of the mind, soul and body in which the soul forms the intermediary between material and spiritual, able to ascend and be absorbed into mind or to sink and be subdued in matter."

11 Poetry may also be thought of as the perception of correspondences between the two planes of reality.

12 Castiglione 124.

13 See S.K. Heninger, Touches of Sweet Harmony, for a discussionj of these influences in Renaissance thought.

14 See Appendix J for Hooker on inversion in nature.

15 Hooker 495.

16 A Machiavelli commonplace.

17 Evans xxiii: "It is impossible to say how far Chapman believed in Bruno's Hermeticism or whether he associated it with the Copernican revolution, although he refers to the earth's movement on several occasions, as in "The Teares of Peace" (V.i.153).

18 Sir Francis Bacon, Advancement of Learning (London, 1605) 24.

19 Sir Walter Raleigh, History of the World (London, 1614) 121.

20 Sir Thomas Browne, Religio Medici (London, 1642) 32.

21 The world as understood by the human race.

22 Hermes Trismegistus: The name given the Neo-Platonists and the devotees of mysticism and alchemy to the Egyptian god Thoth, regarded as more or less identified with the Grecian Hermes. He is regarded as the author of all mysterious doctrines, and especially of the secrets of alchemy.

23 Muir 234: "It is not, then, the world in which they move, but the world we see through their eyes which give Chapman's heroes their greatness."

24 Racster The True Art of Living Well (London: Thomas Clarke, 1605) 14.

25 Latin virtūs means "manliness, manhood, the sum of all the corporeal and mental excellences of man, strength, vigor, bravery, courage; aptness, capacity, worth" (C. Lewis,

Latin Dictionary Oxford, 1984).

26 Muir 236: "The essential thing about Chapman's heroes, as about Marlowe's, is that they are framed of the four elements, not that they are human beings obliged to live somehow with other human beings; they are nearer to earth, water, air and fire than to us as we know ourselves. Marlowe gives the concoction from which Chapman's heroes were drawn: 'Nature that fram'd us of four elements, / Warring within our breasts for regiment, / Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds.'"

27 In dedicating The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois to Sir Thomas Howard, he writes: "And for the authentical truth of either person or action, who (worth the respecting) will expect it in a poem, whose subject is not truth, but things like truth? Poor envious souls they are that cavil at truth's want in these natural fictions, material instruction, elegant and sententious excitation to virtue, and deflection from her contrary, being the soul, limbs, and limits of an authentical tragedy."

APPENDIX A

Chapman, in a letter from prison (1605) "To His Most Gracious Majesty," outlines a possible approach to a divine right sovereign. He tries to smooth over the libel that the three playwrights were accused of committing in Eastward Ho:

Vouchsafe most Excellent Soueraigne to take mercifull notice, of / the submissiue and amendsfull sorrowes, of your two most humble and / prostrated subiects for your highnes displeasure: Geo: Chapman and Ben: / Ihonson; whose chiefe offences are but two Clawses, and both of them / not our owne; Muche lesse the vnnaturall Issue of our offenceles intentes: / I hope your Maiesties vniversall knowledge will daigne to remember: That all Authoritie in execution of Iustice, especiallie respectes the manners & liues / of men commaunded before it; And accordinge to their generall actions, cen = / sures any thinge that hath scap't them in perticuler; which can not be so / disproportionable: yt one beinge actuallie good, the other should be intentionally / ill; if not intentionallie (howsoeuer it may lie subiect to construction) where the whole founte of our actions may be iustified from beinge in / this kinde offensiuie; I hope the integrall partes will taste of the same - loyall and most dutifull order: which to aspire, from your most Cesar = / like Bountie (who Conquered still to spare the Conquerd: and was glad / of offences that he might forgiue) In all direction neuer=inough / itterated sorrowe for youre high displeasure, and vowe of as muche / future delight, as of youre present anger; we cast our best partes at / youre highnes feete, and our worse to hell./.

George Chapman./.

APPENDIX B

The following decree of 8 July 1603, from Windsor Castle, offers more of an indication of the official intention of king James at the time of his assuming power:

By the King: We have since our entry into this Realme of England, had speciall care to make all our Subiects know, with how equall affection we resolved to proceed in all things which would concerne the safetie or honour of our kingdomes, for both which we know we are to make one and the selfe-same accompt to Almighty God, under whom we hold all earthly things; In which respect, or affronts, which naturally doe arise betweene severall nations at their first ioyning in societe and conversation, never ceasing to lay severe commandement upon our greatest Subiects that came in with us, to suppose any iniurious Actions of any of their Servants or Trainee, towards the meanest Subiect of English birth, in whom from the highest to the lowest we have observed to great love and generall obedience to us and our commandements: And whatsoever it hath come to our eases that any offence hath bene done by any of them, wee have made them know how much it hath displeased us.

APPENDIX C

Here is a brief list of some of the more notable individuals who James knighted on his way to London, as listed in his Progress . . . of James I, I, 51, from Harleian MSS 1760:

Among those knighted, either on the journey or after the king had reached his capital were Sir William Petre, Sir Roger Dallison, Sir James Harington, Sir John Byron, Sir Gamaliel Capel, Sir Henry Boteler, Sir William Feilding, Sir Eusebius Isham, Sir John Leventhorpe, Sir William Caryll, Sir Richard Tichbourne, Sir Thomas Wenman, Sir Robert Cotton, Sir Richard Blount of Mapledurham, Sir Francis Carew, and Sir John Fortescue. The official world was represented by Sir Julius Caesar, Sir Thomas Lake and Sir Edward Coke. There was the great figure of Sir Francis Bacon and the two men who would come upon his misfortune, Sir Everard Digby and Sir Gervase Elwes. It was in fact an impression of the future court in miniature.

APPENDIX D

In a letter by Chapman written sometime after 4 May 1605-
mid-1605, we observe some of his practical attitudes about
being adequately compensated for his due merit (as a
playwright):

Notwithstandinge youre lordshipps infinite free
bountie hath perdon'd & / grac't, when it might
iustlie have punish't; and rememberd our poore
reputations, when our acknowledgd dewties to your
lordshippe, might worthely seeme forgotten; yet
since true honor delightes to encrease with yrcksome
burthens; we are wth all humilitie enforc't to
solicite the pro / pagation of youre most noble
fauours to our present freedome; And the / rather
since we heare from the Lorde Dawbuey, that his
highnes hath - / remitted one of vs wholie to youre
Lordshippes faouore; And that the other - / had
still youre Lordshippes passinge noble remembraunce
for his Iointe libertie; / his highnes selfe would
not be displeased to allowe; and thus wth all /
gratitude admyringe youre no lesse then sacred
respect to the poore estate of vertue, / neuer were
our soules more appropriate to the powers of our
liues / then our [vtt] vttmost liues are consecrate
to youre Noblest seruice./.

APPENDIX E

This offers a clear sense of what the new knights of 1603 might well have had ambitions for. We see this in Thomas Wilson's Arte of Rhetorique (1553):

What man I pray you, beeing better able to maintaine himself by valiaunt courage, then by living in base subiection, would not rather looke to rule like a Lord, then to liue like an vnderling: if by reason he were not perswaded, that it be honeth eueryman to liue in his owne vocation: and not to seeke any higher rounge, then wherunto he was at the first appointed? Who would digge and delue from Morne till Euening? Who would trauaile and toyle with ye sweat of his browes? Yea, who would for his kings pleasure aduenture and hassarde his life, if witte had not so won men, that they thought nothing more need full in this world, nor any thing whereunto they were more bounden; then here to liue in their duetie, and to traine their whole life according to their calling.

APPENDIX F

An anonymous ballad of the period entitled "Verses upon the order for the making Knights of such persons who had 40 pounds per annum, in King James the First's time." (B.M. Addit. Mss. 5, 832, fol. 205). This ballad offers further support for identifying Chapman's attitudes towards these new knights:

Come all you farmers out of the country,
 Carters, ploughmen, hedgers, and all;
 Tom, Dick and Will, Ralph, Roger, and Humphrey,
 Leave off your gestures rustical.
 Bid all you home-spun russets adieu,
 And suit yourself in fashions new;
 Honour invites you to delights--
 Come all to Court, and be made Knights.

He that hath forty pounds per annum
 Shall be promoted from the plough;
 His wife shall take the wall of her grannum,
 Honour is sold so dog-cheap now.
 Though thou hast neither good birth nor breeding,
 If thou has money thou'rt sure of speeding.
 Honour invites you, &c.

Knighthood, in old time, was counted an honour,
 Which the blest spirits did not disdain;
 But now it is used in so base a manner,
 That it's no credit, but rather a stain.
 Tush, it's no matter what people do say,
 The name of a Knight a whole village will sway.
 Honour invites you, &c.

Shepherds, leave singing your pastoral sonnets,
 And to learn compliments show your endeavours;
 Cast off for ever your two shilling bonnets,
 Cover your coxcombs with three pound beavers.
 Sell cart and tar-box, new coaches to buy,
 Then, 'Good, your worship', the vulgar will cry.
 Honour invites you, &c.

Whatever you do, have care of expenses;
 In hospitality do not exceed;
 Greatness of followers belongeth to princes,
 A coachman and footman are all that you need.
 And still observe this--let your servants meat lack,
 To keep brave apparel upon your wife's back.
 Honour invites you, &c.

APPENDIX G

This passage illustrates some of the differences and some of the similarities between the nobility and lesser ranks. We observe this in Arthur Dent's, The Plaine Mans Path-way to Heaven (1603) 4, 5:

Philagathus: First then I demand of you, in whate state all men are borne by nature?

Theologus: In the state of condemnation, as appeaseth, Ephe. 2.3. wee are by nature the children of wrath as well as others. And against it is written, Behold I was borne in iniquities, & in sin hath my mother aconceived mee.

Phila.: Is it everymans case? Are not Dukes and Nobles, Lords and Ladies, and the greate Potentates of the earth exempted from it?

Theol.: No surelie. It is the common case of all both high and low, rich and poore, as it is written: what is man that he should bee cleane, and he that is borne of a woman, that he should be just?

Phila.: "How deadly the wicked hate the righteous, and almost in every thing oppose themselves against them; and that in most virulent & spitefull maner. They raile and slaunder, scoffe and scorne, mocke and mowe at them: as though they were not worthy to live upon the earth. They esteeme every pelting rascall, and preferre every vile raslet, before them." And though they have their lives and libertie, their breath and safetie, and all that they have hearts with arthcite: so agreat, so firy, so burning and hissing note is their fury and malice against them."

APPENDIX H

In Chapman's translation of Petrarch's Seven Penitentiall Psalms (1612) we get a similar vision of the qualities of a great man contrasted to a good man:

A great and politicke man (which I oppose
 To good and wise) is neuer as he showes.
 Neuer explores himselfe to find his faults:
 But cloaking them, before his conscience halts,
 Flatters himselfe, and others flatteries buyes,
 Seemes made of truth, and is a forge of lies,
 Breeds bawdes and sycophants, and traitors makes
 To betray traitors; playes, and keepes the stakes,
 Is iudge and iuror, goes on life and death:
 And damns before the fault hath any breath.
 Weighs faith in falsehoods ballance; iustice does
 To cloake oppression; taile-down downward groes:
 Earth his whole end is: heauen he mockes, and hell:
 And thinkes that is not, that in him doth dwell.
 Good, with Gods right hand giuen, his left takes
 t'euil:
 When holy most he seemes, he most is euill.
 Ill vpon ill he layes: th'embroderie
 Wrought on his state, is like a leprosie,
 The whiter, still the fouler. What his like,
 What ill in all the bodie politicke
 Thriues in, and most is curst: his most blisse
 fires:
 And of two ils, still to the worst aspires.
 When his thrift feeds, iustice and mercie feare him:
 And (*Wolf-like fed) he gnars at all men nere him.

APPENDIX I

A 1612 Chapman portrait of a "good woman" comes to us through his translation of Petrarch's Seven Penitentiall

Psalms:

A woman good, and faire (which no dame can
Esteeme much easier found than a good man)
Sets not her selfe to shew, nor found would be:
Rather her vertues flie abroad then she.
Dreames not on fashions, loues no gossips feasts,
Affects no newes, no tales, no guests, no ieasts:
Her worke, and reading writs of worthiest men:
Her husbands pleasure, well taught childeren:
Her houtholds fit prouision to see spent,
As fits her husbands will, and his consent:
Spends pleasingly her time, delighting still,
To her iust dutie, to adapt her will.
Vertue she loues, rewards and honors it,
And hates all scoffing, bold and idle wit:
Pious and wise she is, and treads vpon
This foolish and this false opinion,
That learning fits not women; since it may
Her naturall cunning helpe, and make more way
To light, and close affects: for so it can
Courbe and compose them too, as in a man:
And, being noble, is the noblest meane,
To spend her time:

APPENDIX J

In a topsy-turvy world of inversion, Hooker offers us further insight into a view which suggests that humanity has lost its way. We see this in Richard Hooker's The Laws of Ecclesiasticall Polity (1594) 494:

Now if nature should intermit her course, and leave altogether though it were but for a while the observation of her own laws; if those principals and other elements of the world, whereof all things in this lower world are made, should lose the qualities which now they have; if the frame of the heavenly arch erected over our heads should loosen and dissolve itself; if celestial spheres should forget their wonted motions, and by irregualr volubility turn themselves anyway as it might happen; if the prince of the lights of heaven, which now as a giant doth run his unwearied course, should as it were through a languishing faintness begin to stand and to rest himself; if the moon should wander from her beaten way, the times and seasons of the year blend themselves by disordered and confused misture, the winds breathe out their last grasp, the clouds yield no rain, the earth be defeated of heavenly influence, the fruits of the earth pine away as children at the withered breasts of their mother no longer able to yield them relief: what would become of man himself, whom these things now do all serve? See we not plainly that obedience of creatures unto the law of nature is the stay of the whole world?

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