

A Societal Study of William Shakespeare's Character Pericles, Prince of Tyre in Relation to His Urban Environment

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Abstract

To Shakespeare, the mutual agreements and relationships among the members of society provide the only measure for maintaining the order in this society.

This paper concerns the treatment of Shakespeare's ideas and conceptions of society in his play Pericles, Prince of Tyre. Thus Pericles is portrayed here as a man, with special relation to his people, his court and his family. Shakespeare analyses his main character as Prince of Tyre and also as a human being who feels and acts.

In this play, Shakespeare provides both the way and the example of how to build a perfect society through a mutual understanding among all its members, a society in which there is no one individual who is better than the others except through one's excessive giving of himself and his case about his society and those living in it.

Pericles' personality is the main factor which makes any interpretation of himself and of the other characters in the play an easy one, because all of the others react and respond accordingly.

Thus, Shakespeare intends to convince his audience that there is no

Ultimately good or bad society. But realistically speaking, there is something which is a combination of both.

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William Shakespeare's reputation is based primarily on his plays. Yet Shakespeare first achieved celebrity as a writer through his narrative poems. Shakespeare's activities as a poet emphatically of his own age, especially in the period of extraordinary literary ferment in last years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Shakespeare's early plays are his apprenticeship to a playwriting career. The plays of this period are strongly imitative, leaning in comedy upon the academic theater with its Plautine influence, the courtly drama of Greene and Peele; leaning in tragedy upon the Senecan revenge motifs of Kyd; leaning in the chronicle play upon Marlowe.

Shakespeare in his last stage of dramatic activity adds to the stream of literature and knowledge a new outlook about man and his relations with those around him. Also, Shakespeare provides a full understanding and interpretation of almost all of the problems and contradictions which face an individual every day. In order to discover the inner reality of human nature and to analyze many of its complexities and conflicts, Shakespeare creates an individual, timeless and universal, and throws him into the wide sea of humanity where man is neither good nor productive.

Pericles, Prince of Tyre conveys an archaic flavor of old-fashioned romance. The story follows Prince Pericles as he discovers the incestuous love of King Antiochus and his daughter. To escape the vengeance of the guilty monarch, Pericles leaves his government in the hands of honest Helicanus and journeys to Tarsus. Pericles is subsequently the only survivor of a wrecked ship of Pentapolis, faces in a tournament the suitors of Princess Thaisa, daughter of King Simonides and then marries her.

Learning of the death of Antiochus, Pericles and his newly wed bride sail for Tyre, but Thaisa is mistakenly thought to have died immediately after having given birth to a daughter. She is buried at sea in a casket which later, is washed ashore at Ephesus. Thinking Pericles dead and not certain whether she bore a child, Thaisa enters the temple of Diana. At Tarsus, Pericles leaves his daughter Marina with Cleon and his wife Dionyza. Marina becomes the subject of Dionyza's intense jealousy and is sent to a brothel where she wins favour for her goodness of spirit and her pure nature. Pericles, guided by a dream, sets sail again and is

reunited with both his wife and child. Marina is betrothed to Lysimachus, and Gower as chorus relates the burning of Cleon and Dionyza by the irate citizens of Tarsus. The last three acts particularly follow the late romances common themes of a prince and his daughter, sleep disguised as death, magic intervention and reconciliation.

Pericles, the play, provides that wide sea which is a mirror of everyone's actions, where truth and reality cannot last too long hidden in the vast unknown. Pericles, the prince, is that individual to whom nature gives and from whom nature takes the loveliest creatures closest to his heart.

Thus, this paper is concerned with Pericles as a man, and with his relation to his people, his court and his family. One sees him as King of Tyre and also as a human being who feels and acts.

In this play, Shakespeare reveals what he had shown previously in his history plays—how the ideal world should be built with no oppression, hypocrisy or tyranny. In Pericles the dramatist shows many different kinds of societies and communities, some of which are similar while others are in complete contrast to them.

In other words, Shakespeare provides both the ways and the examples at the same time of how to build a perfect and ideal society through a mutual understanding among its members, a society in which there is no one individual who is better than the other except through one's excessive giving of one's self and one's care about his society and those living in it.

Pericles starts the way and turns the light to a new and real facing of life in which restoration, reconciliation and redemption are the measures and proportions which supply happiness, freedom and love of mankind.

Derek Traversi (1965) mentions in his discussion of the play that:

It is clear that the set of related events thus placed,
as its turning- point, at the center of the play
contains all the typical contrasts - between tempest

and succeeding calm, birth and death, mortality
and healing - which go to make up the symbolic
unity of the last plays; they provide, from now
on in increasing measure, a framework for the
pattern of interdependent imagery by which
the play attains its full poetic life. ¹

The character of Pericles, who is the prince of the good and ideal society of Tyre, has many traits which influence his relationships with himself as well as with others.

Pericles' personality is the main factor which makes any interpretation or explanation of the other characters in the play an easy one, because all of the others react and respond accordingly:

The starting point is the definition which Pericles gives of himself when he is asked by Thaisa, who was asked to do that by her father, the good Simonides of Pentapolis:

A gentleman of Tyre; my name, Pericles;

My education been in arts and arms. * (II. iii. 81-82)

F. D. Hoeniger (1963) in his introduction to the play says that "One can infer from Pericles' talents and activities that he is a man of unusual gifts, a skillful soldier as well as a great musician, a man of great authority among his subjects, and of generous dealing."²

Pericles' character combines rigidity in war and full appreciation of art, while courage, modesty and the love of honour are the main factors of this personality.

His courage is revealed through his adventures which start in the very beginning of the play, through his winning of the tournament in Simonides' Court, and through defying King Simonides himself in his own court when the latter accuses him of being a traitor:

My actions are as noble as ray thoughts,

That never relish'd of a base descent.

I came unto your court for honour's cause,
 And not to be a rebel to her state;
 And he that otherwise accounts of me,
 This sword shall prove he's honour's enemy.

(II. v. 58-63)

The thoughts of Pericles are as clear as his deeds. He never cheats or fools anybody, because he does not have any sense of deception or envy. Thaisa praises Pericles for winning the tournament. Pericles then answers her in a very humble spirit and in a modest sense:

'Tis more by fortune, lady, than by merit.

(II. iii. 12)

This sense of modesty also appears through his behaviour in Simonides' court as well as in his request to Cleon, the Governor of Mytilene; Dionyza, wife of the Governor; and the lords, when he harbours in Tarsus

after his running from the wrath of bad Antiochus, the King of Antioch:

Arise, I pray you, rise;
 We do not look for reverence, but for love
 And harbourage for ourself, our ships and men.

(I. iv. 98-100)

In Tarsus, Pericles behaves as a very charitable prince who cares for people everywhere, not only in his own kingdom where it is his duty to care. He helps Cleon to relieve the famine without any condition:

We have heard your miseries as far as Tyre,
 And seen the desolation of your streets;
 Nor come we to add sorrow to your tears,
 But, to relieve, them of their heavy load;

And these our ships, you happily may think
Are like the Trojan horse was stuff'd within
With bloody veins expecting overthrow,
Are stor'd with corn to make your needy bread,
And give them life whom hunger starv'd half dead.
(I. i. v. 88-96)

This act of princely charity wins Pericles the purchase of a different kind of glory. Furthermore, it also reveals his virtuous actions towards others although later on they repay him evil for good by trying to kill his daughter and by causing her misfortune.

Pericles is a very sensitive and intelligent character as well. In the court of good Simonides, Pericles shows himself to be a very skillful dancer and musician. Simonides acknowledges this:

...I am beholding to you
For your sweet music this last night. I do
Protest my ears were never better fed
with such delightful pleasing harmony.
(II. v. 25-28)

"Pericles," says Wilson Knight (1965), "is conceived as the perfect courtier as defined by Castiglione and even his tourneying is praised as art"³

In framing an artist, art hath thus decreed:
To make some good, but others to exceed;
And you are her labour'd scholar.

(II. iii. 15-18)

Knight adds that "there are in Pericles many noticeable artistic emphasis, some of a new sort ... and all blend with the moralistic tone of

thought.”⁴

Pericles is an intellectual person and a very diplomatic one. He knows how to discover the hidden reality, and when it turns against him he is able to cover it with a soft and smooth layer of diplomacy.

Charles Janasz (quoted in Maggi Kramm, 1992) argues that the play itself “It’s about a hero who right away confronts a taboo.... Yet at the same time he has to deal with the fact that he is attracted to this woman. After he’s interpreted the riddle, he says”: “Fair glass of light, I loved you and could still.”⁵

His ability to solve the riddle of Antiochus and his nameless daughter, and also his behaviour towards Antiochus later on reveal his characteristics:

Few love to hear the sins they love to act;
’Twould braid yourself too near for me to tell it.
Who has a book of all that monarchs do,
He’s more secure to keep it shut than shown; (I. i.93-94)

Charles Show Robinson (quoted in Maggi Kramm, 1992) says that “Pericles is very direct, and very pure in how he encounters the world. His natural choice is joy. That’s why he’s so disturbed when he encounters the evil in Antioch.”⁶

Pericles anticipates the bad reaction of Antiochus, who plans to get rid of him by any possible method. This causes him to run away at the first chance to save his life:

Antioch, farewell! for wisdom sees, those men ,
Blush not in actions blacker than the night,
Will show no course to keep them from the light.
One sin, I know, another doth provoke;
Murder’s as near to lust as flame to smoke.
Poison and treason are the hands of sin.

Ay, and the targets, to put off the shame:
Then, lest my life be cropp'd to keep you clear,
By flight I'll shun the danger which I fear.

(I. i. 135-143)

However, Constance Jordan (quoted in David M. Bergeron, 2005) states that Pericles "has mis- understood the nature of Antiochus' rule, and, by extension, the rule of the monarch or prince."⁷ Jordan also states that Pericles should have resisted.

After Pericles reaches Tyre and saves himself from the wrath of the tyrannous Antiochus, he does not feel at peace although he is at home now and very far from the hands of Antiochus. He realizes that he is not safe unless King Antiochus receives his death Pericles speaks to Helicanus, a lord of Tyre, in the court:

'Tis time to fear when tyrants seem to kiss.

(I. ii. 79)

The mind of Pericles begins to be occupied by the problems of evil and mortality and by the airlessness and hopelessness of life when he reaches the point of thinking of death as a saviour:

Here to have death in peace is all he'll crave.

(I. i. 11)

His knowledge of himself and of the others creates in him a state of melancholia.

Derek Traversi (1965) declares: "The actions of the elements cause Pericles to consider, even more explicitly than at the court of Antiochus, the limitations of his human nature, which is indeed, a necessary prelude to self-knowledge and which the whole of this part of the action is concerned to stress."⁸

All of this happens after his shipwreck at Pentapolis where all of his companions die, and Pericles enters, wet and

tired;

Yet cease your ire, you angry stars of heaven!
 Wind, rain, and thunder, remember, earthly man
 Is but a substance that must yield to you;
 And I, as fits my nature do obey you.

(II. i. 1-4)

Pericles, after the first storm, shows an ultimate submission to Fate and he accepts the will of Providence and Fate with full patience and obedience. He realizes that his fortune is changing due to the wrath of gods, but he does not behave against their will, although he is conscious that he has not committed any wrongs against their will. He appears as a passive character in the hands of the gods who control the main change in his fortune. Peter Aylward (quoted in Maggi Kramm, 1992) indicates that "it's true that the episodic nature of this play robs the character of some of his complexity. Pericles has often been thought to be a bland, passive role. He certainly doesn't have the undercutting wit and flashes of genius of Hamlet. But he does have a great capacity to suffer and to bounce back finally from his greatest calamities".⁹

Pericles later realizes that the gods are only testing him and now they are changing their actions towards him by giving him his father's armour from the deep sea:

Thanks, Fortune, yet, that after all thy crosses
 Thou giv'st me somewhat to repair myself;

(II. i. 120-121)

The problem is that this is not the end of his misfortunes or bad luck. As a matter of fact, it is just the beginning and how Pericles will adapt himself to the coming misfortunes is the main concern of the rest of the play.

The second storm occurs after his marriage to good Thaisa and while he is going back home to rule his kingdom in peace. This time the gods seem very angry, because it is the worst and most violent storm that ever had come to that sea, as mentioned by his daughter who is significantly named Marina, since she was born at sea:

When I was born.

Never was waves nor wind more violent;

(IV. i. 58-59)

With the coming of Marina to this life, Pericles has to pay a very expensive loss, which is his beloved wife Thaisa; she dies the moment Marina is born. J.M.S. Tompkins (2005) says: "At his wife's death, like a

madam distracted he tore his clothes and rent his hair', and when he learns of the loss of his daughter he falls into an 'outrageous affection'."¹⁰

D.R.C. Marsh (1962) states in his discussion of the play:

Here, for the first time in the play, the great cycle of life and

death, is introduced, for Thaisa dies in giving birth to a daughter. In the life and love that the baby represents, Pericles finds a measure of consolation, though he cannot help but query the justice of the fate that has robbed him of his wife.¹¹

Lychorida, the nurse, says to him:

Here's all that is left living of your queen,

A little daughter: for the sake of it,

Be manly, and take comfort. Pericles retorts

O you gods!

Why do you make us love your goodly gifts,

And snatch them straight away? We here below

Recall not what we give, and therein may

Use honour with you.

(III. i. 19-26)

In this situation F.D. Hoeniger (quoted in Lyndy Abraham, 1999) argues that the theme of Pericles seems based on the profound Christian view of suffering and redemption and yet remains totally "secular in

content and intention.”¹²

Lychorida gives a dramatic substance to this theme by announcing the queen's death and, together with it, the arrival of a living infant, expressly described as ‘this piece of your queen.’

Pericles emphasizes the continuous process which unites death and birth, the storm and the following calm, and he hopes that his daughter will live a peaceful and a quiet life different from the wild atmosphere which had surrounded her birth:

Now, mild may be thy life!
 For a more blustering birth had never babe;
 Quiet and gentle thy conditions! for
 Thou art the rudest welcome to this world
 That e'er was prince's child. Happy what follows!
 Thou hast as chiding a nativity
 As fire, air, water, earth, and heaven can make,
 To herald thee from the womb. [Poor inch of nature!]
 Even at the first thy loss is more than can
 Thy portage quit, with all thou canst find here.
 Now the good gods throw their best eyes upon't!

(III. i. 27-37)

Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei (2004) indicates that: “The play chronicles Pericles’ sixteen-year journey through the uncharted seas of life, his agonies, his loss of loved ones, and ultimately the confirmation of universal justice through apparent miracles.”¹³

Pericles changes his direction to Tarsus where he leaves his child with Cleon and his queen Dionyza. Later on after sixteen years, Pericles goes to Tarsus to bring her home. But he hears of her supposed death and reads Dionyza's hypocritical inscription on the carefully devised monument, in the ‘glitt'ring golden characters’ (IV. iii. 44) with which

she disguises her 'black villainy' (IV. iv. 44).

Pericles is again deceived, but he behaves passively and suspects nobody. G. W. Knight (1965) says, "He suspects nothing, receives this as but another stroke of fate; vows never now cut his hair, puts on sackcloth, and sets out to sea."¹⁴

But Pericles' endurance reaches its limit at this moment:

He bears

A tempest, which his mortal vessel tears,

And yet he rides it out.

(IV. iv. 29-31)

Pericles does not deserve in any sense this kind of suffering and misery. But in spite of all this, he is still faithful to himself and to the gods, although the gods are deceiving him throughout the play until at the end they discover that they should restore his fortune and give him confidence in life again by returning his daughter and his wife to him. Richard Iglewski (quoted in Maggi Kramm, 1992) states that "we have the hope in Pericles that when things get so bad, may be the gods intervene out of kindness, for the betterment of man, this is something that our contemporary cynicism and chic attitudes marginalize in favor of practical, technocratic, down-to earth choices. But one is never more than a step away from magic."¹⁵ Pericles seems, from the very beginning of the play until its end, to be a man without a defect, a man of an entirely good nature. However, he is affected sometimes by the feelings of lust and appearances as he does with Antiochus' daughter when he is describing her:

See where she comes apparell'd like the spring.

Graces her subjects, and her thoughts the King

Of every virtue gives renown to men!

Her face the book of praises, where is read

Nothing but curious pleasures, as from thence

Sorrow were ever raz'd, and testy wrath

Could never be her mild companion.
You gods, that made me man, and sway in love,
That have inflam'd desire in ray breast
To taste the fruit of yon celestial tree
Or die in the adventure, be my helps,
As I am son and servant to your will.
To compass such a boundless happiness!

(I. i. 13-25)

This does not mean that Pericles is corrupt. His major flaws are his being deceived by appearances and his melancholy. Yet both aspects are not stressed because in both cases Pericles is able in a short time to know the truth and to overcome his melancholy. In spite of these flaws, which exist for the sake of the plot only, he remains pure and good and without any distortion in his character as an ideal king, a hero king.

He has a perfectly balanced personality. He has his spiritual beliefs although his mind is sometimes clouded by deception or misery, but still he never has any psychological war within himself, and there is no civil strife in the kingdom of his personality.

To continue this discussion, the second step is to point out Pericles' relations with his people, court and courtiers, and his family, and to reveal how these relations spring from a mutual understanding and interdependence among all the members of this society. They are all good, productive and ready to build up the bases of the ideal society of Tyre.

From the first look at the Court of Tyre, I think that one may notice very clearly that the general atmosphere which surrounds it is filled with love, peace and unity. Envy, jealousy and treachery have no place in this society; they are outside it, and they cannot enter the mind or the heart of the courtiers because these people have been raised in a good manner and they have no amount of evil in their lives. Helicanus, the lord of this court and the counsellor of Pericles, is a man of good will and good

intentions. Pericles sees in him the image of his father, which makes Pericles respect Helicanus' personality and appreciate his opinion and advice.

Pericles feels an increased need for Helicanus throughout the play, and this is clear in the beginning when he is in a fit of melancholy after running away from Antiochus' court in order to save his life. He says to

Helicanus:

Sit down; thou art no flatterer;
I thank thee for it; and heaven forbid
That kings should let their ears hear their
faults hid!
Fit counsellor and servant for a prince,
Who by thy wisdom makes a prince thy servant,
What would'st thou have me do.

(I. ii. 60-65)

Pericles' own life and personal fortunes are reflected in his court and country. Helicanus, being the chief counsellor and the first lord in the court in addition to being a close relative of Pericles, is the first one to understand the common feeling of his master. Helicanus advises Pericles to leave the country at his own suggestion and he advises him to run away from the wrath of Antiochus. Pericles reacts in the same way towards Helicanus when he puts all his trust in him:

...where I'll hear from thee,
And by whose letters I'll dispose myself.
The care I had and have of subjects' good
On thee I lay, whose wisdom's strength can bear it.
I'll take thy word for faith, not ask thine oath;
Who shuns not to break one will crack both.

But in our orbs we'll live so round and safe.
 That time of both this truth shall ne'er convince,
 Thou showd'st a subject's shine, I a true prince !

(I. ii. 116-124)

At the end of the play, when peace and unity are restored, Pericles introduces Helicanus to his recovered wife Thaisa and reminds her of good Helicanus in these words:

You have heard me say, when I did fly from
 Tyre,
 I left behind an ancient substitute;
 Can you remember what I called the man?
 I have nam'd him oft.
 Thaisa
 'Twas Helicanus then.

(V. iii. 50-53)

Helicanus expresses a matter of love and respect which he feels towards Pericles. Helicanus finds in him a son, and a good one too; likewise, Pericles sees in him the picture of his father, the King of Tyre. Helicanus cares about Pericles in his presence in Tyre as much as in his absence, and even more when he is unaware and wondering if Pericles is alive or not. Helicanus does not lose his loyalty and obedience to Pericles at any time in the play. He is the representative of the good courtier, who looks after the kingdom and who cares about the welfare of Pericles and Tyre. Helicanus assures Pericles not to worry if Antiochus attacks Tyre:

We'll mingle our bloods together in the earth,
 From whence we had our being and our birth.

(I ii. 113-114)

After that Helicanus steadily sends Pericles letters, explaining what

is happening in Tyre. The other courtiers, for the love of their country, ask Helicanus to succeed Pericles after his long absence without any news as to whether Pericles is dead or alive. However, Helicanus answers the courtiers:

... let me entreat you
To forbear the absence of your king;
If in which time expir'd he not return,
I shall with aged patience bear your yoke.

(II. iv. 45-48)

Thus, this society of Tyre is clearly a web of relationships which are personal and political, and yet which point beyond themselves to a shared life irreducible to individual components. Pericles' direct relationship to his subjects is not made clear in this play. A good example is Simonides and his love of his people as well as all others. Simonides is a magnified picture of Pericles and his relationships with other people. But still there are some examples in the play which show a full understanding of Pericles by the ordinary people. The first example is his

concern for the welfare of his people and his running away from the state to save them from the tyranny of Antiochus. Pericles knows that the revenge of Antiochus will not only be on Pericles as an individual but also on the society of Tyre as a whole:

With hostile forces he'll o'erspread the land,
And with th'ostent of war will look so huge.
Amazement shall drive courage from the state,
Our men be vanquish'd ere they do resist,
And subjects punish'd that ne'er thought offence:
Which care of them, not pity of myself,
Who am no more but as the tops of trees
Which fence the roots they grow by and defend them

Makes both my body pine and soul to languish,
And punish that before that he would punish.

(I. ii. 25-34)

Pericles attempts to sacrifice himself for the sake of his people.

At the same time his subjects consider Pericles' personal problems as their own, and they are ready to mingle their blood for the sake of their prince and his kingdom. It is the mutual sacrifice from each side which makes this kind of understanding the measure of every relationship in this society.

Another example occurs while Pericles is on his ship during the heavy storm which results in death to his wife Thaisa and birth of his daughter Marina.

In a very depressed moment, Pericles obeys the sailors who have asked him to clean the ship and remove the corpse of Thaisa. This symbolic action takes a decisive step further; for the burial of his wife at sea is a big sacrifice for the prince in order to satisfy the beliefs of his people—beliefs which are not necessarily right. Pericles respects and considers the opinions and the philosophy of the ordinary people, because he feels in them a truthful sense of reality, and this is clear in his judgement of the fishermen in Act II, scene i when they were philosophizing on the idea of man in this life. A "pretty" moral says Pericles and continues with a comment that would show his respect towards their humble profession. He says:

How from the finny subject of the sea
These fishers tell the infirmities of men;
And from their watery empire recollect
All that men may approve or men detect!

(II. i. 48-51)

According to Wilson Knight (1965) "The simple men are philosophical as well as sympathetic, and their humour shows a moralizing depth unknown to Shakespeare's earlier prose rustics."¹⁶ The

love of man and humanity at large knows no limitations to Pericles, humanity at large knows no limitations to Pericles, but he helps man anywhere, in anyplace. This is precisely what he does to the Kingdom of Tarsus when he saves the people of Cleon and the wicked Dionyza from famine and starvation. Perhaps there is no emphasis in the play which shows a direct relationship between Pericles and his people; yet the idea and opinion of the people towards King Simonides is a convincing example clearly showing the reaction of the subjects toward their ruler if he is good and deserves to be respected and loved. There is the duty of the individual towards his kingdom on the one hand, while on the other there is the responsibility of the community to obey, respect, and serve the individual who is one of its roots.

To complete this discussion, it is necessary to speak about Pericles' relations with his family: his wife and his daughter, Thaisa and Marina.

In Act I, Pericles rejects the nameless daughter of Antiochus. In his refusal to accept her, he rids himself of all the appearances and deceptions in his mind. He starts to look for real beauty and good heartedness.

In Thaisa, Pericles finds his relief and in her too, he is able to bring to life a good and virtuous daughter who is extremely faithful and honest. Thaisa's death is a great burden to Pericles, a disaster, because he sees in her all the values and love that he needs and for which he is looking. Her death means a loss of all these values. Cerimon describes her after she recovers from her death as:

She is alive!

Behold, her eyelids, cases to those
Heavenly jewels which Pericles hath lost,
Begin to part their fringes of bright gold.
The diamonds of a most praised water
Doth appear to make the world twice rich. Live,
And make us weep to hear your fate, fair creature,
Rare as you seem to be. (I. ii. 99-106)

Derek Traversi (1965) says that "Thaisa, one lost to Pericles in her death, is again alive, and the first sign of her restoration is a renewal of value by which her very physical attributes are transformed."¹⁷

In her restoration to Pericles, she makes the cycle complete, where there is nothing missing, neither in his kingdom nor in the world of goodness.

Marina has a special effect on Pericles; she is a magnified picture of her mother Thaisa. Moreover, she has a power of recreation and reformation. Marina trains in Tarsus in music, letters and needlework, and becomes generally admired, which irritates the Queen's jealousy. The Chorus describes her in Act V:

She sings like one immortal, and she dances
As goddess-like to her admired lays.
Deep clerks she dumbs, and with her neele composes
Nature's own shape, of bud, bird, branch, or berry.
That even her art sisters the natural roses;
Her inkle, silk, twin with the rubied cherry:

(I. Chorus. 3-8)

At the brothel, Marina prays to Diana to preserve her virginity. The Bawd exclaims, "What have we to do with Diana?" (IV. ii. 148). All of the people who come to this house change their habits and now they become virtuous members of society. They swear to each other that they will never again attend such places. John Arthos (quoted in

Lyndy Abraham, 1999) argues that "The brothel was traditionally the scene in the old romances and in the lives of the Saints where the power of innocence and trust could be most powerfully asserted."¹⁸ The Boult himself can not do anything with Marina but he is convinced after an isolated meeting with her that she should move away from there. The Bawd says, "She would make a puritan of the devil" (IV. vi. 9) and also the Boult says "She makes our profession as it were to stink afore the face of the gods" (IV. vi. 135-36). Howard Felperin (1972) sees Marina ". . . as the human embodiment of Diana's divine grace, [who] will reform the

stews of Mytilene.”¹⁹ In Act V Marina tells Pericles her own life story in order to remove his depression and heal his soul. On hearing her story, Pericles is shocked and asks Marina if she is “flesh and blood ... no fairy” (V. i. 152-53). Pericles is interested in listening to Marina when she appears to him as virtuous and honest as the ultimate “Truth.” He asks Marina to speak more:

Falseness cannot come from thee, for thou look'st
Modest as Justice, and thou seem'st a palace
For the crown'd Truth to dwell in. (V. i. 120-123)

So Marina tries to revive her lost father by her sacred physic. Also

Thaisa is revived by Cerimon “Through whom the gods have shown their power” (V. iii. 60). Marina has been “god-like perfect, the heir of kingdoms, And another life to Pericles thy father” (V. i. 206-7).

The nobility of Marina is stressed in the play by everyone from Lysimachus, who sees in her the instrument and tool of healing and recovering, to the others who look at her as a spiritual ideal. Lyndy Abraham (1999) indicates that John Arthos has rightly observed that Marina is “mostly a symbolic not a dramatic character.”²⁰ She is the daughter of good Pericles and Thaisa, and her relationship with her father is one of spiritual love in which duty, responsibility, emotion and feelings are fused together to feed this genuine relationship and to build up the essence of their mutual love.

Simonides is a third father in the play, but he is a man of different heart. He is not only the father of Thaisa but also of all the people of Pentapolis even to Pericles himself. Simonides is the image of the good father.

His relations are dialectical and balanced. Simonides is never cheated by appearances or illusions. He can read the hearts of everyone around him and he treats people with good-heartedness. Simonides' relationship with himself is an ultimate understanding of his inner goodness in which there is no way to evil or deception. Simonides loves

wisdom, courage, values and honour:

. . . honour we love,
For who hates honour, hates the gods above.

(II. iii. 21-22)

Simonides also loves music, dancing and all kinds of arts, all of which exist in his kingdom where there is no war, famine or disasters. His relationship with his daughter Thaisa as the symbol of the royal family is a direct contrast to Antiochus' relationship with his daughter. What exists is a pure and shared love which is surrounded

by a spiritual and fatherly atmosphere. Simonides teaches Thaisa wisdom and reality:

Opinion's but a fool, that makes us scan
The outward habit by the inward man.

(II. ii. 55-56)

Princes, in this, should live like gods above,
Who freely give to every one that come to honour them;

(I.iii. 60-61)

Simonides explains to Thaisa the meaning of the mottos for the winning of her love spoken by the knights and lords on the tournament day. He assures her that Pericles' motto is the best one. This means that Pericles is the best husband for her, and Simonides is right, for the play proves the dedicated love of Pericles to Thaisa.

Simonides is a king who knows how to behave and react with everybody. His relations with his court and the courtiers are spotless. He knows how to treat his courtiers and they know how to repay him:

Knights: We are honour'd much by good Simonides.
Simonides: Your presence glads our days; honour
we love,

For who hates honour, hates the gods above. (II. iii. 20-22)

His court is living peacefully; every courtier knows his duty towards

the other, and each practices his responsibility very carefully. The knights say to Simonides on the tournament day:

Contend not, Sir; for we are gentlemen
Have neither in our hearts nor outward eyes
Envied the great nor shall the low despise.

(II. iii. 24-26)

Simonides' knights are perfect courtiers, they are good, honourable, faithful, and chivalrous and they love art as well. Simonides proves himself a respected king in the heart of everyone, no matter what his rank. Simonides loves all of his people, the lord as well as the poor. Likewise, the poor people or the masses love, respect, and see Simonides as a responsible ruler. To Pericles on the seashore, one of the fishermen says that the good Simonides is the king of the country:

Pericles: The good King Simonides, do you call him?

First Fisherman: Ay, sir; and he deserves so to be
call'd for his peaceable reign and good government.

Pericles: He is a happy king, since he gains from his subjects
the name of good by his government. (II.i. 99-103)

As Wilson Knight (1965) says, "The statement serves to crystallize the sense already transmitted of simple honesty and wisdom: we are in a good community. The society is not leveled, but the men are as happy and rich-hearted in their station as the king in his".²¹

The whole society of Simonides is dominated and ruled by the kingly, courteous, moralistic and jovial attitudes of the good King. The personal feelings and formal relations are fused together to produce a spontaneous love and social duty united in an ideal and free society.

On the other hand, Cerimon is also a good ruler, yet he has some creative power which gives him a godlike role. He is an almost superhuman figure. He is a magician of secret arts as well as a noble man, virtuous, generous and wise. Of these values, he says:

I hold it ever,

Virtue and cunning were endowments
 greater
 Than nobleness and riches; careless heirs
 May the two latter darken and expend,
 But immortality attends the former,
 Making a man a god. (III. ii. 26-31)

Cerimon 's lords, who attend the recovery scene of Thaisa from her death, exclaim:

The heavens through you, increase our wonder,
 And set up your fame forever.
 (III. ii. 98-99)

These people respect and obey Cerimon. They see him as the good and holy man who revives people, who cares for life more than he does for himself, as D. R. C. Marsh (1962) mentioned. Cerimon is a man who searches for truth rather than for reputation or wealth. The subject praises him:

Your honour has through Ephesus pour'd forth
 Your charity, and hundreds call themselves
 Your creatures, who by you have been restor'd;
 And not your knowledge, your personal pain, but even
 Your purse, still open, hath built Lord Cerimon
 Such strong renown as time shall never [raze].
 (III. ii. 43-48)

D. R. C. Marsh (1962) suggests some meaning in Cerimon's name, such as "cerements and ceremony, life coming out of death, but if this is so, the significance is confused and obscure."²² Cerimon praises Pericles

in the play as H. Felperin (1972) notes:

His charity aligns him with Pericles, whose gift of corn to
Tarsus had brought "them life whom hunger starv'd half
dead" (I. iv. 96), as well as with the good fishermen who
restored Pericles' sea-rusted armour to him."²³

Cerimon's society reveals the relationship of the good ruler to the supernatural power as well as to human beings.

His ideal society has a power of creating and restoring life, the thing which Pericles' society lacks.

In contrast to these good and ideal societies discussed above, there are two bad and corrupt societies. Antiochus is a decayed character. Mark Taylor (quoted in William Deanne, 2002) argues that Antiochus provides a "foil" for Pericles' more appropriate expressions of familial love.²⁴ He is corrupted to the extent that nature herself with the aid of her superpower murdered him in order to take suitable revenge for his unpardonable sin. He is an embodiment of evil and is the symbol of hypocrisy and tyranny. His relationship with the court is a very deceptive one because it is a matter of fear and power, there is no mutual understanding and no respect between him and his court. He is to them a tyrant who oppresses everything with his power. Pericles illustrates this by saying:

The blind mole casts
Copp'd hills towards heaven to tell the earth is throng'd
By man's oppression; and the poor worm doth die. for't.
(I. i. 101-103)

Lord Thaliard does not respect or care for Antiochus, because the king does not ask for his advice or his opinion; Antiochus just gives orders and asks Thaliard to carry them out. What kind of orders, why and how? All of these questions the court must not ask; they have only to manage the job as his majesty wants it:

Antiochus: Thaliard, behold here's poison, and

here's gold;
 We hate the prince of Tyre, and thou
 must kill him:
 It fits thee not to ask the reason why:
 Because we bid. Say, is it done?
 Thaliard: My lord 'tis done. (I. i. 156-159)

What kind of relationship is this in comparison to the good relations of Pericles' society and Simonides' court where there is neither oppression nor hypocrisy? Antiochus society is a very fearful one; it does not care about relationships among human beings. It is a society which frustrates its people, crushes them, destroys them, and then at the end leaves them hopeless, purposeless and aimless.

After Antiochus and his nameless daughter die because of a supernatural power, not one of the people comes to bury them or even look at them. People feel happy and relieved because the essence of corruption and evil in the society has died, and they are now looking forward to a new and better society. Helicanus says in Act II.iv:

Antiochus from incest liv'd not free;
 (II. iv. 2)

And about Antiochus' ugly death with his daughter, Helicanus adds:

A fire from heaven came and shrivell'd up
 Their bodies, even to loathing; for they so stunk.
 That all those eyes ador'd them ere their fall
 Scorn now their hand should give them burial
 (II. iv. 9-12)

Antiochus, with his daughter, provides an extreme contrast to Simonides and Thaisa. The first are concerned with adultery and physical love, while the others appear more human and natural, and they are concerned with spiritual and pure fatherly love. H. Felperin (1972)

explains the role played by Antiochus' daughter as follows:

Antiochus' daughter, whose beauty "enticeth" Pericles to "view", "touch" and "taste", comes to represent in the course of the scene not that good which rewards romantic "virtue", but that evil which tests moral virtue.²⁵

This lady, who sees in her father not only a father, but also a husband, behaves worse than animal. She is corrupt in heart and as such there is no way to build a good society among those people, for no one has any essence of goodness. They all stink of sin and lust. It is really a very different society in comparison to that of good Simonides where truth and faith are the measures of its base.

Cleon and Dionyza's society is different from that of Antiochus

and his daughter. They represent a one-sided contrast to Pericles' society. Cleon has a very cold relationship with his people, because through his pride and the wicked spirit of his wife Dionyza, they lose their prosperity and happiness, and sink into terrible poverty and famine. Pericles does a very charitable job in saving these people from starvation, and he leaves with the king and queen's protestations of undying gratitude in his ears. But unfortunately, these people are later to repay good for evil by trying to bring about the death of his lovely child Marina. The people of Tarsus, knowing this fact, turn against their king and queen and kill them as the price of their wicked deed:

For wicked Cleon and his wife, when fame
Had-spread his cursed deed to th¹ honour'd name
Of Pericles, to rage the city turn.
That him and his they in his palace burn:
The gods for murder seemed so content
To punish; although not done, but meant.
(Epilogue. Chorus. 11-16)

Cleon's behaviour towards his wife is very different from that of Pericles' towards Thaisa. Because Cleon is under the control of

Dionyza, she is oppressing him and she guides him to the acts of murder and deception. On the other hand, Thaisa loves honour and faith more than anything else. It is an evil relationship between Cleon and his family, while it is a good and loyal one in the case of Pericles and Thaisa. Cleon is incapable of building an ideal society in his kingdom, incapable replacing poverty with prosperity, because all of his relationships and intentions are false and corrupt.

Lysimachus is a realistic figure who represents a real and logical society, which Shakespeare portrays through him in order to convince his

audience that there is no ultimately good or bad society. But realistically speaking, there is something which is a combination of both. Lysimachus, who has more goodness than evil in himself, is a representative of this society.

Lastly, F.D.Hoeniger (quoted in Lyndy Abraham, 1999) indicates that "Pericles can hardly have been intended by its creator to delight audience or reader in the sense that the comedies do. Rather its appeal is to our sense of wonder, a wonder which reaches its high point in the scenes of recognition." ²⁶

End Notes

- * Lines and references to this play are taken from Professor Hoeniger's [New] Arden edition. These references will be consistent throughout this paper.
- 1- Derek Traversi, Shakespeare: The Last phase (London: Hollis and Carter, 1965), pp. 25-26.
 - 2- F.D. Hoeniger, ed., The Arden Shakespeare (London: Harvard University Press, 1963), p.lxxx.
 - 3- G.Wilson Knight, The Crown of Life (London: University Paperbacks, 1965), p.51.
 - 4- Ibid.
 - 5- Maggi Kramm, "the hero nobody knows, William Shakespeare's Pericles" American Theatre 9.3 (1992),p.12
 - 6- Ibid
 - 7- David M. Bergeron, "Review", rev. of Shakespeare's Monarchies: Ruler and Subject in the Romances, by Constance Jordan. Shakespeare Quarterly 50.2 (Summer, 1999), p.226.JSTOR. 1 April 2005 <<http://www.jstor.org/>>.
 - 8- Traversi ,Shakespeare: The Last phase ,p.23.
 - 9- Maggi kramm, "The hero no body knows, William Shakespeare's Pericles, "American Theatre" 9.3 (1992),p.14.
 - 10- J.M.S. Tompkins, "why Pericles", rev. of Pericles, Prince of Tyre, by William Shakespeare, The Review of English Studies 3. 12 (oct,1952): 320. JSTOR. 1 April.2005 <http://www.jstor.org/>>.
 - 11- D.R.C. Marsh, The Recurring Miracle (Lincoln: University of Nebraska press, 1962), p.17.
 - 12- Lyndy Abraham, "weddings Funerals and Incest: Alchemical Emblems and Shakespeare,s Pericles, Prince of Tyre", The journal of English and Germanic Philology 98.4 (1999):525.
 - 13- Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei, "Pericles, Prince of Tyre", Asian Theatre

- Journal 21.1 (Spring 2004):117.
- 14- Knight, The Crown of life, P, 60.
- 15- Maggi Kramm, “The hero no body knows, William Shakespeare’s Pericles”, American Theatre 9. 3 (1992):14.
- 16- Knight, the crown of life, p.44.
- 17- Traversi, Shakespeare: The last phase, p.31.
- 18- Lyndy Abraham, “Weddings, Funerals and Incest: Alchemical Emblems and Shakespeare’s Pericles, Prince of Tyre”, The Journal of English and Germanic philology 98. 4 (1999): 545.
- 19- Howard Felperin, Shakespearean Romance (New Jersey: Princenton, University press, 1972), p.161.
- 20- Lyndy Abraham, “Weddings, Funerals and Incest: Alchemical Emblems and Shakespeare’s Pericles, Prince of Tyre”, The Journal of English and Germanic Philology 98. 4 (1999), p.538.
- 21- Knight, The crown of Life, p.45.
- 22- Marsh, The Recurring Miracle, p.41.
- 23- Felperin, Shakespearean Romance, p.159.
- 24- Williams Deanne, “Papa Don’t Preach: The Power of Proximity in Pericles”, University of Toronto Quarterly 71.2 (2002), p.618.
- 25- Felperin, Shakespearean Romance, p.148.
- 26- Lyndy Abraham, “Weddings, Funerals and Incest: Alchemical Emblems and Shakespeare’s Pericles, Prince of Tyre”, The Journal of English and Germanic Philology 98. 4 (1999), p.548.

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Received 31/7/2005.